

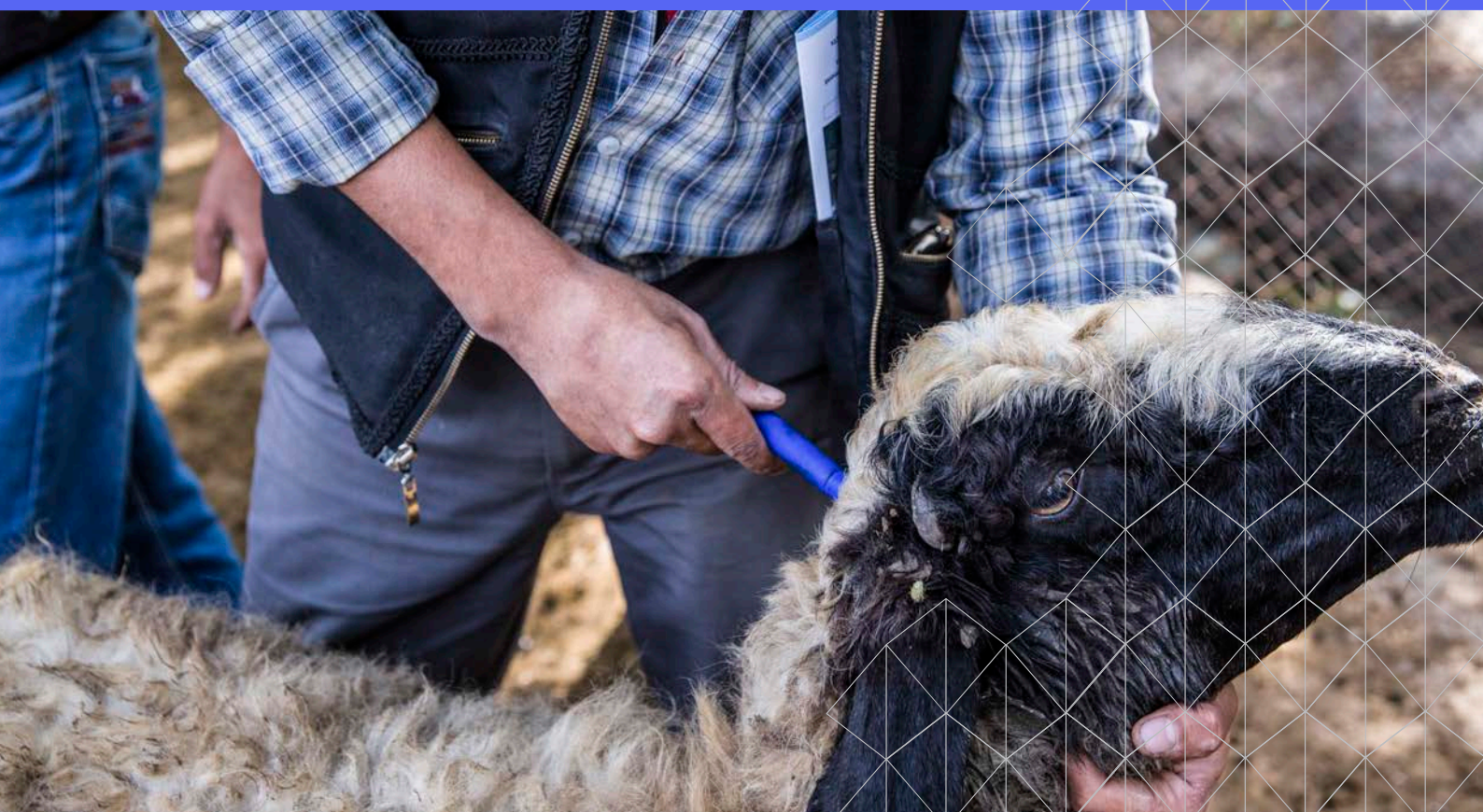


Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

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WORLD ORGANISATION
FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

3rd Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks Meeting for West Eurasia

Report of the virtual meeting
17–18 August 2021



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Acronyms

ANSES	Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail	Members	Member Countries and Territories or Member States
ARRIAH	Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance	MoU	Memorandum of understanding
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer	OCP	Official control programme
EPINET	West Eurasian Epidemiology Network	OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
EuFMD	European Commission for the Control of Foot-And-Mouth Disease	OIE RR	OIE Regional Representation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	OIE SRR	OIE Sub-Regional Representation
FAO REU	FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia	PCP-FMD	Progressive Control Pathway for Foot and Mouth Disease Control
FAST	FMD and similar transboundary animal diseases	PSO	PCP-FMD Support Officer
FMD	Foot and mouth disease	PTS	Proficiency testing schemes
FMDV	Foot and mouth disease virus	RAG	Regional Advisory Group
FMD-WG	GF-TADs FMD Working Group	RRL	FAO Regional Leading Laboratory
GF-TADs	Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases	SAT	PCP-FMD self-assessment tool
		WELNET	West Eurasian Laboratory Network
		WRLFMD	World Reference Laboratory for Foot-and-Mouth Disease (The Pirbright Institute)

Report of the meeting

BACKGROUND

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is one of the most important transboundary animal diseases (TADs) globally, affecting the productivity of livestock and disrupting regional and international trade in animals and animal products. The FMD animal health status in the West Eurasian region is as follows:

- Kazakhstan and Turkish Thrace: free country/zone status;
- Kyrgyzstan: an OIE-endorsed official control programme (OCP) for FMD; Pakistan, Iran, Turkish Anatolia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan: in Stage 2 of the Progressive Control Pathway for Foot and Mouth Disease (PCP-FMD);
- Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan: in Stage 1 of PCP-FMD.¹

As one of their contributions to the global fight against FMD, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) developed a 15-year [Global FMD Control Strategy](#) in 2012. Under the strategy, several initiatives were identified to establish an enabling environment to make FMD control a feasible option. Among these initiatives are the strengthening of Veterinary Services in order to enable better control of priority animal diseases like FMD, and to encourage countries to progressively control FMD using PCP-FMD methodology.

It is against this background that the FMD Working Group (FMD-WG), under the umbrella of the FAO/OIE Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases ([GF-TADs](#)), and with technical support from the European Commission for the control of FMD ([EuFMD](#)), initiated a meeting for epidemiology and laboratory experts (Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks meeting) in the West Eurasian region in August 2021.

The last FMD Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks meeting for the West Eurasian region was held in 2017; given the standard two-year interval between meetings, the next meeting should have taken place in 2019, but was postponed to 2020 due to an overlap with the 8th West Eurasia FMD Roadmap Meeting for the same region.²

However, this postponed meeting could also not be held due to the COVID-19 pandemic and, due to the continuing global travel restrictions, the meeting was held virtually, via Zoom, on 17–18 August 2021.

