A blueprint for canine rabies prevention and control

Rabies, transmitted mainly by domestic dogs, continues to impose a tremendous public health burden on many developing countries, despite the availability of effective human and animal vaccines. Among many other constraints described in this issue of the Bulletin, a lack of easily accessible guidelines covering rabies control from A to Z has contributed to less-than-desirable implementation of rabies prevention and control programmes, in particular at the source: the animal. In an attempt to address this gap, rabies experts from all over the world, including OIE staff, have translated evidence-based knowledge on rabies prevention and control into user-friendly guidelines.

Practical information was obtained from various sources, including previously published guidelines by international health, animal health and animal welfare organisations, as well as scientific findings. This information has now been compiled into a new document, The Blueprint for Rabies Prevention and Control (www.rabiesblueprint.com).

The initial online publishing of this tool was facilitated by the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), Bamako. The current version of the Blueprint focuses on controlling canine rabies; a second blueprint on rabies control, with particular emphasis on rabies in wildlife, e.g. red foxes, is being developed. The Blueprint has been translated into French and will soon be available in Spanish, Russian and Portuguese. The OIE supports this initiative and will actively promote its use in countries through the OIE Delegates’ network. Please visit the webpage and inform all your colleagues about this useful tool.

The Blueprint is the result of a collective effort by a large number of authors. For this reason, it has been released under the name ‘Partners for Rabies Prevention’ (PRP) (www.rabiescontrol.net/EN/prp.html). Partners for Rabies Prevention is the technical branch of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), founded in 2006, an independent, non-profit organisation, bringing together all stakeholders – medical, veterinary, wildlife and animal welfare professionals, both in the private and public sectors – who are involved in the field of rabies. The Global Alliance is also considered to have initiated World Rabies Day, celebrated since 2007 on 28 September. The OIE and its Reference Laboratories on rabies, along with WHO and FAO, have been involved in the PRP group since its creation in 2008. This informal network provides a platform for sharing information and expertise, and exchanging and discussing current information in the field of rabies prevention and control including: global epidemiology, outbreak information, new tools and diagnostic techniques, laboratory surveillance, educational awareness and advocacy.