

USAID-PAHO Agreement

Quarterly Report
1 July 2009 – 30 September 2009



List of Acronyms and abbreviations

AI	-	Avian Influenza
CAREC	-	Caribbean Epidemiology Center
CARICOM	-	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CDC	-	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CPA	-	Caribbean Poultry Association
OCPC	-	Office of Caribbean Program Coordination
CIRAD	-	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GF-TAD	-	The Global Frontiers – Trans Animal Boundary Diseases
IDB	-	Inter American Development Bank
IHR	-	International Health Regulations
IICA	-	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
MOA	-	Ministry of Agriculture
MOH	-	Ministry of Health
NIPPP	-	National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan
NVSL	-	National Veterinary Services Laboratory, USA
OIE	-	World Organization for Animal Health
OIRSA	-	International Regional Organization for Health in Agriculture and Livestock
OCHA	-	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PAHO	-	Pan American Health Organization
PANAFTOSA	-	Pan American Center for Foot and Mouth Disease and Zoonoses
PED	-	Area of Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief at PAHO
PI	-	Pandemic Influenza
PWR	-	PAHO/WHO Representative Office
RRT	-	Rapid Response Teams
UNIC	-	United Nations Information Center
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSIC	-	United Nations System Influenza Coordination
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	-	United States Department of Agriculture
WB	-	World Bank
WFP	-	World Food Program
WHO	-	World Health Organization

Introduction

In this last Quarter (July to September 2009) the first wave of the H1N1 Influenza A Pandemic hit the Americas and continued its spread around the world. WHO declared a Pandemic Phase 6 on June 11th. At present, the virus has spread to all WHO regions of the world and the countries of the Americas is anticipating the second wave of the Pandemic.

PAHO has conducted two Lessons Learnt exercises in this quarter and is using these to shape future response and to strengthen country capacities for the next wave.

It should be noted that the major public health task for the second wave shall be the distribution of the H1N1 A vaccine to at risk groups. PAHO's Immunization Programme has developed a manual to assist countries in this task. PAHO has also negotiated for the donation of vaccines from various sources and is working to ensure their delivery in country in a coordinated effective way.

Project Background

The main purpose of the Influenza project is to assist and to monitor the development of ongoing preparedness plans in Central America and prepare the Caribbean countries to cope with a pandemic in ways that reduce morbidity and mortality and also mitigate economic and social disruption. To achieve this goal, the work plan has two main outcomes:

- Member States have developed national influenza pandemic preparedness plans (NIPPP) and national and local capacity to respond to emerging diseases outbreaks, especially influenza.
- Member States build partnerships and strategic alliances in support of an effective response to pandemic influenza in compliance with WHO Influenza Pandemic Repetitiveness Plan; build capacity on early detection, investigation and response including strengthened country capacities for execution of non-pharmaceutical intervention and containment activities and implementation of sub-national and local health services preparedness activities.

Each outcome will be presented as a separate section of the report; finally, a progress report table will summarize the information included in every section.

Target Countries

Caribbean countries: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Partners

This project was executed under the coordination of the Area of Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief (PED) in collaboration with the Health Disease Management Unit for technical advice to the project on training and development of materials. In the field, the focal points in the PWR offices located in the Caribbean - Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela made valuable contributions under the coordination of the PED Caribbean sub-regional advisor based at the PAHO Office of Caribbean Program Coordination OCPC) based in Barbados.

Additional support was given for the Caribbean activities by the Health Disease Management Unit which collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Caribbean Epidemiology Center (CAREC), particularly in those Caribbean countries that have another pandemic related project funded by the CDC (Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago).

Objective of the program

- To reduce morbidity and mortality and mitigate the economic and social disruption of a pandemic or international health emergency in the Caribbean

Outcome 1. Member States have developed national influenza pandemic preparedness plans (NIPPP) and national and local capacity to respond to emerging diseases outbreaks, especially influenza.

1.1 Development of the NIPPPS

The H1N1 outbreak has served to galvanize Caribbean countries to re-examine their NIPPPs and in many instances to take steps to improve them in the light of their experience. The project has pushed the development of operational plans from the NIPPPs which are mainly strategic and such activities have been timely.

The project sought to use existing national disaster plans and to integrate the NIPPP plans to them while preserving the activities related to health service surveillance and response. In this quarter, operational plans for Dominica, and Grenada were completed. Meetings were held in Anguila, the British Virgin Islands, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and the Turks & Caicos Islands to develop operational plans.

