

REPORT

SAARC RABIES WEBINAR DURING 18-20 MAY 2020 - A REPORT

“UPDATES AND PROGRESS IN THE SAARC REGION TOWARDS ELIMINATION OF DOG-MEDIATED HUMAN RABIES BY 2030”

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Rabies is considered to be the neglected disease of zoonotic importance. Despite being 100% preventable, the human rabies mediated through dogs can lead to thousands of human deaths annually. Needless to emphasise that more than 95% of human rabies cases are attributed to the rabies-infected dog bites. Vaccinating dogs can result in elimination of dog-mediated human rabies at source, in association with dog bite prevention, its management, improving public awareness and access to post exposure prophylaxis.

In view of this, four international organizations, viz. the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations with the support of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) had organized the International Conference on “Global elimination of dog-mediated human rabies ” in Geneva, Switzerland during 10–11 December 2015.

To keep the aforementioned global agenda of “Zero by 2030” alive and encourage countries to accelerate their activities on rabies, OIE RRAP (Regional Representation OIE for Asia and Pacific), Tokyo; FAO - RAP (Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific) Bangkok, and WHO-SEARO (South-East Asia Regional office), New Delhi have jointly organized the regional tripartite SAARC Rabies Webinar from 18-20 May 2020 to share updates, progress, tools, and success stories from the tripartite and partners and also the progress and experiences from the SAARC Member States. Globally, this three days webinar titled ““Updates and progress in the SAARC region towards elimination of dog-mediated human rabies by 2030”was attended by more than 220 participants and renewed the contacts among the participants and updated them on the current rabies related activities.

At the outset, COVID-19 would have hampered rabies control activities, but the lockdown time was better utilized for interaction on various aspects of rabies control, multi sectoral coordination and status of National Strategic Plan for Rabies Elimination considering the global call for rabies elimination by 2030. Following is the brief report of this SAARC Rabies Webinar.

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Day 1. Monday 18 May 2020**Theme: Organizing a mass dog vaccination (MDV) campaign including use of oral rabies vaccines (ORV)**

Presentation	Speaker
Introduction	Dr. Kinzang Dukpa, OIE, RRAP
Welcome remarks and outline of the webinar series	Dr. Hirofumi Kugita,,OIE Regional representative
Canine mediated human rabies elimination from an Indian state: the example of Goa	Dr. Andrew Gibson, Mission Rabies
Experiences of using oral rabies vaccines (ORV) in Thailand	Dr. Karoon Chanachai, DLD, Thailand
How to do planning /costing for annual mass dog vaccination using an Excel-based tool?	Dr. Ryan M. Wallace, CDC, Atlanta, US
What does it take to organize sustained Mass Dog Vaccination in countries – the Bangladesh experience?	Dr. Umme Ruman Siddiqui, CDC ,DGHS, Bangladesh
Discussion / Q&A	Moderator: Dr.Kinzang Dukpa, OIE RRAP

Day 2. Tuesday 19 May 2020;**Theme: Multisectoral Coordination Mechanism (MCM) in responding to rabies elimination**

Presentation	Speaker
Welcome and brief recap from Webinar 1	Dr. Gyanendra Gongal, WHO SEARO
Leading from the front, globally – the UAR initiatives	Dr. Bernadette Abela-Ridder, WHO, Geneva
Experiences from Africa including how cross-border issues are being tackled	Dr. Tenzin, Programme Officer, OIE SRR-SA, Botswana
SAARC country updates on the rabies situation, key progress and challenges since July 2019	Dr. Pasang Tshering Consultant, OIE RRAP, Tokyo
How Bhutan is using MCM to mount rapid response (s) to outbreaks/cases of rabies in animals	Dr. Karma Rinzin, CVO DOL, Bhutan
Q&A	Moderator: Dr. Gyanendra Gongal, WHO SEARO

Day 3. Wednesday 20 May 2020;**Theme: Developing a National Strategic Plan (NSP) for elimination of dog-mediated human rabies – the foundation for rabies control and elimination**

Presentation	Speaker
Welcome and brief recap from Webinar 2	Dr. Katinka de Balogh, FAO RAP
The Key Components in a national strategic Plan (NSP) for elimination of Dog-mediated Human Rabies	Dr. Gregorio Torres, OIE Paris
Experiences in using the SARE-PWARE outputs in identifying key activities for developing an NSP	Dr. Andre Coetzer, GARC
Using the outputs of PVS evaluation, JEE mission reports, IHR-PVS NBWs for rabies control and elimination.	Dr. Maud Carron, OIE Hq + Dr. Katinka de Balogh, FAO RAP
How can SAARC countries benefit from the proposed OIE Reference Laboratory on Rabies in India?	Dr. Shrikrishna Isloor, KVAFSU, Bengaluru
Experiences in developing an NSP for rabies elimination – challenges and opportunities	Dr. Ajit Shewale, NCDC, Govt. of India
Q&A including discussion on lessons learnt and way forward	Moderator: Dr. Katinka de Balogh, FAO RAP
Closing remarks	Regional tripartite

The webinar was evaluated with respect to 1) Technical information, quality update, relevance 2) Structure with respect to topics chosen, duration of presentation, Question and Answer sessions 3) Rating the probable impact on technical knowledge, professional activities, strengthening the regional / international networks, improving the services / departments / units and other logistics. The participants were issued the certificates. Overall the SAARC webinar was successful, productive and further strengthened the connectivity !