

AVIAN INFLUENZA & PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS

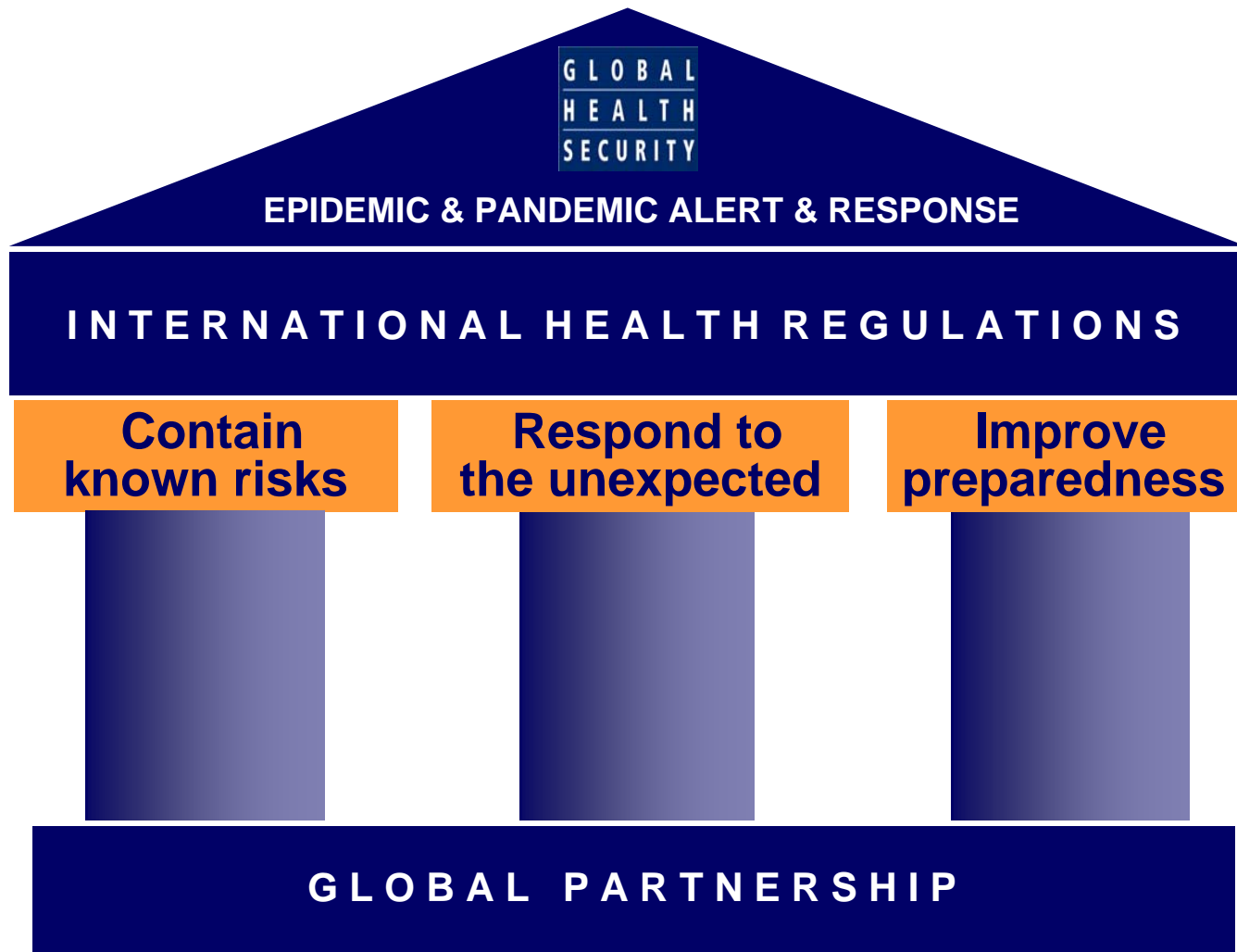
Health and Consumer Protection -
European Commission.

Media Seminar

Brussels, July 7, 2006

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WHO Global Health Security



Global H5N1 Situation

1997 Emerged as cause of poultry & human disease

Remains an avian influenza virus

2006 Continued spread in animals

Combination of poultry movement (legal and illegal) & wild birds

53 countries (Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East) since 2004

Primarily poultry, less often other animals

2006 Continued infections of people

- 10 countries
- 228 lab-confirmed infections (130 fatal) since 2003
- Sporadic cases & clusters
- Most associated with direct exposure to infected poultry
- NO widespread, sustained human-to-human transmission

Avian H5N1 Control Efforts

- Effective and sustained in some countries
- Ongoing infections in other countries
- Must expect H5N1 infections to continue in near- and medium-term
 - Identified in South Africa in 1960's
 - Emerged in Asia in 1996
 - Accelerated global spread since 2003

Underlying Assumptions

Risk communication is an integral part of managing risk

In the context of avian influenza and pandemic preparedness there are multiple risks:

- Risk of transmission of avian influenza amongst birds and animals and to humans
- Risk of transmission from human to human
- Risk of a pandemic

Strategic Risk Communication

Includes

- Outbreak communications to assist governments to respond in crises
- Social mobilisation, including health promotion and disease prevention and control messages

Outcome:

- Enables individuals, governments, elected representatives, organisations, the private sector to make appropriate decisions to take action

Note: Avian Influenza initiatives involve WHO, FAO, OIE and UNICEF

Note: UN system coordination

Outcome

Better informed decisions by "decision makers" and other stakeholders including citizens

Informed policy makers

Clarity of roles

Management of risk

Improved human security

WHO Outbreak Communication

WHO Handbook for Journalists: Influenza pandemic

WHO Outbreak Communication Guidelines

WHO Outbreak Communication – Best Practices

- The major challenge is translating science and analyses of risk in ways that engender trust...

WHO Strategic Action Plan for Pandemic Influenza

1 Reduce Human Exposure to H5N1 virus

2 Strengthen Early Warning system

3 Intensify Rapid Containment operations

4 Build Capacity to cope with pandemic

5 Coordinate Global Scientific Research and Vaccine Development