1.2 Testing and Modifying the NIPPP

A simulation exercise was held in Jamaica in September and the report and recommendations will be submitted shortly. In response to a request from the Turks & Caicos Islands, a planning meeting was held in the Turks & Caicos Islands for a simulation drill to be conducted in the next Quarter. The recommendations from this drill will also inform the development of the operational plan and ensure its integration into the existing National Disaster Plan.

Dominica has requested a simulation drill to test their national plans.

1.3. Integration of security and National Disaster plans with Pandemic, Municipal Toolkit development .

In July, a meeting was held with the Laborie Village Council in Saint Lucia to pilot the Municipal level toolkit. A second pilot was held in Nicaragua and the project supported an advisor from the Panama Sub-Regional Office to this meeting, and the toolkit is in its final editing phase. The Municipal Toolkit is currently in its final phases of being edited.

Two dissemination events are planned for the next Quarter, one in Trinidad in November for local government / NGOs from 6 Caribbean Countries and the second in Jamaica at the CDEMA meeting in December for Caribbean National Disaster Coordinators.

Outcome 2: Countries build partnerships and strategic alliances in support of an effective response to pandemic influenza in compliance with the WHO influenza pandemic Plan; build on early detection, investigation & response including strengthened country capacities for execution in non-pharmaceutical intervention & containment activities, and implementation of sub-national and local health services preparedness activities.

2.1 Countries build partnerships and strategic alliances; Advocacy outside the Health & Agriculture Sectors: Strategic Alliances:

- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies sub-regional office for the Caribbean has agreed to collaborate with Pandemic related activities, particularly those related to strengthening community resilience and specifically on promoting the dissemination of the Municipal Level Toolkit and training in Non-Pharmaceutical interventions against an Influenza Pandemic. The Federation was invited to the pilot meeting of the Municipal Toolkit and three officers took part. The Federation will also participate in the dissemination activities next Quarter.
- A sub-regional meeting was held in Barbados in September on Lessons Learnt from H1N1 for the Caribbean countries and participants from countries and sub-regional agencies took part. [Delegates from the countries included staff from Ministry of Health, national disaster offices, immigration, and security forces. Partners from USAID/OFDA, CDEMA, CAREC, CDC, UN OCHA, UNICEF, IFRC and USNORTHCOM/USOUTHCOM also attended the meeting.](#) A panel on National Influenza Pandemic Plans was among the presentations made.
- PAHO hosted two workshops on Pandemic Influenza at the request of the Ministry of Local Government in Trinidad and Tobago.
- In the next Quarter, there will be a dissemination workshop for the Municipal Toolkit for pandemic planning in Trinidad. A number of local and regional participants will take part. From Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Health, the Tobago House of Assembly, the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force, the Office of Disaster Prevention and Management, along with country delegates from the Dominica Cadet Corps, the Red Cross Societies of Aruba, Belize, and Regional office the has been invited to the meeting.

2.2 Early detection, investigation & response

National/Local Outbreak Response team training has been completed in 14 countries. Field Simulation Drills will tested the Response Team deployment in Jamaica. The Turks & Caicos Islands will conduct similar next quarter. An update of training of the Regional Health Response Team with a focus on H1N1 will be held next Quarter in Panama.

The Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) continues to support countries in laboratory confirmation of influenza variants by strengthening national laboratory diagnostic capacity and by testing samples at their laboratory in Trinidad.

2.3 Strengthening Hospital Preparedness

Sub-national and local health services preparedness activities..

Two country workshops have been held in this quarter bringing the total to 12 for the year. Follow up activities to ensure the completion of the health services plans will continue.

Hospital Pandemic plans have been prepared in the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Kitts. Last year Dominica tested their Hospital Emergency plan and they have indicated that they would like to test the pandemic plan developed this year.

Problems and Solutions (including financial issues when applicable).

Project activities this quarter have been affected by the H1N1 outbreak as some had to be postponed or cancelled but flexibility by the project coordination rescheduled or repurposed activities to achieve completion. One meeting aimed at advocacy for Avian and Pandemic Influenza was re-fashioned as a Lessons Learnt meeting. The simulation drill for Jamaica was originally scheduled for July was executed in September.

While the countries have been very receptive to any support to strengthening their national capacity to deal with the response to H1N1 outbreak, there were few technical advisors available during this period as many were deployed to the field.

Lessons Learned

The H1N1 influenza A Pandemic has been an opportunity for countries to evaluate their preparedness activities and resources for a national health event as well as how to respond as a sub-region.

