

Second One Health Training on Disease Investigation in Wildlife, Livestock and Public Health held in Mole National Park, Ghana

The second One Health training on disease investigation in Wildlife, Livestock and Public Health was held in Mole National Park in Ghana from the 7th to 17th May 2012. The training was organized and conducted by AU-IBAR under the Integrated Regional Coordination Mechanism for the Prevention and Control of TADs and Zoonoses (IRCM) strategic framework with the technical support of USAID RESPOND project of the Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) Program.

The Ghana training brought together 31 professionals: 9 medical and public health experts, 13 veterinarians (including veterinary public health), 9 wildlife specialists (including wildlife veterinarians), a nurse, a microbiologist, livestock production specialist and a food safety specialist. Participants were drawn from ten countries namely; Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Swaziland (Figure 1). The Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), one of Africa's 8 official Regional Economic Communities was also represented.



The Mole training participants

The overall objective of the intervention was to train and mentor One Health champions representing the 3 health domains (wildlife/environment health, livestock health and public health) at Member State and REC secretariat levels as part of advocacy of the integrated approach to the management of TADs and zoonoses.

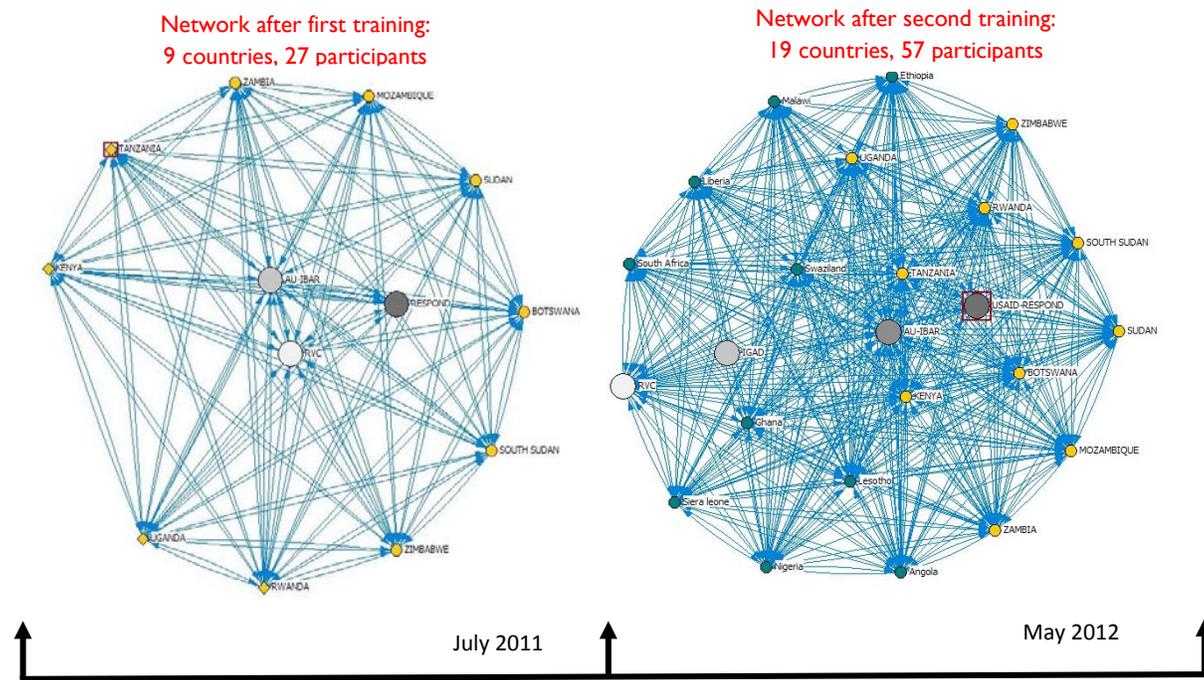
The training was based on the adult learning approach that enables participants to have direct experiences, reflect on their previous experiences, conceptualize, and apply new knowledge and skills to their specific contexts. The training method combined lectures, problem based learning and field exercises. Every lecture was followed by a discussion session facilitating the clarification of issues and sharing of experiences. Problem based learning exercises were conducted to enable participants to better understand the links between the determinants of health, ecological influences and the epidemiological patterns of disease, hence, the necessity for collaboration among different sectors to address them. During both field exercises and problem based learning, multi-sectoral teams were constituted to enhance and capture the essence and spirit of One Health. Field visits were made to the savannah and forest ecosystems within the Mole National Park and areas of human settlement outside the park. A visit to the Jelinkon-Kon-Oloh



village in the western border of Mole National Park gave participants an opportunity to hold focus group discussions with the local community on One Health issues of the wildlife-livestock-human interface. Additional visits were made to a mission hospital, the District Veterinary Office, a slaughter house and a community clinic in West Gonja District, during which participants interviewed the respective officials on issues of One Health. Trainees used outputs of the field work to develop a One Health strategy and recommendations to address zoonoses and conflict at the wildlife-livestock-human interface in West Gonja district.

Lessons learned from One Health initiatives in Ghana, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and South Africa were presented to participants by representatives from the respective countries. Considered as One Health champions, the trainees identified actions that they would implement in their respective countries in the short, medium and long term to promote One Health through a short action planning exercise towards the end of the course.

The participants expressed interest to join the One Health/WILDHEALTH network currently being established by AU-IBAR and partners in the USAID RESPOND project. A total of 19 countries¹ have participated in the One Health training series and will be part of the network (Figure 2).



Visual depiction of the One Health/WILDHEALTH network

Under the leadership of AU-IBAR, the One Health/WILDHEALTH network aims to link and empower members to promote the One Health Approach, share experiences, share information and exchange technical knowledge on the management of infectious diseases. Through additional planned training sessions, the One Health network is expected to grow to cover the whole continent. Some of the countries (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda) involved in One Health/WILDHEALTH network are also members of One Health for Central and Eastern Africa network (OHCEA) that brings together Deans of Faculties responsible for Human and Veterinary Medicine from 6 universities in Eastern and Central Africa.

¹ Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, Lesotho, Nigeria, Angola, Tanzania, South Sudan, Sudan, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Malawi, Swaziland, Botswana.



Group representative presenting outputs of a problem based learning exercise



WILD training participants attending a lecture on risk communication



WILD training participants in group discussion during visit to village near Mole National Park, Ghana



WILD training participants during a session of problem based learning

Special thanks to:

Dr Richard D. Suu-ire (Manager of Accra Zoo, Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission), Mr Meyir Ziekah (Accra Zoo vet Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission), Mr Umaru Farouk (manager of Mole National Park), Ali Mahama (Assistant Wildlife Officer, Law Enforcement and Ground Coverage Officer), Mr Nana Adu Nsiah (Director of Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission), Dr Edward Mark Hansen (Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).