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**ONE HEALTH AND
TRANSBOUNDARY
PESTS AND DISEASES**

Peste des Petits Ruminants Eradication

Advancing the eradication of Peste
des Petits Ruminants (PPR) in Africa

The issue

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) is a highly contagious disease infecting wild and domestic small ruminants, first reported in 1942 in Côte d'Ivoire. Some 5.4 billion people live in affected areas, the majority of them among the world's poorest livestock farmers. This disease is particularly prevalent in Africa, where 33.8 percent of global small ruminants are reared. PPR is caused by a morbillivirus of the family of paramyxoviruses, which are related to rinderpest, measles and canine distemper. Since initial identification, this fast-spreading viral disease has steadily expanded its geographical reach beyond its original endemic region in western Africa. PPR is now widespread throughout Africa (apart from the most southern countries) and many countries in the Near East, Central Asia, East Asia and South Asia.

Currently, 70 countries have reported infection, or suspected infection, to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and another 50 countries are considered to be at risk. Of those infected countries, more than 60 percent are in Africa, including North Africa, where there is a high risk of incursion into Europe. Thankfully, PPR is readily diagnosed and a reliable, inexpensive and high-quality vaccine is available to immunize animals. FAO and OIE began a global coordinated effort in 2015 to wipe out the disease by 2030. Stepping up this initiative will advance the PPR global eradication programme in Africa and ensure coordinated implementation. As of May 2017, 56 countries were deemed PPR free by the OIE, of which only five were African (Botswana, Eswatini, Madagascar, Mauritius and South Africa).

The action

The programme's main goal is to control and eventually eradicate PPR from Africa and the planet. This is technically achievable, as it is readily diagnosed and a reliable, inexpensive and high-quality vaccine is available, which confers lifelong immunity on inoculated animals. A concerted global effort to support both national and regional actions is required to control and then eradicate the disease. The veterinary services entrusted with this task require support and strengthening.

This action is feasible and necessary. The PPR virus has many characteristics of an eradicable disease: (1) an effective, robust, safe and affordable vaccine is available, (2) PPR vaccines can induce immunity against all known serotypes, (3) immunity is lifelong, (4) infection is transmitted primarily by direct contact and the virus does not persist in the environment, (5) animals are infectious for a short period of time and there is no carrier state.

The issue in numbers



2.1 billion

sheep and goats at risk of becoming infected



70 countries

infected with PPR and another 50 at risk



300 million

families rely on small ruminants for their livelihoods

Programme targets



2030

the target date for eradicating PPR



1.5 billion

animals immunised against PPR by 2022, 500 million of them in Africa



15

countries in Africa declared free of PPR by 2022

The budget



USD 95 million



4 years



Africa

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Expected results

- Country PPR eradication strategies in place and implemented, based on an understanding of the epidemiological situation at national and regional level, to reduce the prevalence of PPR and then eradicate the disease;
- Capacity developed to demonstrate the absence of the PPR virus and move towards and maintain OIE official PPR-free status;
- Performance of national veterinary services improved through enhanced compliance with OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Critical Competencies and successful implementation of the PPR global eradication programme;
- Other prioritized small-ruminant diseases under better control.

Geographic focus

All five regions of Africa: Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Northern Africa, Southern Africa and Western Africa

In partnership with

The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), national and local veterinary services, regional African organizations, such as the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and the African Union-Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC), and regional economic communities



SDG contribution



Diagnostic kits and vaccinations help control PPR

Across Africa, FAO has been helping to train field veterinarians and community animal health workers in disease recognition, outbreak investigation, surveillance, risk assessment, diagnosis and vaccination. In partnership with AU-PANVAC, a diagnostic kit has been tested and validated, reducing the unit cost from USD 2.5 to just USD 0.6.

After three years of vaccination in Somalia, no outbreak of PPR has been reported since 2015. Those efforts are now being replicated in Burundi and elsewhere. Freeze-drying technology has been procured for Ethiopia, boosting its PPR vaccine production more than threefold. FAO has been instrumental in rehabilitating a diagnostic laboratory in Liberia and in procuring equipment and reagents for other countries, to bring Africa a step closer to eradicating PPR.



Why invest?

Eighty percent of the world's sheep and goat population is at risk of becoming infected by PPR, which has a 90 percent mortality rate. Some 5.4 billion people live in the areas affected by PPR, the majority of them poor livestock keepers. Africa, alone, is home to 33.8 percent of the global small ruminant population. PPR has a direct effect on more than 300 million families, which rely on small ruminants for a living. Moreover, because of the socioeconomic and cultural importance of small ruminants to African communities and how PPR poses a threat to food security, nutrition, poverty alleviation and resilience, the eradication of PPR is critical in order to safeguard livelihoods and ensure food security in affected areas.

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