

# WHO Recommendations: Pandemic Influenza Planning

Last updated: 5 March 2009

# Learning Objectives

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- Describe the WHO pandemic preparedness guidance
- Discuss the WHO phases, their goals and main actions
- Discuss the WHO recommendations regarding key components of a pandemic preparedness plan



# Why prepare for a pandemic?

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- Be able to recognize it early and manage it
- Contain it or slow its transmission
- Decrease cases, hospitalizations, deaths
- Maintain essential services (i.e., medical)
- Reduce the economic and social impact



# Broad Risks of a Pandemic

## Livelihoods

- Food and income loss from poultry deaths/ culling & decreased economic activity

## Human Health

- High illness & potentially higher death rates
- Overstretched health facilities
- Disproportionate impact on vulnerable

## Governance & Security

- Increased demand for governance & security
- Higher public anxiety
- Reduced capacity due to illness & death

## Social & Humanitarian Needs

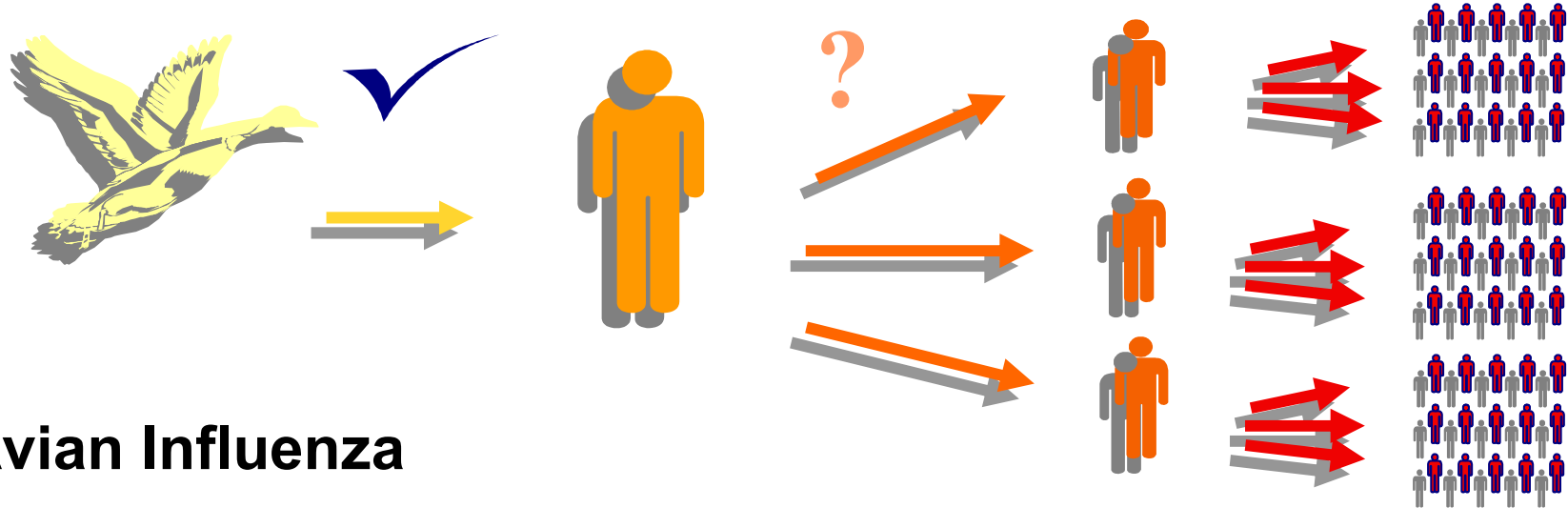
- Deterioration of coping & support mechanisms
- Interruption in public services
- Quarantine policies

## Economic Systems

- Trade & commerce disruptions
- Degraded labour force
- Interruption of regular supply systems



# Threat of Pandemic Influenza



## Avian Influenza

- Circulating in wild birds and poultry
- Highly contagious / deadly among birds
- Spreading from Asia to Europe, Middle East and Africa
- Has infected humans in rare instances - resulting from close exposure to sick birds and/or their droppings
- If the virus evolves into a human virus it could cause a human influenza pandemic
- Also possibility that these viruses (such as H5N1) never evolve into a human virus

# Requirements for a pandemic

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## Global outbreak of disease

- An influenza virus A with pandemic potential appears
- It causes sustained human-to-human transmission
- The population has no or minimal immunity



# Current Risk Assessment

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- **The Pandemic threat remains undiminished**
  - Severity and timing of a pandemic remains uncertain
- **Much accomplished through national preparedness efforts**
- **Challenges to global preparedness for the next pandemic**
  - Competing national priorities
  - Insufficient/decreasing resources
  - Decreasing media/public attention
  - Multisectoral collaboration
  - Implementation of plans at national, provincial, or district level

