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EXAMPLE OF A PROJECT FOR A NETWORK BETWEEN OIE REFERENCE LABORATORIES AND NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES IN THE AMERICAS

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The quality, accuracy and reliability of the tests performed by National Reference Laboratories are essential aspects that help to guarantee the certification carried out by the Veterinary Services, as well as to support sanitary programmes, prevention and restraint of emerging diseases and the certification of the sanitary status of a country, zone or compartment and international trade.

It is obvious that although a region may have important human resources and infrastructure, not all countries of the region may have the same level of resources.

Regardless of the need to reinforce those aspects related to infrastructure and equipment, there is a constant need for training human resources.

The conclusions and recommendations of the First Global Conference on OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres, held in Florianopolis in 2006, have shown that this OIE Reference Laboratory Network should assist and support the National Reference Laboratories of the Veterinary Services.

The OIE Regional Representation for the Americas, together with certain international organisations that have an agreement with the OIE, is leading a project aimed at creating the NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES NETWORK OF THE VETERINARY SERVICES OF THE AMERICAS, with the purpose of:

- 1) Identifying the capacities and needs of the National Reference Laboratories of the Veterinary Services of the Americas (NRLVS) for terrestrial and aquatic animals, regarding animal health, zoonoses and food safety.
- 2) Suggesting mechanisms that facilitate training, both technical and scientific cooperation, availability of reagents, reference materials, expertise, etc.
- 3) Strengthening the relationships and the collaborative work with the OIE Reference Laboratory Network and the Collaborating Centres, including carrying out inter-laboratory tests.
- 4) Encouraging the development of specific twining projects with OIE Reference Laboratories.
- 5) Detecting areas within the region where diagnostic capacity is low and access to reference materials limited.
- 6) Developing an information management mechanism in the National Reference Laboratories Network of the Veterinary Services of the Americas.
- 7) Assessing the creation of National Laboratory Networks, under the coordination of the National Reference Laboratories of the Veterinary Services.



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