



Food and Agriculture
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United Nations



World Health
Organization

Press release:

Capacity building for coordinated zoonotic diseases surveillance and information sharing in Uganda

FAO, OIE and WHO support national authorities in their efforts to establish the Tripartite Information Sharing Operational Tool (SIS OT) to strengthen coordinated surveillance and information sharing to fight zoonotic diseases.

07 February 2022, Jinja - Uganda is strengthening capacity for coordinated zoonotic disease surveillance and improving information sharing to feed into the Early Warning and Response system. To support this process, Uganda piloted the Surveillance and Information Sharing Operational Tool (SIS OT) aimed at assessing capacity for coordination, information sharing and resource mapping. The tool was jointly developed by the Tripartite organizations: the Food and Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to establish and strengthen a national coordinated, multi-sectoral surveillance and information sharing mechanism (or system), to fight zoonotic diseases.

To pilot the tool, The Tripartite FAO-OIE-WHO, and partners including Africa CDC and other regional institutions, held a four-day meeting in Uganda to draw a roadmap and SIS development plan to strengthen the coordination of One Health, multi-sectoral surveillance and information sharing in the country. The meeting was attended by over 80 key stakeholders from different ministries, departments and agencies, as well as organizations involved in the implementation of One Health activities. Throughout the different sessions, they contributed to the completion of the SIS-OT process and development of the surveillance roadmap and plan.

Coordinated One Health, multi-sectoral surveillance for zoonotic diseases

In the last five years, several countries in the region have experienced a number of zoonotic diseases outbreaks ranging from Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever, Marburg virus disease, Rift Valley fever, anthrax and Ebola Virus Disease. Uganda was selected to pilot the SIS OT as part of improving response to zoonotic diseases. The first step to decreasing zoonotic disease threats is understanding why and where the risks exist. This understanding can be built through national level joint risk assessments, bringing together information on the disease occurrence in humans and animals and presence in the environment, and coordinating the national animal health, public health and other relevant sectors.

In this context, the country established the National One Health Platform (NOHP) and developed the Strategic Plan (NOHSP). Following this, the National Bridging Workshop and One Health Zoonotic Disease Prioritization was conducted in 2017, which highlighted the need to promote integrated surveillance and timely information sharing through a One Health approach. More recently, [Uganda joined other countries in Africa to pilot the Tripartite Joint Risk Assessment \(JRA\) operational tool](#) in

December 2019. This instrument, jointly developed by the Tripartite, supported multi-sectoral risk assessment for zoonotic threats at the human-animal-environmental interface. The meeting recommended the need to further conduct the Joint Risk Assessment (JRA) at sub-national level and evaluate the risk for other priority zoonotic diseases.

Recently, besides the establishment of the NOHP, as mentioned above, Uganda has made efforts also to scale up the One Health operationalization. Such is the case of the development of the [One Health Framework](#) (OHFW) and the mapping of [One Health policy stakeholders](#).

Supporting the government of Uganda to pilot the SIS OT

FAO Representative in Uganda, Antonio Querido, emphasised the importance of surveillance as an essential part of tackling zoonotic diseases which cannot be effectively addressed by one sector alone. "We support the government of Uganda to pilot the SIS-OT in order to obtain technical guidance to actions that can strengthen capacity for coordinated zoonotic diseases surveillance. We need for our systems to wield reliable mechanisms that can tackle diseases at source before they cross from animals and environment to human beings," he said, adding that, "It is our hope that the projected outcomes of this pilot workshop will have a positive impact on the health of the masses and their animals."

This pilot meeting provided recommendations to build a coordinated mechanism of surveillance and information sharing for zoonotic diseases. Participants had the opportunity to develop a prioritized activity list, road map, development plan and timeline to improve coordination of zoonotic disease surveillance. The SIS-OT represents an opportunity to strengthen coordination among One Health stakeholders and to improve the planning and implementation of their activities and of multisectoral surveillance of zoonotic diseases and other threats.

For more information

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