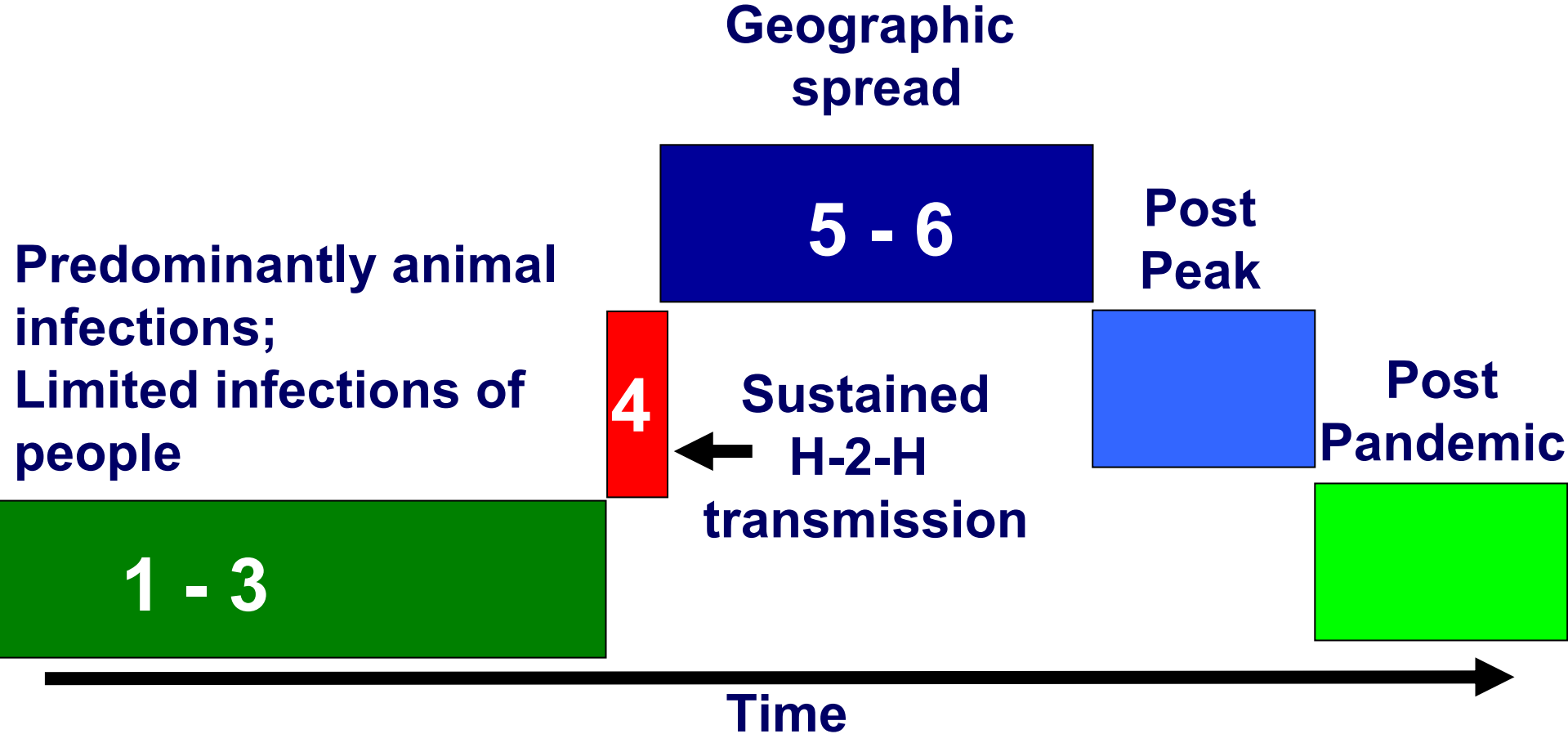


# Pandemic Phases

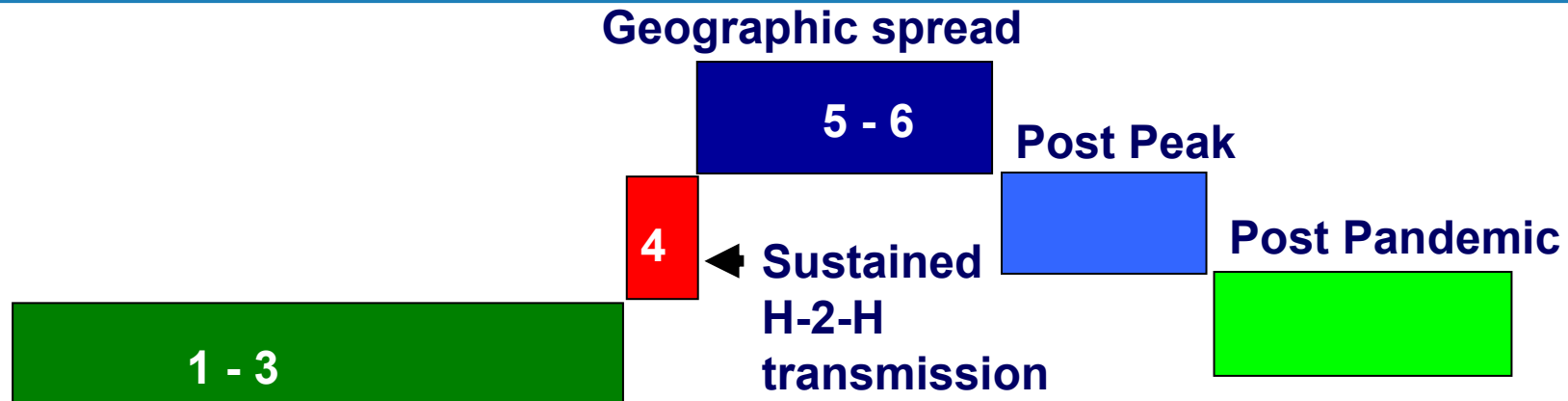
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- Provide global framework for preparedness and response
- Six phase approach
  - 1 – 3, 4, 5 - 6, post peak and post pandemic
- Planning tool
- Declaration in accordance with IHR
- Only loosely related to pandemic risk
- Identify sustained human-to-human transmission as a key event