The participants were Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) and their nominated National Laboratory and Epidemiology Focal Points (or points of contact) involved in FMD control, from the following countries: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In addition, the FMD Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for West Eurasia, as well as FAO Regional and National Representatives, OIE Regional and Sub-Regional Representatives, and representatives from regional bodies and from the OIE/FAO Reference Laboratory Network for FMD were invited.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the 3rd Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks Meeting for West Eurasia were as follows.

- 1) Share information on the current FMD situation in the region and identify challenges.
- 2) Strengthen the engagement of the regional Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks in capacity-building programmes (needed to support the implementation of the FMD control strategies in the region).
- 3) Update membership on the Epidemiology and Laboratory Network leaders and on regional leading laboratories.
- 4) Develop biennial regional Epidemiology and Laboratory Network work plans for 2021–2023.
- 5) Set the methodology behind linking laboratory and epidemiology networks to ensure continuous support for the national and regional objectives for FMD control.
- 6) Provide an overview of the FMD vaccines and diagnostics used in the region, and, where relevant, globally.
- 7) Introduce the PCP-FMD self-assessment tool (SAT) for monitoring progress and assessing national capacity on implementation of the FMD control strategy.

¹ An updated health status map is available at: www.gf-tads.org/fmd/progress-on-fmd-control-strategy/en/ (accessed on 23 February 2022).

² The report of the meeting is available at: www.gf-tads.org/events/events-detail/en/c/1151911/ (accessed on 23 February 2022).

OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

- 1) The Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks would be strengthened and coordinated within a specific timeframe to enable the implementation of their work plans.
- 2) A two-year work plan for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks would be developed.
- 3) Countries would share information on the FMD viruses currently circulating and the appropriate vaccines for prevention and control.
- 4) Diagnostics would be identified on countries capacity-building and training needs on FMD surveillance.
- 5) Countries would gain an understanding of the principles of the SAT.

WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Dr M. Taitubayev, OIE Sub-Regional Representative for Central Asia, on behalf of the OIE Director General and the OIE Regional Representative in Moscow, welcomed the participants to this two-day virtual meeting, and started by summarising the context of the meeting and specific objectives and expected outcomes of the event acknowledging the absence of representatives of Afghanistan due to the political situation in the country at that time.

Dr E. Raizman, Senior Animal Health and Production Officer of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (FAO REU), stated that the livestock sector in West Eurasia continues to develop but needs protection against many threats, particularly against TADs, FMD being one of the major ones because of its known impact on smallholders' livelihoods and trade. He reminded the participants that FMD control is a long process, and recognised the importance of the GF-TADs platform and regional meetings as a way of coordinating efforts at the regional level to combat FMD.

Dr N. Mapitse, OIE co-Chair of the FMD-WG, introduced FMD-WG members, and discussed the meeting's objectives and agenda. He mentioned that the agenda had been influenced by the conclusions and achievements of the 8th West Eurasia Roadmap Meeting for FMD-PCP held in Shiraz, Iran, in 2019,³ and encouraged the two networks to continue their efforts.

The chairperson of the West Eurasian Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for FMD, OIE Delegate for Kazakhstan, Dr G. Nurtazina, submitted the agenda to the meeting participants for consideration and adoption.

³ The report on this meeting is available here: www.gf-tads.org/events/events-detail/en/c/1151911/ (accessed on 23 February 2022).

Session 1

Setting the stage for the networks

ROLES OF THE REGIONAL LEADING LABORATORY, EPINET AND WELNET LEADERS

[M. Dhingra, FAO, FMD-WG]

Dr M. Dhingra, FAO member of the FMD-WG, started by summarising the foundations of the Global FMD Control Strategy (Global Strategy), developed by FAO and the OIE and endorsed in 2012 by representatives of more than 100 countries, and international and regional partners. The Global Strategy aims to reduce the global burden of FMD and the risk of re-introduction of the disease into free areas.

The FMD Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs) were established for each FMD roadmap region so that the regions could work in close collaboration with the FMD-WG towards the implementation of the Global Strategy. They are particularly important in PCP-FMD, being the key bodies in the acceptance process for countries progressing through PCP-FMD Stages 1 to 3. RAGs provide advice on issues or factors preventing effective progress of the FMD

roadmap in their regions and assist in resolving problems and issues related to the implementation of regional activities and national strategies for the progressive control of FMD.

RAGs consist of five voting members which are nominated by the Members of the region for a period of three years and can be re-nominated. Dr Dhingra reminded the meeting that the RAG for West Eurasia is currently composed of the CVO from Kazakhstan (chairperson), the CVOs of Azerbaijan and Iran, and leaders of the Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks (EPINET and WELNET, respectively), and that elections would take place during the meeting for the latter two positions

Dr Dhingra subsequently went through the generic objectives and functions of the two networks, and emphasised the leaders terms of references (ToRs), as summarised in the table below, in anticipation of the elections.

TABLE 1: Terms of references for WELNET and EPINET leaders

WELNET leader ToR	EPINET leader ToR
Organise laboratory network meetings and facilitate the implementation of the agreed work plan.	Organise and lead the epidemiological network meetings and facilitate the implementation of the agreed work plan.
Lead the formulation of a memorandum of understanding to meet the network objectives.	Lead the formulation of a memorandum of understanding to meet the network objectives.
Assist in the evaluation of capacity/capabilities and performance of the national laboratories within the region.	Analyse the information provided by the region to look for trends and formulate a hypothesis to better address challenges within the region.
Offer expertise to the region on diagnostics to assist in the control of FMD.	Share information in real-time with the points of contact on the FMD situation in the region (early warning), including data on virus circulation, vaccine selection, vaccination strategies, and vaccination monitoring.
Provide recommendations on vaccine strain selection for implementation of control plans.	Provide recommendations to the region on FMD surveillance and epidemiology to assist in the control of FMD.
Share information in real-time with the points of contact on the incursion of new virus strains in the region (early warning).	Support training based upon the recommendations provided by the network.
Facilitate training and workshops on diagnostics per the agreed work plan.	Prepare and provide an annual epidemiological network report to the FMD-WG.
Assist in the submission of diagnostic samples for virus characterisation and vaccine matching.	
Provide standard operating procedures and protocols to harmonise laboratory results.	
Coordinate and prepare proficiency testing schemes for the region.	
Participate in the annual OIE/FAO FMD Reference Laboratory Network.	

