



OIE TWINNING PROGRAMME: A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE  
FROM BOTSWANA (Botswana National Veterinary  
Laboratory)

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## INTRODUCTION

- ✘ Became aware of the OIE twinning programme in 2007. This was communicated to SADC subcommittee for Veterinary Laboratories by OIE-SRR
- ✘ Used the published list of OIE reference laboratories to select the laboratories dealing in the field of interest and contacted them by email.



## INTRODUCTION CONT'D

- ✘ IZS acknowledged the email and later they arranged a visit to our lab to appreciate the needs and help in the design of the twinning project
- ✘ The project was launched in 2008 following a preparatory meeting in Italy, Teramo
- ✘ Another project was conceptualised in 2008 and we approached the Veterinary Laboratory Agency of UK to assist. Like IZS, they sent an expert to do a study of our needs before design of project



## INTRODUCTION CONT'D

- ✘ Another project was conceptualised in 2009 and is in its final stages before implementation.
- ✘ The projects are all aimed at developing BNVL capabilities either to be a reference laboratory or to improve our capabilities to OIE standards.



### SCOPE OF TWINNING PROJECTS

- ✘ Improving or building capacity in a specific area: Trichinellosis
- ✘ Improving capacity for a group of diseases: AI & NCD
- ✘ Reaching OIE reference Laboratory status: CBPP for the region
- ✘ Attain OIE standards only in a specific area of work: AI



### ROLE PLAYED BY PARENT LABORATORIES

- ✘ Parent OIE reference Laboratory and the designated expert(s) are the driving force, to ensure the success of the Twinning agreement
- ✘ Expert at parent lab is the Project manager
- ✘ Parent lab submits agreed (with candidate lab) project proposal to OIE Central Bureau in Paris
- ✘ Parent lab is responsible for implementation and use of financial resources support Twinning project



### ROLE OF CANDIDATE LABORATORY

- ✘ Must be fully committed to improving its capacity and expertise
- ✘ Owns the end result that is being achieved by the partnership
- ✘ Expert is nominated to be the project leader for the candidate lab activities



### OIE

- ✘ OIE Central Bureau provides support and coordination for the twinning programme
- ✘ Ensures the application for financial and technical controls outlined in the mutual agreement of the participating laboratories
- ✘ OIE World Fund for Animal Health and Welfare provides financial support for the OIE Twinning programme



### REPORTING TO OIE

- ✘ This is done by the parent laboratory and submitted to OIE Scientific and Technical dept
  - + Interim report: within first year of the project
  - + Annual report: within 1 month of the end of year of project start date
  - + Final report: on completion of project. To be jointly prepared by parent and candidate labs
  - + Post-project review: 6 – 12 months after project closure



### BNVL PROJECTS

- ✘ CBPP project
- ✘ Avian Influenza & Newcastle project
- ✘ Trichinellosis project



## CBPP PROJECT

- ✘ Objectives:
  - + Production of reagents for the serological testing;
  - + Isolation and identification procedures of the aetiological agent
  - + Disease pathology and differential diagnosis;
  - + Conducting epidemiological surveillance



## CBPP CONT'D

- ✘ The diagnostic procedures are being standardised and validated according to the OIE standards
- ✘ BNVL will acquire status of Reference laboratory, and will lead to a more even geographical distribution of expertise and provision of scientific support to neighbouring countries.



## CBPP CONT'D

- ✘ The project scheduled for a period 17months but was extended to 24months.
- ✘ The project closes in June 2010



## AVIAN INFLUENZA AND NEWCASTLE DISEASE

- ✘ Objectives:
  - + To develop a laboratory contingency plan for AI and NCD
  - + Identify key areas to strengthen capacity building at BNVL
  - + Transfer tests, skills and reagents in order to provide a robust diagnostic/virus confirmatory capabilities
  - + Produce key diagnostic reagents to support testing



## AI AND NCD CONT'D

- ✘ Project scheduled for 21 months, to end 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010



## TRICHINELLOSIS

- ✘ The twinning project will establish scientific and technological expertise at BNVL through
  - + Training of laboratory personnel
  - + Training of slaughterhouse personnel to collect muscles from target animals for the detection of *Trichinella* infection by training the trainer
  - + Dissemination and publication of information on *Trichinella* in Botswana and neighbouring countries



## TRICHINELLOSIS CONT'D

- ✘ The project is being finalised for implementation this year.
- ✘ The period of implementation has not yet been scheduled.



## BNVL EXPERIENCES

- ✘ Commitment from both parent and candidate laboratories is mandatory if the project will have to deliver the desired results
- ✘ Level of research engaged in is critical to becoming an OIE reference laboratory, especially the publications made on the subject
- ✘ Availability of resources, including the equipments needed to carryout added functions very crucial. Support from principals very critical



## BNVL EXPERIENCES CONT'D

- ✘ Change of leadership at OIE delegate and laboratory level creates loss of momentum when it occurs
- ✘ Economic down turn globally, tended to affect developing countries more and in turn risked the implementation of the projects negatively
- ✘ Poor service delivery by suppliers of services and consumables directly impacted negatively to the project progress
- ✘ Lack of competent equipment maintenance companies created a draw back.



## CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

- ✘ Limited financial resources to support newly acquired skills and technologies and adopting them to the candidate laboratory a challenge
- ✘ OIE Twinning project(s) do not provide support for making available the necessary equipment(s) to candidate laboratories to build capacity, instead funds are provided to the already established parent labs



## CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES CONT'D

- ✘ Absence of specific diseases in a candidate country also brings about challenges of acquiring the materials; developing countries tend to send materials to labs in Europe more than they could send to sister labs in Africa
- ✘ Stability of technical staff in the country/candidate laboratory remain a challenge, especially that candidate laboratory is a public institution and wages are set by government. To set retention packages is not easy
- ✘ Redeployment of team members in the twinning project without their replacement also acts against the intended objectives



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✘ Maintain adequate support to candidate by OIE delegate in terms of:
  - + Staff complement, avoid deploying staff away from the project (before its closure)
  - + Financial resources
  - + Facilitation of scientific research
- ✘ OIE to make it possible for candidate laboratory to access funds that will assist in the implementation of the Twinning, and not limit the funds only to the parent laboratory



## REFERENCES

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- × BNVL records and reports
- × OIE Twinning Laboratories: A guide to OIE Laboratory Twinning Projects
- × Personal communication



- × **THANK YOU**
- × **MITA OBRIGADO**
- × **MERCI BEAUCOUP**
- × **KE A LEBOGA**



× **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS  
ARE WELCOME**