# 2009 Phases



# Advantages of 2009 Phases



- More accurate representation of epidemiological "risk"
- Identifies sustained H-2-H transmission as most pivotal event
- Better distinguishes between time for preparedness & response
- Defines post pandemic peak to facilitate recovery activities

# Phase 1 - 3

Phase	Goals
<b>1:</b> No animal influenza virus circulating among animals have been reported to cause infection in humans	<b>Strengthen pandemic influenza preparedness and response capacities</b> at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels
<b>2:</b> An animal influenza virus circulating in domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans and is therefore considered a specific potential pandemic threat	<b>Strengthen pandemic influenza preparedness and response capacities</b> at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels
<b>3:</b> An animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks	<b>Strengthen pandemic influenza preparedness and response capacities</b> at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels



# Phase 4

Phase	Goal
<b>4:</b> Human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks has been verified	Contain the new virus within a limited area or delay its spread to gain time to implement interventions, including the use of vaccines



# Phase 5 - 6

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Goal</b>
5: The same identified virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in at least two countries in one WHO region	To reduce the impact of the pandemic on society, hence actions shift from preparedness to response at a global level
6: In addition to the criteria defined in Phase 5, the same virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in at least one other country in another WHO region	To reduce the impact of the pandemic on society, hence actions shift from preparedness to response at a global level



# Post Peak / Pandemic

Phase	Goal
<b>Post-peak period</b> - Levels of pandemic influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance have dropped below peak levels	The overall goal of actions during the post-peak period is to address the health and social impact of the pandemic, as well as to prepare for possible future pandemic waves
<b>The post-pandemic period</b> - Levels of influenza have returned to the levels seen for seasonal influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance	The goal of activities during the post-pandemic period is to address the long-term health and social impact of the pandemic, as well as to restore normal health and social functions



# Recommended components in a plan

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- Planning and coordination
- Situation monitoring and assessment
- Reducing the spread of disease
- Continuity of health care provision
- Communications



# WHO's role includes:

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- Coordination of international public health response under IHR
- Designation of the global pandemic phases.
- Selection of the pandemic vaccine strain and recommending production of the pandemic vaccine
- Assistance upon request, to rapid containment efforts of the emerging pandemic virus.
- Timely assessment of pandemic severity and provision of epidemiologic, virologic, and clinical characteristics of pandemic influenza to help national authorities in deciding the optimal response.
- Providing guidance and technical assistance to Member States in their efforts to be better prepared to mitigate a future influenza pandemic.



# National governments' roles include:

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- Provide leadership and coordination among different sectors of the government and for the whole-of-society to be prepared for an influenza pandemic enacting or modifying legislation where required
- Plan for effective risk communication before, during and after the pandemic.
- Actively collect, analyze and disseminate data for making informed public health decisions about the pandemic.
- Plan for and implement all available measures in an ethical manner to mitigate the impact of the pandemic,
- Ensure continuity of health care provision during a pandemic



# Of critical importance

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1. High level political commitment
2. Whole of Society involvement
  - Government departments (e.g. agriculture, labor, education, defense, transport, trade, judiciary)
  - Private sector/civil society (e.g. industry, NGOs)
  - Community, family and individual
3. Consideration of existing resources as well as unmet resource needs



# Lessons learned from previous influenza pandemics

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- It is expected that the next influenza pandemic will:
  - begin any time, anywhere
  - spread globally within several weeks or months.
  - come in two or more waves in most communities
  - result in widely variable health impacts among countries and communities
  - affect vulnerable populations more severely
  - cause workplace absenteeism higher than the clinical attack rate

## Where to get more information

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### WHO global influenza sites:

#### General information:

[www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en)

#### Updates on recent outbreaks:

[www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/updates/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/updates/en/)

#### Guidelines

[http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/guidelines](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/guidelines)