Finally, Dr Dhingra noted that FAO has been working on the establishment and support of the Regional Leading Laboratories (RRLs), whose roles and responsibilities were defined in 2012. The ToRs of the RRLs include communication with the national veterinary laboratories in the region, provision of assistance in the development of technical reference documents such as laboratory manuals, standard operating procedures (SOPs), etc. Also, RRLs have to provide training, diagnostic services and advocate national laboratories to submit samples to the OIE/FAO Reference Laboratories. Coordination in organising proficiency testing schemes (PTS) and assistance in regional procurement of essential diagnostics, participation in regional laboratory networks and linking with the regional epidemiology network are other tasks for RRLs. Any national laboratory could be an RRL, if the following selection criteria are fulfilled:

- a) the creditability of the RRLs and their acceptance by Members in the region are of paramount importance;
- b) commitment of respective governments would be required to support RRLs in strengthening and sustaining their own capacities to fulfil the ToRs;
- c) laboratories should have the capacity and capability to perform diagnostics for TADs and should be able to handle exotic viruses received from other countries;
- d) laboratories should have the required certification to ship and receive diagnostic samples, willingness to take part in the OIE twinning programme and have the intention of becoming an OIE/FAO Reference Laboratory;
- e) regular and successful participation in PTS carried out by the OIE/FAO Reference Laboratory is also a prerequisite for the national laboratories to be selected as RRLs.

UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WELNET WORK PLAN FROM THE 8TH WEST EURASIA FMD ROADMAP MEETING OF THE GF-TADS

[A. Bulut, ŞAP Institute, Turkey]

Dr A. Bulut, virologist from the ŞAP Institute in Turkey and WELNET leader since the establishment of this network in 2009, introduced WELNET's activities over the past two years and shared reflections on the update of the work plan for 2021–2023. WELNET is composed of 14 countries (12 Members from West Eurasia, plus Iraq and Syria which are observer countries of the West Eurasia FMD Roadmap). Initial objectives were to promote better communication; improve early detection, diagnostic capacity and performance of laboratories; and also to implement a system for PTS. Dr Bulut reviewed the ToR and objectives of the regional network, and then listed the achievements of WELNET in 2019–2021 as follows:

- Participation in annual PTS was only partially completed, as some laboratories could not participate in the PTS organised either by World Reference Laboratory for Foot-and-Mouth Disease, The Pirbright Institute (WRLFMD) or Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (ANSES) because of logistical issues or COVID-19 related issues (budget shortfall, changes to International Air Transport Association rules).
- Assessment of the capacity/capability and performance of the national veterinary diagnostic laboratories, recommended during the 1st Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks Meeting (Georgia, 2017) to identify training needs of each member laboratory, was conducted by ANSES in 2020 under the EuFMD work programme (Pillar II). Results are available for nine laboratories in seven Members of WELNET and will be shared by ANSES.
- Training on FMD diagnostics, increasing the laboratory diagnostic capacity was not implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic (inability to hold face-to-face training). However, WELNET members attended the virtual course delivered by WRLFMD and EuFMD (FMD Laboratory Investigation Training Course, FLITC) and assessment results will soon be shared.
- The establishment of an early detection system was partially achieved through the following activities:
 - development of a protocol for sample submission and transportation by the ŞAP Institute and EuFMD;
 - an FMD epithelium sample was submitted by the Iran Veterinary Organization to the ŞAP Institute;

- initiation of a live animal and meat price survey (results will be shared by EPINET);
- tripartite meetings (Iran, Turkey, Pakistan) have been initiated under the coordination of EuFMD;
- an information and data-sharing platform was established within the Southeast Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood (Statement of Intention [SOI] activities) with the financial and technical support of EuFMD;
- participation in the FAO/OIE Reference Laboratory network annual meeting and the European Commission laboratory network annual meeting.
- The following webinars and evaluation meetings were conducted: FMD Investigation Training online course in Turkish and Russian, management meetings for the SOI platform.
- The establishment of a network for molecular epidemiology data-sharing in West Eurasian laboratories (endemic countries) was not achieved, however steps have been taken towards this with the ŞAP Institute sharing sequences with WRLFMD.

The following gaps were identified:

- WELNET structure: although the network visions, objectives and ToR have been formalised, there is still a lack of a specific/dedicated funding to ensure the sustainability of the network. In addition, the list of network members and points of contact is still not available. There is a need for strong political commitment and engagement by Members so that WELNET activities can be supported, and efficient

coordination and collaboration mechanisms can be developed.

- Despite significant progress in the set-up of diagnostic methods, there is still a gap and heterogeneity in the FMD laboratory testing used routinely (see the assessment by ANSES) and conducting missions to collect appropriate samples.
- Despite strong international support (particularly from the EuFMD in the Southeast Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood), support from other international organisations, and to the whole WELNET region, should be sought.
- The COVID-19 pandemic impacted activities particularly face-to-face meetings, workshops, research studies and laboratory training, and delayed FMD sample submission and reagent supply. It is important to note that successful meetings were held using virtual solutions, but a loss of motivation from participants was observed.

Dr Bulut concluded with suggestions for the work plan for 2021–2023 and prioritised activities as follows:

- continue participation in PTS;
- provide laboratory-based training on diagnostic methods;
- continue activities towards an early detection system;
- continue webinars and evaluation meetings;
- establish a network for FMDV molecular; epidemiology data in West Eurasia;
- support validated NSP sero-surveillance in vaccinated livestock populations.

UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EPINET WORK PLAN FROM THE 8TH WEST EURASIA FMD ROADMAP MEETING OF THE GF-TADS

[T. Chaligava, National Food Agency Georgia and J. Aliyev, Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency, Azerbaijan]

Dr T. Chaligava presented the current structure of EPINET and its generic objectives. He then listed the activities implemented by the network in the past two years as follows:

- sharing of updates on the FMD situation: outbreak notifications are immediately entered into the SOI database for the countries of the Southeast Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood (Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq);
- FMD vaccines and vaccination: information is entered into the SOI database;

- live animal prices across borders (considered as a proxy for informal or illegal cross-border animal fluxes) is reported quarterly to the EuFMD;
- sharing of guidelines, SOPs and national control plans: annual elaboration and updating of guidelines, SOPs and study design;
- implementation of GIS/risk-mapping integrating animal mobility (international and national) data, animal markets location and characterisation, mapping of pasture areas in the framework of a collaboration between French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the EuFMD to create national risk maps of FMD and similar TADs (FAST) introduction and spread, with the ultimate aim to optimise the resources allocated for FAST control and surveillance;

- assistance in serological (structural protein [SP], non-structural protein [NSP], immunogenicity studies) survey design and analysis, assessment of FMD control measures.

