

1st Asia Rabies Control Network (ARACON) Meeting 13-14 March 2018; Bangkok, Thailand

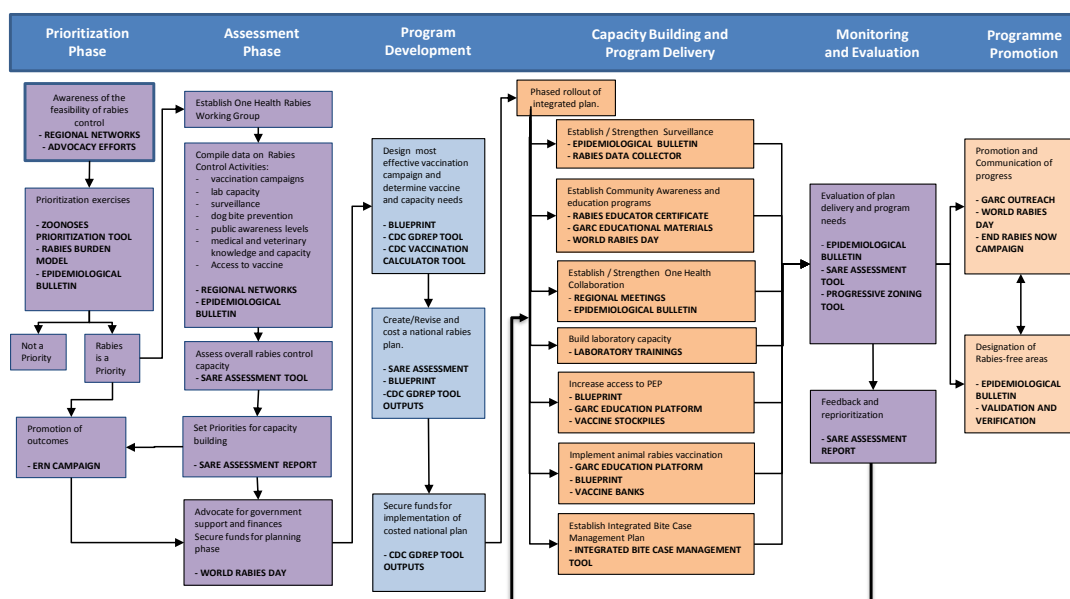
Concept Note

The global rabies conference coordinated by the WHO, OIE, FAO and GARC in December 2015 convened international organizations together with many different rabies experts and country representatives to review the tools and frameworks available for elimination. Together they set a goal to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies by 2030.

At the country level, operationalizing national rabies elimination strategy remains a challenge with competing priorities and limited resources, but opportunities for support exist. In response to this challenge, the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the tripartite (WHO, OIE, FAO) created a set of tools that focus on the prevention and elimination of dog-transmitted human rabies.

These tools have recently been developed to support countries towards the elimination of rabies and enhance the following: strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation (Stepwise Approach for Rabies Elimination/SARE); data collection, analysis and sharing (Rabies Epidemiological Bulletin); and capacity building (GARC Education Platform). The tools offer a structured pathway to developing and delivering rabies control programs.

Country pathway towards rabies elimination



In order to make significant progress towards regionally set goals, capacity building through rabies-specific networks have been shown to be extremely valuable such as the Pan-African Rabies Control Network (PARACON) that has been developing since 2015 and comprises of 38 sub-Saharan countries. The PARACON Network countries not only benefit from a shared understanding derived from using the same set of tools and the development of similar strategies but have formed collaborations with the neighbors to tackle the transboundary disease from a regional perspective.

A similar regional network that encompasses all rabies highly endemic countries in Asia (mostly South Asia and South East Asia) is proposed with the following objectives. Meetings will be highly interactive, allowing representatives to really understand the tools that are available to support their efforts.

Key Objectives

- a) To develop an Asian Rabies Epidemiological Bulletin which can be utilized by countries to support their rabies monitoring and reporting to international organizations.
- b) To encourage countries to use the SARE tool to assess their progress towards elimination and to create a more streamlined prioritized plan forward.
- c) To make countries aware of the different online educational courses that can be used to support in-country capacity building.
- d) To make countries aware of costing and budgeting tools.
- e) Establishment of a One Health regional network to allow countries to work together to develop a shared understanding and approaches to rabies control.

Intended Country Participants (15)

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Bangladesh | 11. Philippines |
| 2. Bhutan | 12. Sri Lanka |
| 3. Cambodia | 13. Thailand |
| 4. China | 14. Vietnam |
| 5. India | 15. Malaysia |
| 6. Indonesia | |
| 7. Lao People's
Democratic
Republic | |
| 8. Myanmar | |
| 9. Nepal | |
| 10. Pakistan | |

Countries selected from all rabies endemic countries in Asia, excluding those in other rabies network regions. Representatives from both human and animal health will be invited from each country to strengthen intersectoral collaboration.

