

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS: A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH

Experts believe that an influenza pandemic will have the potential to disrupt the world economy and may disrupt the distribution of food and other supplies that are important to communities. As a result, organizations like the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and Donor Nations are preparing for an influenza pandemic and its possible consequences for food security and livelihoods in communities.

In the case of a severe pandemic, economists have predicted that financial losses could reach up to \$4.4 trillion in its first year – that is 12.6% of the global GDP. The more severe a pandemic, the more developing countries will be economically hurt relative to North America and Europe.

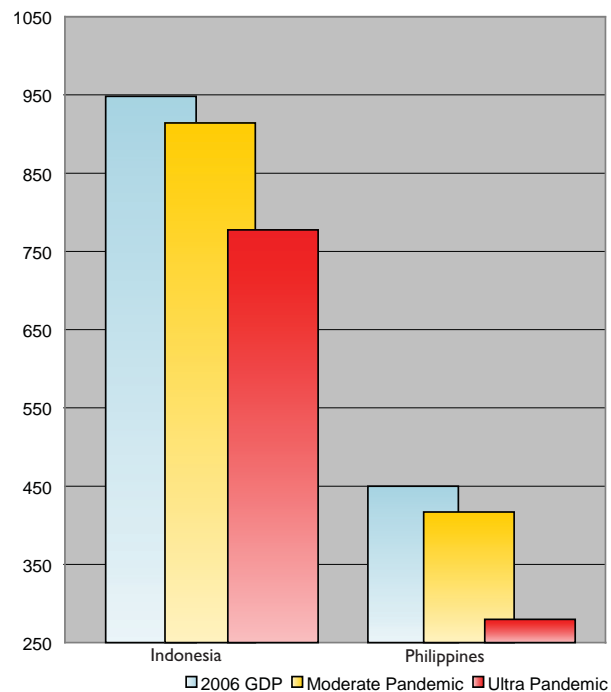
It is widely recognized that chronic food insecurity, malnutrition, and the vulnerability to it, is widespread in many parts of the developing world. The goal of this project is to help strengthening or developing community-based systems minimize the additional negative impacts that a pandemic influenza could have on food security and livelihoods.

In preparing for a pandemic, leaders should gather information that will allow them to produce a community-based food security “pandemic preparedness plan.” Part of the information-gathering process should include:

- Mapping national and district food flows to assess how a pandemic might affect food access, including identification of possible vulnerable spots in the food supply chain.
- Identifying alternate food supplies for loan or purchase.
- Identifying opportunities for Ready-To-Eat (RTE) foods that help bridge short term gaps in supply of food.
- Identifying whether there are any key food stocks, stores or silos that may require protection.
- Develop a plan how a food system is put in place and protected that ensures the flow of food to hospitals, clinics and therapeutic feeding sites and other locations of high concentration of (vulnerable) people.

A community based approach for pandemic preparedness and readiness requires the need to involve a broad selection of partners and stakeholders at all levels.

Impact of an Influenza Pandemic on GDP in \$US Billions



The following tables offer practical tasks that communities can undertake to help mitigate the effects of food insecurity before and during an influenza pandemic.

Pre-Pandemic

Task	How often	Result	Requires
Map food stocks	Annually	Map, List	Visiting farms, industry
Identify food protection priorities	Every 2 years	List	Convening local experts
Identify most vulnerable households	Annually	Roster	Surveys, measures
Communicate to key organizations	Every 2 years	Messages	Meetings
Compile public works projects	Every 2 years	List	Creative exploration
Track early warning signs of local livelihood disaster	Continuously during pandemic	Decisions	Track markets, movements of people, local rumors
Propose increase in food for the medically vulnerable	Every 2 years	Commitment	Convening community

During an Influenza Pandemic

Task	How often	Result	Requires
Hold community meetings to plan for food sharing	Pandemic onset	Transparency & volunteers	Leadership
Negotiate channels and networks for food or voucher provisions to vulnerable households	Outset	Mapping and new vouchers	Cooperation among merchants & CBOs
Deliver small-scale food rations to homesteads	Twice/month	Household receipt of minimal food supplies	Trucks, motorcycles, community volunteers
Deliver nutrient-rich therapeutic foods to households with malnourished children	Twice/month	Prevention of severe malnutrition and dehydration	Ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF), oral rehydration solution (ORS), fortified foods
Initiate public work projects that minimize working in large groups	Daily	Self-targeted safety net	Food, mobile supervision
Merge feeding, child health, and agricultural extension programs	Ongoing	Food to families where they live	MOA and MOH sharing
Increase center-based feeding after epidemic wave	Daily	Malnourished rehabilitated	Fuel, structures, volunteers
Promote livelihoods through new loans in new loan cycles with new short-term loan products	Once a month	Increased currency circulation among poor	Capital from banks into microfinance networks
Provision of short-cycle seeds post epidemic wave	Ongoing	Effective sowing of next crop cycles	Cooperation of seed companies