The following gaps were identified:

- busy professional schedule (routine tasks) of EPINET leader and co-leaders;
- lack of face-to-face meetings;
- decreased interest from Members in active collaboration;
- decrease in use of needed systems (ArcGIS, QGIS, GPS, SOI-Data base);
- lack of informative data from Members;
- relative inactivity of colleagues from EPINET Members (financial incentives should be considered);

- The impact of COVID-19 on EPINET activities.

Opportunities were identified (see below) and discussed during the break-out group discussions (Session 4). It was suggested that:

- countries seek internationally funded projects;
- EPINET conduct a survey to identify the reasons for the decreased interest of Members in being active under EPINET;
- EPINET identify donors who will fund activities under the platform;
- EPINET encourage face-to-face meetings where possible;
- EPINET identify work-plan activities which will be beneficial for all countries.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL FMD UPDATE

[D. King, WRLFMD, The Pirbright Institute]

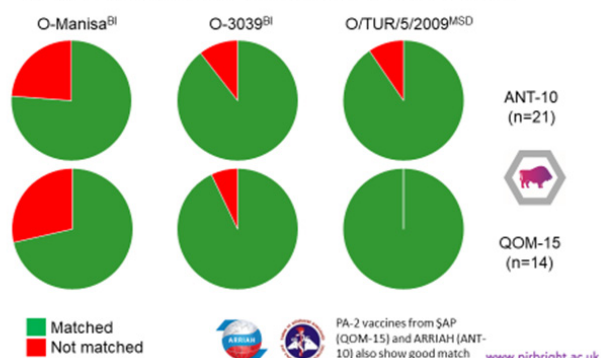
On behalf of the OIE/FAO Reference Laboratory Network for FMD (<https://foot-and-mouth.org/>), Dr D. King from the WRLFMD presented a brief overview of the FMD situation in West Eurasia. The talk highlighted the distribution of endemic FMDV lineages, including O/ME-SA/PanAsia-2, A/ASIA/Iran-05 and serotype Asia 1. The region has also recently experienced the introduction of two exotic FMD virus lineages from Pool 2 comprising A/ASIA/G-VII (in 2015) and O/ME-SA/Ind-2001e, which was first identified in two samples collected in July 2019. Subsequent field sampling has revealed further FMD cases due to the O/ME-SA/Ind-2001e lineage in ten districts within two separate provinces in North-Eastern and North-Western Pakistan (Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The emergence of O/ME-SA/Ind-2001 in Pakistan expands the geographical range of this pandemic lineage and provides opportunities for onward spread in the region via established transboundary transmission pathways. These dynamic events underline the importance of continued field sampling of FMD outbreaks to characterise the FMD virus strains that are circulating in the region, where confirmatory testing of samples by OIE and FAO Reference Laboratories is performed free-of-charge.

Dr King also summarised vaccine matching data (see Figure 1) that has been generated at the Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (ARRIAH) (Russia), the ŞAP Institute (Turkey) and WRLFMD (UK), where a range of serotype O vaccines show good antigenic match against field isolates from the ANT-10 and QOM-15 sub-lineages of O/ME-SA/PanAsia-2. Encouraging antigenic data is also available for representative O/ME-SA/Ind-2001e isolates collected from countries where outbreaks due to this lineage have occurred since 2017. In contrast, vaccine matching data from WRLFMD for the FAR-11 and SIS-13 sub-lineages of A/ASIA/Iran-05 includes a greater proportion of field isolates that are not well-matched against the vaccines from Boehringer Ingelheim and MSD. Results reported for serotype A vaccines produced by ARRIAH show that only the A22 and A/TUR/06 vaccines were matched against field isolates collected in Pakistan (in 2018), while data presented at this meeting by the ŞAP Institute also revealed a poor match for locally produced serotype A vaccines against recent FAR-11 isolates collected in Iran. Taken together, these results reinforce the importance of ensuring that good quality vaccines are used with a booster regime (where this is recommended) with good coverage in target host populations. There are a diverse range of FMD vaccines and vaccine strains used in the region (including those from international suppliers and local sources), and the use of harmonised regional reference FMDV antigens provides an approach that could be adopted to allow heterologous post-vaccination responses to be measured and compared.

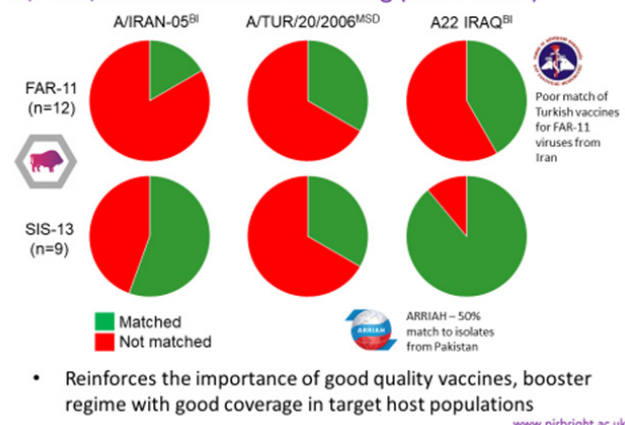
FIGURE 1: Summary of FMD vaccine-matching data generated at ARRIAH (Russia), the ŞAP Institute (Turkey) and WRLFMD (UK)

O/ME-SA/PanAsia-2 : vaccine matching (2014-2021)

- Quick and cost-effective laboratory assessment of the antigenic relationship between **field** and **vaccine** viruses

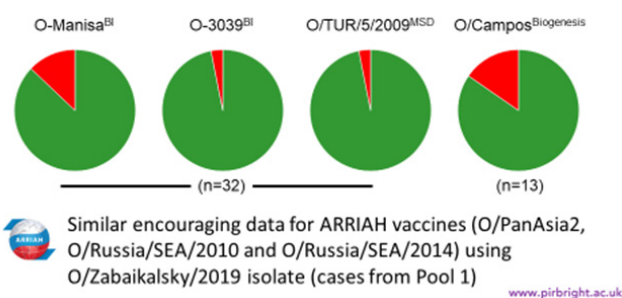


A/ASIA/Iran-05: vaccine matching (2014-2021)



O/ME-SA/Ind-2001e: vaccine matching (2017-2021)

- Vaccine matching data from other regions where this lineage is present
- WRLFMD data now includes O-Campos (from Biogenesis Bago)



LABORATORY CAPACITY SURVEY REPORT IN THE SOUTHEAST EUROPE AND EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

[L. Bakkali-Kassimi, ANSES]

National reference laboratories play an important role in the control of FMD. They conduct analyses to support national control strategies at different levels. They should provide quick, reliable and accurate results to decision-makers. It is therefore essential that laboratories have good diagnostic capacity.