- While all the National Influenza Pandemic Plans made provision for the introduction of highly lethal Avian strain, the H1N1 originated from the Americas and so far has been a mild variant with low mortality and no social disturbance in the Caribbean. Despite this, the confirmation of the virus in the countries put pressure on the Ministries of Health to respond to the public and to provide up to date information on the evolving situation. This highlighted the need for strengthening the risk communication capacity of the health sector is important.
- The tourism and health and the issue of port health as relates to the Cruise Ship industry and tourism in the Caribbean identified the need for better cooperation between all stakeholders – health, tourism, national economies, private industry.
- Those counties that had a number of planning meetings for national events mass gathering events as sporting or international events and had set up systems for emergency public health response were better able to respond to the outbreak.
- Prepositioning of PPE kits in all countries facilitated replenishment as the system for distribution was in place.

Success Stories

The Village of Laborie in Saint Lucia prepares for a Pandemic.

Sometimes being small but close-knit might be the best thing for a crisis.

Yon Konmin, yon katjil, yon mouvman pou developman!^{1*}

Comment [11]:

Ceceila Rene, 60, a retired schoolteacher, now works on to preserve her village's way of life. As chair of the local village council of Laborie in the southern coast of Saint Lucia, she was listening to something that would threaten her village. Cecilia was sitting in the village hall overlooking the main street towards the sea and hearing about how to prepare for a pandemic.

Since 1999, the people of Laborie realized that their village might fall victim to something was beginning to affect many small communities – unplanned development resulting in the degradation and destruction of their lands and environment. In 2002, the villagers formed the Laborie Development Foundation with a vision of a "culturally vibrant community where there is continuous improvement in the quality of life and where people are able to enjoy all the basic necessities and to participate fully in the process of development."

Government Planners in Saint Lucia have been working on developing an Influenza Pandemic Plan for the last five years. The island has a very vibrant emergency agency which had done a lot of work in hurricanes; it was tasked to develop the Pandemic Plan.

Among the most important concerns for Dawn French, the director of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), has been how to mobilize small communities like Laborie to prepare for a pandemic. Too often, she felt, communities expected the government to provide everything in a crisis but from her long experience, she knew that the biggest resource was the community itself. The hard part was in getting them interested in shifting from hurricane work to preparing for a disease that few gave much thought to.

So when PAHO asked her if she could suggest a small community to pilot test some guidelines for a pandemic, she immediately thought of Laborie. Apart from being away from the capital, Castries but near to an international airport, as well as having a strong community infrastructure, it was a good mix that would be able to work with the international team that would be coming from different countries.

With the able support of the NEMO and the coordination of the Laborie Village Council and Development Board, the international team comprising experts from Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, Peru and the USA arrived at Laborie. The team had been working on the various guidelines for months. The pilot was a first for them as well as although they had met to develop ideas for the toolkit, and had many conference calls and emails, working together as a team in the field was to be a new experience.

According to Cecilia Rene: "Too often we do think of things (but) we just imagine it (as best as we can) but you all went into depth and it was an eye opener for us. And soon afterwards the swine flu became more serious (in Saint Lucia) and I felt that the workshop gave us a real life sense of what to expect. "

Dawn French thought that the pilot went well but says that the work has to continue for Laborie to have a well defined community plan. "I would say it was a success, as the villagers are now motivated to produce a plan".

¹ *"One community, one idea, pulling together as one for development." Laborie Development Foundation slogan*



As Cecilia Rene looked over her neighbors' backyards with breadfruit and mango trees and banana plants and coconuts, she recounted. "The food security parts were not a big thing in Saint Lucia. Laborie would not starve as we could go for several weeks as we here have a lot of things and we tend to share with the less fortunate. We have fish in abundance and everyone has a tree with something to share."

"We always take care of our own"

Maybe Laborie wasn't so badly off after all.

