Laboratory Twinning - evolution from concept to functioning programme

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mandate
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THE CONCEPT
Aims and objectives - networking

• Provide better global geographical coverage of OIE expertise for priority diseases in priority areas

• To form long and lasting links between the institutes

• Strengthen global disease surveillance networks

• Strengthen national, regional, and international scientific networks

• Create collaborative research opportunities - improve sharing, and advance science
Aims and objectives - expertise

• Improve compliance with OIE standards (surveillance and control)

• Improve access to high quality diagnostics and technical assistance for more OIE Members

• For some Candidates to apply for ‘OIE reference’ status

• Help more countries enter scientific debate on an equal footing with others
The twinning project is just the start....

- Engaging with the international scientific community
- Engaging with regional and global networks
- Supporting neighbour countries
- Pursuing opportunities for joint research
- Applying for OIE Reference Laboratory status when ready
A young programme

- Concept launched at 1st OIE RL/CC Conference in Florianopolis in Dec ‘06
- OIE Resolution adopted in May ‘07
- Twinning manual published in Dec ‘07
- Inaugural project starts in Feb ’08
- First project completed Sept ‘09
- Today 3 projects complete, 30 projects underway, at least 10 others in the pipeline
Reviewing the programme

- Annual reports
- Visits and assessments
- Feedback
  - OIE Administrative Commission, Biological Standards Commission, Aquatic Animal Health Commission,
  - Workshops and questionnaires
  - Talking with experts
Changes

- Parent and Candidate ‘networks’
- Greater complementarity with other capacity building initiatives
- Funding for complementary needs not within the scope of twinning
- Guidance on multiple projects in the same laboratory/institute
- OIE Laboratory Twinning without OIE financial support
CURRENT STATUS
OIE Twinning: a valuable tool for regional development
Trevor Drew, Tony Fooks & Judy Stack
Veterinary Laboratories Agency, United Kingdom

What is “OIE Twinning”? The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Reference Laboratories (RL) and Collaborating Centres (CC) provide a global service, providing member states with expertise and diagnostic capacity to combat diseases reported to OIE. OIE aims to enhance regional representation and development by establishing new RL’s in regions of the world.

Rabies
Human rabies in China continues to be endemic, leading to poor vaccine coverage in naive dogs - 25% in rural areas. Rabies is a zoonotic disease affecting humans and animals, with fatal consequences. The World Health Organization estimated 59,000 human deaths in 2010, and over 1.4 million domestic animals are killed annually to control the disease. OIE Twinning in China is aimed at improving vaccine coverage, conducting rabies monitoring, and increasing Awareness.

Brucellosis
We are currently working closely with the Brucellosis, Veterinary Control and Research Institute (PCBR), in Kenya on brucellosis. Brucellosis is one of the most important bovine zoonoses worldwide, causing abortion and infertility in livestock. It is endemic in Turkey, where it causes important economic, veterinary and public health consequences. The Twinning project includes the following topics to enhance the diagnostic capacity of PCBR:
- Preparation of National & Laboratory Standardised Tests
- Identification of diagnostic tests
- Application of molecular techniques to obtain more data on epidemiological situations
- Antigen production and characterization
- Exchange of material and samples to ensure harmonisation

Future Activities
Twinning with the Brucellosis group at the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory, Las Tablas, and the recently established Brucellosis Reference Laboratory in South Africa. The Twinning project includes the following topics to enhance the diagnostic capacity of PCBR:
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Future Twinning Projects
- Anti-microbial resistance
- Veterinary vaccine development
- Veterinary diagnostic services
- Veterinary training

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