As part of the EuFMD work plan (2019–2023) - Risk Reduction Programme (Pillar II) - to support WELNET, the EuFMD initiated a survey on the different capacities and expertise of laboratories in the Southeast Europe and Eastern Neighbourhood region. The survey was conducted by ANSES in June 2020 for nine laboratories through a questionnaire partly inspired by the FAO

laboratory mapping tool ([information](#) and [publication](#)). Nine laboratories from seven countries namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey (three laboratories), participated to the study. The main purpose of this study was to provide an overview of the laboratories' main strengths and weaknesses regarding the detection of FMD and other similar TADs (FAST, including peste des petits ruminants, sheep and goat pox, Rift Valley fever, ephemeral bovine fever and lumpy skin disease).

The results of this study showed that staff skills vary between countries for the virology, serology and molecular biology competencies. Training on virus isolation and serology was expressed specifically for some countries but was less important than the need for training in molecular biology (PCR, RT-PCR) and sequencing, with a strong interest expressed in data analysis by some of the participants. The need for the implementation of serological tests specific to some of the

FAST diseases was strongly expressed, especially for sheep and goat pox, Rift Valley fever, ephemeral bovine fever and lumpy skin disease. Staff skills in quality assurance, quality control, maintenance and laboratory management also vary from country to country. A third of the participants asked for training in quality assurance and control, and in laboratory management. Harmonisation of practices at the regional level would improve the standards and allow the implementation of a coherent quality system throughout the region, improving the confidence of the diagnostic results provided by the laboratories. Some Members pointed out the need for training in biosafety/biosecurity regarding the shipping of infectious substances. Biosafety/biosecurity in the laboratory training could allow for the

proper handling of FAST threats. Furthermore, awareness on the waste management modalities should be improved as few Members have an incineration system for biological waste and/or a procedure for the proper disposal of chemical waste.

In conclusion, the identification of needs for improvement provided by this study will allow the establishment of a targeted training action plan to improve laboratory diagnostic capacity for FAST in the region. The survey and the follow-up actions might be an example to consider for other countries in the region. The questionnaire is available and could be provided by ANSES to laboratories upon request (contact: Head FMD Reference Laboratory, ANSES).

IDENTIFYING REGIONAL NEEDS/ PRIORITIES FOR BOTH EPIDEMIOLOGY AND LABORATORY NETWORKS, AND PREPARATION FOR THE BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

[F. Rosso, Deputy Executive Secretary EuFMD, FMD-WG]

Dr F. Rosso started by reviewing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified for the PCP-FMD approach in West Eurasia during the 2019 FMD meeting in Shiraz, and the recommendations formulated for the two regional networks (facilitate sharing of best practices and operational procedures; calibrate laboratory assays used to assess heterologous antibody responses – harmonise post-vaccination monitoring studies; and encourage the sharing of information on outbreaks, disease control measures and risk hotspots), for the region, for the countries, and finally for international organisations and reference laboratories. The speaker emphasised that this information should be considered while discussing successes and challenges of EPINET and WELNET, and developing the work plan for the next biennium.

The common issues or support requested by both networks in 2019 was as follows:

- lack of communication between network members;
- support for mapping of the migration routes of animals;
- support for sample shipment to reference laboratories;
- lack of laboratory information management systems;
- lack of a national reference laboratory (NRL) in some countries.

While defining the work plan for 2021–2023 (Session 3), the speaker encouraged EPINET and WELNET members to reflect on:

- identifying priorities (**priority objectives** taking into account how they would contribute to the control of FMD in the region);
- **achieving** these objectives (through the identification of mechanisms and tools that can assist and support the networks in achieving the objectives);
- pinpointing the **main actors** to involve to ensure the objectives are achieved;
- indicating the **risks** that can affect the work plan and its expected achievements and how these risks can be mitigated.

Session 2

Election of EPINET and WELNET leaders

The session was chaired by Dr D. Abdollahi, elections occurred in the plenary session. Results of the elections for WELNET and EPINET leaders (2021–2023) were as follows: **Dr Bulut (Turkey)** was re-elected as **Leader of WELNET** and Dr S. Kharatyan (Armenia) was elected as **Leader of EPINET**.

Session 3

Update of the EPINET and WELNET work plans for 2021–2023

The members of WELNET and EPINET were placed in parallel break-out rooms, and discussions were held on the update of the respective work plans for 2021–2023 and based on the suggestions formulated by the former networks' leaders (Session 1). Composition of the two groups can be retrieved in **Annex 2**.

A summary of the discussions was introduced by the newly elected networks' leaders in Session 5.

Session 4

Technical presentations

This session was chaired by Mr J. Perchet, OIE Regional Representation in Moscow.

OVERVIEW OF THE PCP-FMD SUPPORT OFFICER (PSO) SYSTEM

[C. Potzsch and E. Chevanne, EuFMD]

Dr C. Potzsch and Dr E. Chevanne provided background information on the PSO system, reflections on the system since its implementation in 2017/2018 and perspectives on PSO support in West Eurasia.

The FMD-WG established the PSO system to provide tailored support to countries' Veterinary Authorities for developing and monitoring the impact of FMD control strategies. Initially aimed at countries assessed in PCP-FMD provisional stages, the scope of the PSO system expanded to support countries requesting individual support or accepting an offer of support from the FMD-WG. The PSOs assist the assigned country/countries in advancing in PCP-FMD stages 1, 2 and 3. To be specific, PSOs:

- a) Establish a regular and consistent dialogue and communication with the Veterinary Authorities of the assigned country/countries, including the FMD designated points of contact to:
 - i) provide tailored guidance to support and guide the Veterinary Authority to complete the PCP-FMD Stage, and/or to develop and improve a plan/programme to progress along the PCP-FMD and during the acceptance process;
 - ii) ensure that the relevant plan/programme is technically and formally consistent with the latest guidelines and templates provided by the FMD-WG, and that the feasibility of the plan/programme implementation is also clearly described, including the resource mobilisation and allocation processes.
- b) Assist the assigned country/countries in assessing its/their progress within the PCP-FMD through the interpretation of the SAT and FAO and OIE evaluation tools outputs.
- c) Act as liaison between the assigned country/countries, the PSO network, the EuFMD team and the FMD-WG.

- d) Assist the assigned country/countries in identifying training needs, accessing relevant training material or liaising with relevant experts, the EuFMD team and the FMD-WG.
- e) Report his/her activities and the country's progress along the PCP-FMD to the PSO network.
- f) Advocate for the regional uptake of principles of the PCP-FMD and the PSO system when participating in FMD Regional Roadmap meetings, PCP-FMD related training courses, webinars, workshops and missions upon request.

