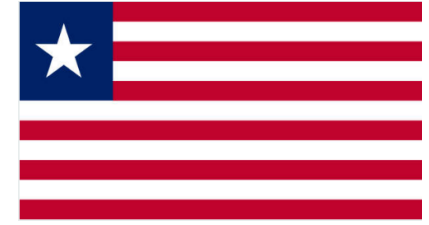


# Regional Training Seminar for WOAH National Focal Points for Veterinary Laboratories (cycle III)

8 - 10 July 2025, Gaborone, Botswana





# **Liberia's Experience with the PVS Laboratory Mission**

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# Context

Liberia previously engaged in a WOAHPVS Evaluation (2013) and a Gap Analysis (2016); the PVS Laboratory Mission in 2021 built upon these efforts.

Key national challenges:

- Limited post-war infrastructure,
- Under-resourced diagnostic services
- Heavy reliance on donor support.



# Benefits of the Mission

**Objective external review** of CVL and supporting structures.

- **Clear roadmap** for strengthening lab functions in compliance with WOAHA standards.
- **Heightened political visibility** of animal health systems—facilitated engagement with policymakers and donors (e.g., REDISSE, FAO).
- Reinforced the **One Health Coordination Platform** as a multisectoral gateway for lab and surveillance integration.

# Key Findings



Liberia **lacks** comprehensive **veterinary legislation**, and existing laws are outdated.

Draft bills on veterinary practice and animal diseases remain unapproved.



The **livestock sector is underfunded**, with a low political will to prioritize veterinary services, leading to insufficient operational budgets and inadequate service delivery

**Operational gaps in data systems (e.g., inconsistent ARIS usage across counties).**



# Implementation of Recommendations

Drafted comprehensive **Animal Disease Law** and **Veterinary Law** to anchor lab powers and mandates.

- Developed SOPs for surveillance and diagnostics
- CVL refurbishment completed through FAO-ETAD; focused on Molecular(Real-Time & Conventional PCR), Microbiology (culture and sensitivity) basic Parasitology, & Virology (rabies diagnosis).
- Few subject matter experts

# Challenges Encountered

**Budgetary constraints:** Implementation of recommendations is often stalled due to limited domestic funding.

- **Human resource bottlenecks:** Skilled diagnostic staff operate on a voluntary or intermittent basis.
- **Legislative inertia:** Despite strong drafts, veterinary laws have yet to pass through Parliament due to broader sectoral reforms.

# Suggestions for Enhancing the PVS Lab Assessment Process

Include a **follow-up mechanism** to track uptake of recommendations post-mission (technical guidance + advocacy support).

- Provide **modular toolkits** tailored to low-resource settings to facilitate implementation.
- Foster **peer-to-peer exchanges** for countries with similar constraints—e.g., a West African reference labs network.



# Key Insights from Liberia's 2021 Virtual PVS Laboratory Mission

# Overview

- Conducted in January 2021 as the **first-ever fully virtual PVS Laboratory Mission** due to COVID-19.
- Focused on **CVL-Liberia**.

## Mission Goals

- Assess the **physical, human, and economic resources** of the veterinary laboratory system.
- Evaluate performance within the national landscape.
- Provide data-informed insights to support the national Veterinary Services' decision-making.

# Virtual Format: Opportunities & Successes

- **Web-based format** involved a 3-month webinar series on:
  - Data collection
  - Resource modeling
  - Reporting and analysis
- Enabled **longer preparation**, richer datasets, and enhanced expert involvement.
- Delivered **high-quality data visualizations** using improved digital tools.
- Strengthened **strategic and management thinking** among lab personnel.

# Challenges in Remote Delivery

- **19% internet penetration** in Liberia limited full participation.
- Inequitable access to the internet and devices among staff and stakeholders.
- **No on-site observation** meant reliance on pictures, staff declarations, and virtual walkthroughs.
- Declarations required **thorough follow-up and verification**, adding complexity.

# Reflections & Lessons Learned

- Revealed Liberia's **digital divide** in laboratory systems, exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Reinforced the need for **hybrid (blended) missions** combining remote and in-person elements.
- Demonstrated potential for **future digital transformation** of the PVS Pathway.

# Thanks for Listening