

## COMBINING DOG RABIES CONTROL PROGRAMMES WITH OTHER INTERVENTIONS TO CONTROL ANIMAL DISEASES – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Inadequate supplies of financial and personnel resources impact the delivery of human and animal health services in most developing countries. Large distances and poor road infrastructure represent further challenges, necessitating new methods to ensure comprehensive provision of health services. Joint animal and human health studies in pastoralist communities have shown that veterinarians engaged in livestock vaccination programmes achieve better coverage than human health personnel. Trials done in Chad over several years showed that combining human and animal vaccination services is feasible and conserves financial resources when compared to single sector campaigns. However, such approaches are deeply context-dependent, requiring careful insight into community socio-cultural and provider aspects. Participatory stakeholder approaches, which involve local communities, authorities and technical experts, allow for identification of local priorities for disease control in animals and humans. Tailoring interventions to the needs of the communities optimizes the use of scarce resources and may lead to unexpected collaboration across sectors of public services. Using this type of approach, rabies control would be integrated into an overall animal and human health approach not addressed using a single sector vertical operation. Rabies vaccination of dogs could be incorporated in joint human and animal vaccination campaigns for remote rural populations in Africa or be part of brucellosis mass vaccination efforts in Central Asia and Mongolia. Consequently, remote populations could be reached more efficiently, with significant reduction in intervention costs, hopefully to affordable levels. Additional contextually-adapted, community-based studies are needed to substantiate technical and economic evidence for inclusion of rabies control into other animal and public health interventions, possibly as an extension of the Blueprint for Rabies Prevention and Control ([rabiesblueprint.com](http://rabiesblueprint.com)). Remote rural communities could also contribute more effectively to wildlife rabies prevention and control.