Based upon a PSO's commitment and performance, the FMD-WG may assign additional countries to their remit or may involve the PSO as an independent reviewer of PCP-FMD strategic documents (as part of the PCP-FMD Review Support Team). Terms of reference of a PSO along with the required qualification and experience were also discussed.

To date, 13 PSOs have been assigned by the FMD-WG to 29 countries but there is a need to further expand the PSO roster. To address this issue, a three-tier PSO training development framework was created by the EuFMD (on its virtual learning website) and it is currently being piloted for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region with experts coming from OIE/FAO Reference Laboratories. In this training development framework, PSO candidates would undertake different tasks to develop their knowledge and expertise in applying the PCP-FMD.

Dr Potzsch reminded participants that following the 2019 Shiraz meeting, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were encouraged to accept support from one PSO to develop or update their risk-based strategic plan. To date, only three countries in West Eurasia are assigned a PSO: Afghanistan (G. Ferrari), Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan (C. Potzsch), and noted that countries not assigned PSO support did not request it. Dr Potzsch then presented the outcomes of the recent review carried out by senior PSOs on the PSO system as follows:

- structure of the PSO system: greater involvement of national focal points (or **primary PSOs**), supported by senior PSOs, thus senior PSOs could support several countries;
- increased interaction between PSOs working on different TADs to encourage development of several disease strategies and control/eradication pathways;

- regular meetings between roadmaps: frequent virtual and face-to-face meetings to review and plan activities at the national level;
- guidance on how to kick-start national support: the provision of practical guidance for national focal points on how to kick-start a national plan/programme development or update, including setting-up a multidisciplinary team of national experts, and identifying funding;

- the formal introduction of a PSO to national authorities and FMD focal points would help to clarify respective roles and responsibilities, evaluate modes of working and set expectations.

Dr Potzsch concluded by encouraging representatives of countries in West Eurasia to take the opportunity to use the PSO system and continue developing or updating FMD control plans, nominate national PSO candidates and support the work of the two regional networks.

VACCINES AND VACCINE SELECTION IN SUPPORT OF FMD PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAMMES

[D. Mikhalishin/ARRIAH]

The Russian Federal Centre for Animal Health, ARRAIH, Vladimir, Russia, produces FMD vaccines in accordance with the recommendations of the OIE *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*. Immunogenicity of all vaccines is no less than 6 PD₅₀ per dose. FMD vaccines do not induce antibodies to FMDV NSPs (i.e. the vaccines are NSP-free).

The following FMD vaccines produced by ARRAIH and schemes for their application were presented:

- adsorbed (aluminium hydroxide-saponin adjuvanted) vaccine for cattle, yaks, buffaloes, camels, sheep and goats (immunity is induced 21 days post-vaccination and lasts for at least six months, at least 6 PD₅₀/dose);

- emulsion vaccine for all susceptible animals (immunity is induced 21 days post-vaccination and lasts for at least six months, at least 6 PD₅₀/dose);
- universal concentrated vaccine for all susceptible animals (immunity is induced seven days post-vaccination and lasts for at least six months, at least 20 PD₅₀/dose).

In addition, methods for tests of anti-FMD vaccines in naturally susceptible animals were described. And finally, examples of the successful use of FMD vaccines to control FMD in countries such as Mongolia, Kazakhstan and Chinese Taipei were discussed. The ARRAIH presented data and its experience in developing control tools and methods in support of FMD control programmes. It was explained that the latest vaccine matching test results that are performed by ARRAIH (and other FMD Reference Laboratories) are collated in the annual report of the OIE/FAO FMD Reference Laboratory Network.⁴

⁴ See <http://foot-and-mouth.org/oiefao-fmd-reference-laboratory-network/oiefao-fmd-laboratories-network-annual-reports> (accessed on 24 February 2022).

INTRODUCING THE PCP-FMD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (SAT) TO MONITOR PROGRESS AND ASSESS NATIONAL CAPACITY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FMD CONTROL STRATEGY

[G. Ferrari/IZSLT and EuFMD Standing Technical Committee member]

Dr G. Ferrari (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Lazio e della Toscana, IZSLT – EuFMD [Standing Technical Committee](#) member) gave a presentation on the PCP-FMD Self-Assessment Tool ([SAT](#)), a spreadsheet-based questionnaire developed by the EuFMD and the OIE to assist FMD-endemic countries in assessing their progress in the PCP-FMD, for countries in PCP-FMD Stage 0–3. The SAT aims to assist Veterinary Services in identifying completed and pending activities that should be carried out to better understand the FMD virus situation and to better control FMD. It also provides the framework for a standardised and harmonised country self-assessment over time and across regions. A yearly update of the SAT would allow a country's activities implemented to progress along the PCP-FMD to be reviewed.

The SAT results are also used during FMD Roadmap meetings to assist the FMD-WG and ultimately the Regional Advisory Group to assess the appropriate PCP-FMD stage for each country.

The SAT starts by asking which plan or programme for FMD control is currently in place in the country, and

whether this plan or programme has been approved by national authorities and/or accepted by the Regional Advisory Group. The SAT user is then directed through four sections:

- a) Livestock and stakeholders
- b) Surveillance and diagnosis
- c) Veterinary Services
- d) Prevention, Control and Evaluation.

These four sections include 93 statements based on the latest PCP-FMD guidelines and the focus and key outcomes for PCP-FMD Stages 1, 2 and 3. All 93 statements should be answered irrespective of the country's PCP-FMD Stage. The SAT completion will then require different expertise (teamwork) from the Veterinary Services to complete the questions, hence it will be the responsibility of the CVO/OIE Delegate to lead its completion and submit responses to the FMD-WG and relevant RAG.

The SAT generates detailed outputs adapted to the PCP-FMD stage, intended to assist the Veterinary Services in prioritising the pending activities to progress through the PCP-FMD, and to guide and facilitate communication with relevant decision-makers.

The SAT is currently available in English and French and can be downloaded from the EuFMD website.⁵ It will also be made available online through the PCP-FMD tool for review and communication developed by the EuFMD and IZSLT.

⁴ www.eufmd.info/sat-pcp-fmd

Session 5

Presentation of EPINET and WELNET work plans

This session was chaired by Dr S. Kharatyan, EPINET leader (Armenia).

WELNET WORK PLAN FOR 2021–2023

[A. Bulut/Turkey]

The WELNET leader, Dr A. Bulut (Turkey) made a presentation on the WELNET work plan for 2021–2023, highlighting the identified issues discussed during the break-out group session, and possible solutions observed regarding executing the WELNET mandate in West Eurasia. He further suggested agencies/institutions which could provide staff to lead the solutions to these challenges, and listed possible sources of assistance (technical, financial, logistical, etc.).