The village of Laborie lies in the South West coast of Saint Lucia, in the Eastern Caribbean recently hosted a pilot of materials for local communities to prepare for a pandemic. Named after a former French governor, it dates back to the mid-eighteenth century and today boasts a small (Pop. 9000) but vibrant community. The Municipal Toolkit for Pandemic Influenza Planning will be available on <http://www.paho.org/English/DD/PED/EOCReports.htm>

Quarterly Progress Report, PAHO-USAID Influenza Program. Period 01 July 2009 – 30 September 2009

Outcome 1: Preparedness and Communication. Caribbean countries & territories have developed national influenza pandemic preparedness plans (NIPPP) and national and local capacity to respond to emerging diseases outbreaks, especially pandemic influenza.				USAID Sub Element
Activities	Planned steps /Tasks	Actual Steps/Tasks for this period	Remedies (if required)	Remarks
1.1.1 Assessment of implementation of national action plans at all levels & to provide technical cooperation to address gaps and adjust NIPPPs	Review & development of national action plans for 6 countries (Dominica, Grenada, BVI, Saint Vincent & Grenadines, Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda	Country meetings to develop operational plans/SOPs were held in Anguilla, BVI, Dominica, Grenada, St Vincent. Turks & Caicos Islands worked on their operational plan in preparation for their simulation drill which is planned for next quarter.	None	This activity is completed
1.2.1 Develop, conduct, and assess pandemic influenza simulation exercises with the participation of local leaders & observers from regional countries to test local contingency plans in two selected representative localities in at least 4 Caribbean countries.	Simulation drill for Jamaica Drill. Planning for Turks & Caicos Islands Simulation Drill.	Simulation Drill carried out in Jamaica. Planning meeting held in the Turks & Caicos Islands for a simulation drill next Quarter Dominica has requested a simulation drill and this is being considered in the next Quarter.	None	
1.3.1 Integrate security issues with pandemic planning into National Disaster Plans and local emergency coordination mechanisms through	Dominica to hold country meeting to prepare operational plan in next Quarter. Checklist for Pandemic	See 1.1.1	None	The recommendations from the simulation drill in Jamaica will include security issues and the National Pandemic Plans

meetings, workshops	Response Plan targeted for Health Disaster or National Disaster Sectors.			
1.3.2 Support the preparation of guidelines and instruments to support local level planning and response to pandemic	Municipal level Toolkit draft completed. Pilot in Caribbean to be held in Saint Lucia in next Quarter.	Pilot workshop in Saint Lucia executed. PAHO also supported the Pilot in Nicaragua and the final editing meeting in WDC.	None	Dissemination meetings scheduled for November and December 2009
Outcome 2: Response and Containment: Build partnerships and strategic alliances in support of an effective response to pandemic influenza in compliance with the WHO influenza pandemic preparedness plan; build capacity on early detection, investigation and response including strengthened country capacities for execution in non-pharmaceutical intervention and containment activities and implementation of sub-national and local health services preparedness activities.				
Activities	Planned steps /Tasks	Actual Steps/Tasks for this period	Remedies (if required)	Remarks
2.1.1 Technical cooperation for advocacy outside Health & Agriculture Sectors on Pandemic Influenza planning and national coordination, non-pharmaceutical interventions	Workshop for National Disaster Coordinators, Municipal leaders and NGOs planned for October 2009.	Lessons Learned Meeting for Caribbean Countries and Agencies held in Barbados in Sep. International Federation of the Red Cross regional office agree to collaborate on dissemination of Municipal Toolkit meeting. Workshop on Pandemic Influenza Planning for Ministry of Local Government disaster planners held in Trinidad.	A module on Municipal planning for Pandemic Influenza will be presented at the National Disaster Coordinators meeting in Jamaica next quarter. Dominica Cadet Corps request for training in pandemic preparedness will be met next quarter. Local Government Planners from Trinidad, the Tobago House of Assembly, Trinidad & Tobago Defense Force, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management Trinidad, Officers from the Red Cross of Belize, Dominica, Aruba & Trinidad & Tobago will take part in Municipal Toolkit dissemination meeting next Quarter.	

<p>2.2.2 Training of national influenza outbreak response teams in effective rapid response to and containment of influenza, under the framework of the WHO protocols and the IHR</p>			<p>An update of the training for the Regional Response team will take place next Quarter in Panama.</p>	<p>This activity is completed.</p>
<p>2.3.2 Put into operation Pandemic Influenza Response plans at the level of hospitals & health care networks (At least 1 major hospital and 1 healthcare network in at least 10 countries).</p>	<p>2 country workshops to train staff the first step in the development of the Hospital and Health Care Delivery units Preparedness Plans. planned for this Quarter</p>	<p>Workshops completed in Cayman Islands and Dominica in this Quarter.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>A total of 12 Country workshops completed this year. Hospital Pandemic Plans have been developed in 5 countries (BVI, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia & St Kitts)</p> <p>Health Services coordinator will follow up on completion of hospital plans.</p>