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## CASE STUDY

# Practice Makes The Task Perfect

### USAID assists in consolidating emergency outbreak response



Joint practice on the zoning of an H5N1 outbreak area. Photo: Project HOPE

***“The field practice gave participants the skills to collaborate their efforts with professionals from other departments.”***

*- epizootologist Khusan Nosirov from Uzbekistan’s State Veterinary Department, member of the National Emergency Response Team.*

#### Challenge

With continued registration of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 outbreaks and human fatalities in many neighboring countries, Uzbekistan’s quick reaction was to establish Emergency Response teams embedded at the Ministries of Health, Agricultural and Water Supply, and the Emergency Situations. For years, however, these teams lacked coordinated emergency response, which hampered effective control of dangerous zoonotic diseases. To correct the situation, Uzbekistan needed to drastically improve collaboration among the groups through policy development and joint exercises.

#### Initiative

To make sure that Emergency Response Groups are able to respond effectively to outbreaks of HPAI and other dangerous zoonotic diseases, USAID’s STOP AI Project designed a practical training course for the members of these groups. The course also aimed to help these specialists from veterinary, health, and emergency situations services coordinate their actions.

For the first time, National and provincial-level Emergency Response Team members from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agricultural and Water Supply came together at the training to plan and conduct joint emergency response procedures. During a two-day practical course at a local farm, 45 specialists of National and Oblast ERTs collaborated on zoning, human and bird sampling, epidemiological investigation, depopulation and disposal, as well as cleaning and disinfection activities. “Theoretically we knew that each zone has its own purpose and its own protection protocol, but in practice, we saw how difficult it was to define their sizes,” said State Veterinary Department’s epizootologist Khusan Nosirov about a training activity that focused on establishing areas with different levels of risk. The specialists also learned to deploy all necessary actions in the infected zone while ensuring safety for the people working in that zone.

#### Result

“The field practice helped participants to hone their collaboration among various departments,” said Nosirov. The training course also led the national and province-level professionals to develop standard procedures for joint action and identified which organization will do what during an outbreak. These new procedures will be included into the national preparedness plan and will become a cornerstone for all outbreak actions in the country. “Together with USAID, we put tremendous efforts into finding the right solution,” said Nosirov.