The following five points were considered to be the most critical in achieving the work plan effectively and in a timely manner, and thereby need to be prioritised.

- 1) Some countries in the region do not have NRLs for FMD, creating a communication gap between them and the available NRL network. As a stopgap measure, the **WELNET leader and FAO and OIE Regional Offices should meet members** (national laboratory focal points) regularly and encourage the country to nominate/establish an NRL. An updated list of **WELNET members should be collated** (names of the laboratories and points of contacts). The WELNET leader should be responsible for implementing this solution and should regularly update the WRLFMD and FMD-WG on this list. Similarly, the Regional Offices should organise regular online meetings within the network using all available tools – virtual tools, web-based communication platforms, etc. The FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratory Network was identified as a possible provider of assistance in the form of visibility and support to WELNET.
- 2) **Participation of NRL in FMD PTS needs to be strengthened** – current hurdles can be overcome by mapping laboratory capacities in West Eurasia and signing memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between NRLs and Reference Laboratories for FMD, to facilitate exchanges and participation. The WELNET leader volunteered to lead a **regional survey on laboratory capacities**. Through this survey, country representatives should express

their willingness to take part in FMD PTS. The target countries are those in PCP-FMD Stage 2 and above, including those with OIE recognised status. Dr N. Mapitse mentioned that the objective should be the annual participation of WELNET members in the PTS. The lack of participation by members in PTS was discussed. Dr L. Bakkali-Kassimi (ANSES) commented that the causes of low participation first needed to be addressed, for example, the lack of routine FMD testing in laboratories and of sufficient reagents and diagnostic kits to participate in the PTS. Clarity in WELNET's objectives and goals is of paramount importance. Not all laboratories are at the same level, therefore before countries can participate in PTS (which can be considered the ultimate step in capacity-building programmes), the laboratory capacities should be assessed and mapped at national and regional levels. Dr D. King (WRLFMD) indicated that PTS can be adapted to the level of capacity of the laboratories. Dr Bulut called for financial and logistic support from FAO and other international organisations. Assistance can come from WRLFMD, ANSES and FAO/EuFMD, who have agreements to cover the cost of participation of some countries in PTS, and facilitation of reagents and samples. The WRLFMD sent proficiency testing panels to West Eurasia Member countries in late 2021, and countries are encouraged to connect with Dr King.

- 3) The early warning system needs to be refined by **improving sampling and sample submissions to FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratories** – i.e. sampling, sample transportation, political will, etc., and sharing of sequences. This is also an opportunity to implement risk-based surveillance and share results by collaborating with EPINET. To operationalise this initiative, there is need to raise awareness of FMD importance/impact among decision-makers. The use of lateral flow devices (LFDs) can provide opportunities to ease international sample shipment (see the EuFMD Special Committee on Bio-risk Management's joint opinion on LFD international shipment⁶).

⁶ Shipment of lateral flow devices (<https://www.fao.org/3/cb7173en/cb7173en.pdf>).

However, it was stressed that the best samples for FMDV characterisation are epithelium and vesicular fluid, these should not be substituted by LFDs. There is a need to ensure the availability of material for shipment and establish bilateral agreements with Regional Leading Laboratories (RLs) and FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratories. In specific circumstances, sample shipment and information-sharing are facilitated through bilateral country agreements, but results should be shared with the OIE/FAO Reference Laboratory Network for FMD. Sequences can be shared through a database recently developed at WRLFMD and training on shipment of biohazardous materials for shipment of FMD samples. Funding to support sample submission for virus characterisation can be sourced through the WRLFMD, ANSES and FAO/EuFMD, and countries holding samples are encouraged to connect with Dr King to arrange sample shipment.

- 4) There are gaps and non-standardisation (heterogeneity) in routine testing for FMD – this weakness can be overcome by **mapping the existing NRL in the region to assess training needs, tailor training content and format it accordingly**. Assistance can be through a capacity development framework with core competencies for laboratories, and the development of a training management system for laboratory personnel (under development by the EuFMD). The Virtual Learning Centre for Europe and Asia can provide support. Dr Bulut called again for financial and logistical support from international organisations to support training. WRLFMD is offering an e-learning training course in English – FMD Laboratory Investigation Training Course – to any interested laboratory and is currently coordinating its translation into French with the EuFMD. WRLFMD mentioned the potential to translate this course into Russian with the engagement of ARRIAH. Finally, the FAO Laboratory mapping tool and OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Sustainable Laboratory missions may also assist in identifying investment areas for capacity building in laboratories.
- 5) There is a challenge of high diversity of viruses and variability of virus sequences in the region – this

can be addressed by calibration of SP enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISAs) available in the region against different vaccine responses, vaccine assessment (identification of appropriate reference virus in the region), strengthening sample submission for virus sequencing and vaccine matching by FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratories, strengthening sample submission for vaccine matching by FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratories, and finally promoting and implementing immunogenicity studies and sharing results. This can be facilitated by WELNET/WRLFMD/ANSES and possibly funded by FAO/OIE FMD Reference Laboratories to support to FMD diagnosis and vaccine matching.

During discussions, Dr King pointed out that one of the challenges in the region is the wide range of FMD vaccines that are used (different vaccine strains from different suppliers), and that perhaps a priority for WELNET should be to support the adoption of approaches to assess the performance of these vaccines – against common (risk FMD) antigens that are circulating in the region.

The representative of Iran raised the issue of data-sharing tools which exist for countries – that different organisations use, such as OIE–WAHIS,⁷ the EuFMD's Statement of Intention in Transcaucasia and EPINET. The use of different data-sharing forms/templates, may cause difficulties for Members who have to submit data through multiple templates. He recommended that other institutions should use the OIE–WAHIS template for common data sharing. The response provided was that different templates are used to match the different objectives of the databases, some collecting more detailed data, some engaged in real-time reporting, etc., but it was agreed that the data-reporting process should be useful, unified and/or standardised. Further, the information system should be dynamic and should assist risk forecasting or prediction of incursions (serve as an early warning system). In conclusion, the meeting emphasised the need to submit information required under OIE–WAHIS, which is important for immediate notification and six-monthly reports and it is one of the requirements for OIE official recognition procedures. The burden to Members, of reporting through multiple platforms was raised with a request to minimise these platforms as much as possible by providing some interoperability/exchange of data between them.

⁷ OIE–WAHIS means the OIE World Animal Health Information System.

