

Abstract

Infectious diseases of grave concern to human health are emerging from wildlife and livestock populations in regions of the world where boundaries between human, wildlife and livestock populations are undergoing rapid change. This occurs with greater frequency in tropical regions, areas with limited resources for disease prevention and control. Among recent examples, avian influenza may have posed the greatest threat to public health, but increases in monkey pox in the DRC, Yellow Fever in Uganda, and Nipah virus outbreaks in Southeast Asia are of global importance. Most capacitybuilding efforts to identify, investigate and respond to emerging infectious diseases have focused on supporting public health agencies. However, responding effectively to these diseases requires engagement of and coordination with a diversity of professions and stakeholders in both human and animal health, as well as social and environmental sciences. Moving towards a One Health approach to investigate, respond to, and counter existing and future emerging infectious disease threats is the overarching goal of the USAID's Emerging Pandemics Threat (EPT) Program. The RESPOND project aims to strengthen training, educational programs, and support to governments, universities and civil society with the objective of using One Health tools and approaches to improve worldwide capacity to investigate and respond to emerging infectious diseases. The project reinforces and supports existing public health services by developing the skills of a wide range of professionals with multidisciplinary applied training and experience in animal, human and environmental health threats, while simultaneously strengthening the institutions that can provide the training.