The workshop will present and work through the following tools. In addition it will present GARC's Education platform which includes the REC, AVC, CCC and RHC certificates.

Planning, Surveillance, Costing, Diagnosis and Education Tools

Tool	Function
The Stepwise Approach towards Rabies Elimination (SARE) The Stepwise Approach towards Rabies Elimination (SARE) was developed as a template for countries to evaluate current rabies control activities.	The tool helps measure progress of national programs and strategies for sustainable rabies prevention, control, and eventually elimination. The tool focuses on the prevention of dog-transmitted human rabies, and follows the principles of enhancing intersectoral collaboration with the goal of sustained rabies risk reduction over time. SARE is not prescriptive nor is it intended to replace existing regional or national rabies control strategies. The tool serves as a self-assessment and a practical guide in developing or enhancing a national rabies program, which can be implemented in progressive stages.
Rabies Epidemiological Bulletin The Rabies Epidemiological Bulletin is an integrated system designed for rabies data collection, collation, analysis, and dissemination.	The bulletin uses the DHIS2 health management information system already in use in 60 countries and has been customized for rabies specific parameters. It is widely accepted that data is key to any disease intervention strategy and rabies is no different. Accurate and timely data is essential for success in multiple stages throughout a country's path towards elimination. Furthermore, accurate data is essential at the start of rabies control initiatives to obtain stakeholder buy-in and to document success of programs as successful interventions approach canine rabies elimination.

<p>The Rabies Data Collector (RDC)</p> <p>Portable data-logging device</p>	<p>The RDC is a unique multipurpose, custom developed, lightweight and portable data-logging device. The RDC was primarily designed for used in the field by rabies vaccinators to record data relevant to each vaccination event. However, the RDC can also be used in clinics to record any bite instances and suspect cases as well as in communities to record relevant information relating to dog populations and rabies incidences. The data of each event includes information such as time- and- date, GPS coordinates, type and gender of animal. The data generated by the RDC can be uploaded to the Rabies Epidemiological Bulletin.</p>
<p>Global Dog Rabies Elimination Pathway (GDREP)</p> <p>Macro-budgeting tool</p>	<p>The GDREP is a macro-budgeting tool that estimates the cost of building and sustaining a long-term vaccination program at the national level. Drawing from multiple datasets, including national dog vaccination campaigns, rabies literature, and expert opinion, CDC developed a tool to estimate the years and resources required to achieve dog rabies elimination over a 13 year timeframe (i.e. by 2030). Countries input country-specific parameters (i.e. human and dog population, vaccination coverage, and vaccinator workforce) and the tool will provide an estimated time to elimination, number of vaccination personnel needed, and overall cost to eliminate rabies. The GDREP is intended for high-level stakeholders and policy makers at the national or regional level. It highlights the monetary commitment required for rabies elimination by 2030, and can be used to begin discussions about securing long-term funding for rabies elimination activities.</p>
<p>The Rabies Educator Certificate (REC)</p>	<p>The REC course is the basic starting point for rabies awareness and education. This course teaches participants about rabies, its cause, and its prevention. Also covered are principles of responsible animal care, with emphasis on dogs. Most importantly, the participants learn about effective ways to communicate this life-saving information to people in their communities.</p>
<p>After completion of the REC, three different training avenues may be explored:</p> <p>A: Animal Handling and Vaccination Certificate</p>	<p>This training course builds on the REC and teaches proper treatment and handling of dogs in general and during vaccination campaigns specifically. The course promotes responsible pet ownership and dog population management. Due to the fundamental role that dogs play as a reservoir for rabies, the regular vaccination of dogs against the disease is extremely important. Good animal handling, and the proper administration of vaccine, are essential techniques that must be learned</p>

(AVC):	by all people actively involved in dog handling and vaccination to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the handler and animal alike. As such, the AVC course can either act as a refresher course to update certified professionals about the latest information and techniques in humane animal handling or it can serve as an introductory course where appropriate
B. Community Coordinator for Rabies Certificate (CCC):	The CCC course builds on the REC and is directed at individuals serving the community in an official capacity in either the veterinary or public health sector. Such individuals could include community health workers, animal health technicians, municipal workers, religious leaders, teachers, security personnel, police, and welfare workers. The CCC provides graduates with step-by-step guidelines to managing various common situations within a community setting, including a bite incident, a suspect animal in the community, and PEP follow-up. This training adds to the REC by providing an additional layer of proficiency and encourages informed and active participation in vaccination campaigns.
C. Rabies Healthcare Certificate (RHC):	The RHC builds on the REC and is a profession-specific course developed to teach or refresh professionals working in the human healthcare sector. The course focuses on the correct administration of rabies biologics, the clinical diagnosis of suspect human rabies cases, the consideration of rabies as a differential diagnosis for neurological symptoms, the procedure for the correct submission of suspect rabies samples for diagnosis, and rabies risk assessments after bite incidents. The course is currently being updated to incorporate the latest WHO guidelines, which will be updated in October 2017.