



May 2018

Concept Note

Better Enforcement of Standards for Safer Trade (BESST)

Rationale:

The long and rich experiences in mutual and historical interaction between Africa and the Middle East, the cultural, political and social relations between the two regions,

Many of the trade sensitive animal diseases occur endemically in Africa and the Middle East,

Compliance with and maintenance of OIE international standards for trade in animals and animal products are major constraints for countries in Africa to enter successfully into the international and regional trade,

The impact of animal diseases, especially those known as trans-boundary animal diseases (TADs), remain one of the main cause of the poor performance of the livestock production sector and the growing gap between supply and demand for food of animal origin,

The importance of animal disease prevention programs, which requires a large-scale national and international investment for the sake of favorable health situation in both regions and the economic and social benefits this investment may provide,

Overall objective:

The need for World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) member countries in Africa and the Middle East to establish a common, stronger and strictly defined strategy to actively strengthen inter-regional solidarity in the field of Veterinary Services and safeguard of their national livestock and public health, to find joint solutions for promoting trade in livestock and livestock products between the two regions and other commercial partners, and to accredit quality of inter-regional trade certification on animals and animal products,

And knowing that the OIE is committed to assist developing countries to enhance the expertise and capacity of their veterinary services to improve their human and animal health situation and thus their ability to gain and maintain market access,

The main goals to be achieved are:

- The implementation of concrete measures in countries in both regions, to more effectively control animal diseases, improve and protect public health and stimulate access to regional and international markets in animal and animal products,
- Establishment of a solid cooperation between veterinary services of neighboring countries to manage TADs on a permanent basis,
- Maximum utilization of available national and development partners resources to continue on sustainable capacity building of the Veterinary Services, including private veterinarians, and thereby improve the general health of the countries, especially for TADs, in order to both alleviate poverty and promote trade in compliance with OIE standards guidelines and recommendations.

1- Work plan (how the objectives will be met):

- The OIE will provide to member countries new tools for strengthening the efficiency of Veterinary Services using appropriate new mechanisms and initiatives to overcome gaps and needs.

Better Enforcement of Standards for safe trade (BESST)

BESST is an OIE initiative aiming at:

- 1- Provide substantial, appropriate, coordinated and sustained support to strengthen the policies encompassing the capacities of the Veterinary Services in Africa and the Middle East to work towards better compliance and implementation of the OIE international standards to safeguard trade in animals and animal products;
- 2- Promote animal health control systems and convince decision-makers to increase support and investment to the activities of the national Veterinary Services in the implementation of the standards;
- 3- Support member countries to establish export systems that would conform to regionally agreed sanitary certificates to further facilitate the trade in animals and animal products
- 4- Provide a dialogue platform between trading partners of the two regions (Public and Private sector) in order to prevent SPS concerns;
- 5- Provide a better understanding of economics and data related to livestock development and trade.

The work plan will include:

- Veterinary Services should implement the relevant PVS reports recommendations, to be able to effectively improve governance, capacity and capability to control animal health issues, improve veterinary public health measures and have better access to international markets,
- Support to the efforts to standardize and harmonize the regulations for trade in livestock and livestock products in accordance with OIE standards, guidelines and recommendations, within the context of the regional needs and requirements.
- Commitment to capacity building, particularly of public and private veterinary infrastructures to contribute to the inter-regional market access for healthy animals and safe animal products,
- Activating the role and involvement of the veterinary technicians and veterinary para-professionals in animal health and the private sector in trade related initiatives for surveillance and control of animal diseases within the activities of the early warning systems and in particular when developing climate change forecast models for preventing certain diseases,
- Encouraging the development of “livestock sanitary export zones” which would help in improvement of control measures and provide better assurance for trade,
- Encouraging inter-regional investments on animal disease control and risk management that will positively impact on the reduction of transmission of exotic animal diseases via trade,
- Developing an inter-regional mechanism to support efforts for fund-raising at international donor level to finance animal health and trade capacity building projects.
- Encouraging strategic planning in order to coordinate the efforts with other projects/initiatives. BESST project should be complementary to other existing projects/initiatives. In particular, investments in the Veterinary Services should be coordinated with investments to develop the livestock sector, such as facilities for quarantine or slaughter;

Organisation and Development of BESST

- Preparation of a Business Case / (Pre-) Feasibility Study (identification of trade, needs, partners, countries, opportunities). ToR to be drafted, budget (and funding) to be confirmed, consultants to be hired, timeline to be confirmed
- Establishment of a drafting group for the preparation of a detailed project proposal
- Interim BESST Committee meetings (drafting group and stakeholders)

- Discussions with relevant regional Donors interested
- BESST Think Tank Meeting towards the validation of the fully-fledged proposal (incl. staff, proposed activities, investments and governance). ToR to be drafted, budget (and funding) to be confirmed, timeline to be confirmed
- Establishment of a BESST Steering Committee:
 - OIE country Delegates from East Africa and Middle-East, OIE RR/SRR (East Africa and Middle East), donors, IOs, stakeholders...
 - Design of milestones, plan of activities, work programme, logical framework, communication plan, website, etc.
- Dedicated recruitments (depending on funding)