

# Bhutan

**Capital:** *Thimphu*  
**Infant Mortality Rate:**  
*47/1,000 live births*  
**Population:**  
*725,296 (July 2013 est.)*



## Overview

Bhutan is a landlocked, remote country in South Asia located at the eastern end of the Himalayas. The existing national influenza surveillance system is a relatively new system with limited support.

The National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan was developed realizing the threat posed by the H5N1 outbreak in poultry in neighboring countries in 2006. The plan was put into action during the H1N1 outbreaks in 2009 and the first H5N1 outbreak in domestic poultry in 2010.

The Public Health Laboratory (PHL) is the national focal point under the Ministry of Health for conducting and coordinating public health surveillance including influenza surveillance and laboratory testing.

Bhutan was awarded a CDC capacity building cooperative agreement, Surveillance and Response to Avian and Pandemic Influenza by National Health Authorities outside the United States in September 2013. The agreement aims to build and strengthen the national laboratory and surveillance capacity for severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) and influenza-like illness (ILI).

## Highlights

- Awarded Capacity Building Cooperative Agreement.
- Established eight ILI surveillance sites in 2009 during the pandemic. Increased to 11 sites in 2010. In 2011, all sites began SARI surveillance.
- Began constructing a new PHL building which will expand influenza laboratory space including space for virus culture.
- Requested WHO approval to establish a National Influenza Center (NIC).

# Maldives

**Capital:** *Malé*  
**Infant Mortality Rate:\***  
*9/1,000 live births*  
**Population:**  
*393,988 (July 2013 est.)*



## Overview

Maldives is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean, consisting of a group of about 1,200 islands scattered over a distance of 800 km, of which 250 are inhabited. The islands are grouped into natural atolls, which are used as administrative demarcations. There are 21 administrative districts— 20 atolls and the capital, Malé. There are over 1 million tourist arrivals each year.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA), under the Ministry of Health is responsible for surveillance and response of communicable diseases, including influenza and other respiratory illnesses. Acute respiratory infections (ARI) are constantly the highest reported communicable disease category in Maldives. ARI surveillance (including influenza) is currently based on a passive syndromic system.

Maldives was awarded a CDC capacity building cooperative agreement, Surveillance and Response to Avian and Pandemic Influenza by National Health Authorities outside the United States in September 2013. The agreement aims to build and strengthen the national laboratory and surveillance capacity for influenza surveillance, establish protocols for pandemic preparedness and response and share information with WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) for global pandemic preparedness.

## Highlights

- Awarded Capacity Building Cooperative Agreement.
- Requested WHO approval to establish a National Influenza Center (NIC).
- Offered influenza vaccine for all persons travelling for Hajj and Umra pilgrimages.
- Participated in an ILI and SARI surveillance workshop in Thailand in 2013.

\*Based on country estimates.