EPINET WORK PLAN FOR 2021–2023

[Dr S. Kharatyan/Armenia]

The new EPINET leader, Dr S. Kharatyan (Armenia) presented the EPINET work plan for 2021–2023, and identified the following priority areas for the work plan:

- 1) Operationalising EPINET, with support from the EuFMD, GF-TADs and FAO/OIE Regional Offices. This entails developing a close coordination and collaboration mechanism for EPINET and WELNET – continuing activities like **signing an MoU and facilitating regular meetings of West Eurasia Members together with FMD-WG and FAO/OIE Regional Offices**. In addition, the need to regularly update the list of contact points, and review progress in the implementation of the work plans was mentioned.
- 2) Support for the continuous development of the objectives of EPINET by gathering, analysing, and making available epidemiological information on the regional occurrence of FMD. Dr Kharatyan outlined the various activities required to achieve this, which include:
 - a) developing formats/templates for information sharing;
 - b) using standardised report formats of SOI database;
 - c) data analysis to derive trends and information needed for informed decision making, and others.
- 3) The **promotion of information sharing on FMD**, including outbreaks, virus circulation, vaccine selection, vaccination strategies, and vaccine effectiveness. This will be enabled by active focal point participation, using technical structures like the Group for Vaccination Advice, Guidance and Consultation (GVA), to provide technical support on the assessment of performance, identification of training needs and evaluation of process after the training. (Closer collaboration between EPINET and WELNET is envisaged at all levels.)
- 4) Cross-border coordination for the implementation of vaccination strategies, movement control and harmonisation undertaken through various activities, such as support for developing tools required for FMD risk mapping at the regional level.
- 5) **Support for the development and update of FMD national control plans** for countries in the region by assisting in development of OCPs and risk-based strategic plans, and use of the SAT to monitor progress of monitoring and surveillance for early detection of epidemics. Cross-network communication is also important to remain updated on the activities of both networks as they are complementary to each other.

(The assumption being that the required templates and tools will be accessible.)

Session 6

Discussion

This session was chaired by Dr M. Taitubayev (OIE SRR for Central Asia)

REGIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (RAG) AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PLANS

[Dr G. Nurtazina/OIE Delegate Kazakhstan, Chairperson of the RAG]

Dr G. Nurtazina started by reviewing the vision for FMD control in West Eurasia: 'Regional cooperation among Eurasian countries for the progressive control of FMD leading towards freedom of clinical disease by 2025 for regional economic development, food security, and poverty alleviation'.⁸ She further reminded participants that EPINET and WELNET activities support the Regional FMD Roadmap of West Eurasia, and therefore, it is in the interest of the RAG to have the EPINET and WELNET work plans active and operational for the region to achieve its vision on FMD control.

She stressed that some activities in the work plans have not been implemented due to, among other reasons, COVID-19 restrictions, and the challenges that were identified during this meeting around the proposed solutions for improved and sustainable regional engagement. The RAG expects that the two networks will become more active and exchange more regularly on the implementation of the activities identified in their respective work plans. In particular, the RAG for West Eurasia called for:

- strong commitment from the national contact points and active meeting participation;
- improved communication within and between EPINET and WELNET through the following actions:
 - leaders could organise quarterly virtual meetings of the networks, and produce reports of progress and action items;
 - FAO and OIE Regional/Sub-Regional Offices and Representations could facilitate virtual meetings of national contact persons to discuss progress on activities and to offer technical assistance;
 - cross-border meetings could take place on commodity movements, surveillance and simulation exercises;

- Improved utilisation of:
 - PCP-FMD tools (e.g. SAT and guidelines);
 - FAO, OIE and EuFMD programmes;
 - available technical assistance from PSO to progress on work plan activities.

At country, regional and international organisation levels, the RAG for West Eurasia identified the following priorities:

- provision of technical support to the EPINET and WELNET leaders by countries, national contact persons, and regional and international organisations;
- strengthening of political commitment to the regional EPINET and WELNET work plans and activities;
- gaining access to development partners and stakeholders support in resource mobilisation for regional and national FMD control activities, including risk assessment, public–private partnerships and simulation exercises;
- conducting training workshops, including virtual and e-learning, on international standards and guidelines and on PCP-FMD tools to support the willingness to advance along the PCP-FMD. It has been stressed that face-to-face meetings have more value in the region than virtual meetings.

At the level of the FAO/OIE Reference Laboratory Network for FMD, the following priorities were identified:

- continuing the provision of support to EPINET and WELNET on surveillance, facilitation of sample shipment, FMD diagnostics (including proficiency testing), appropriate vaccine selection and vaccination monitoring, and sharing of epidemiological information;
- improving the FMD diagnostic capabilities of the central (national) veterinary laboratories.

She concluded by listing the next steps to be taken by the region following the meeting:

- endorsement of the draft EPINET and WELNET work plans;
- finalisation of the workplans by EPINET and WELNET members with the assistance of the FMD-WG, FAO and OIE Regional Representations, and subsequent distribution of the final plans to all members;

⁸ <https://www.fao.org/3/ca8378en/ca8378en.pdf>.

- establishment of a regular information-sharing mechanism through which to provide updates on work-plan implementation.

Aligned with the previous discussions, Dr Nurtazina called partners to develop or harmonise tools for members (common tools, easy to use). She noted that the RAG for West Eurasia did not meet in 2021 and identified limitations and difficulties faced by the RAG as follows:

- a) high turnover and replacement of OIE Delegates within the RAG with no introduction provided to newly appointed members on RAG activities and progress;

- b) working in the RAG (especially when it comes to plans/programme acceptance) is time and resource consuming and this aspect should be taken into consideration by the GF-TADs governing bodies.

Finally, she apologised to the Georgian representatives for the delay in the provision of the RAG decision on their PCP-FMD Stage 3 application, and reminded the representatives of Azerbaijan and Iran to consider the OCP of Georgia.

Closure of the virtual meeting

Dr N. Mapitse (OIE) thanked the audience for its active participation during the meeting and promised that the FMD-WG will keep working with EPINET and WELNET leaders to make the work plans operational, achievable and aligned with the vision for FMD control in West Eurasia. Dr M. Dhingra (FAO) also thanked the participants for a fruitful meeting and acknowledged the progress achieved and noted that as part of the FMD-WG, FAO will stand ready to assist the region for improved FMD control. Dr F. Rosso (EuFMD) thanked the former and new network leaders; and reminded participants that there is still a need to reflect on the networks' governance and on how the specific objectives of the two networks will be achieved, as it is well recognised that leaders cannot perform the work alone. He advocated for the integration of network priorities and actions in TAD projects implemented at national or regional level.

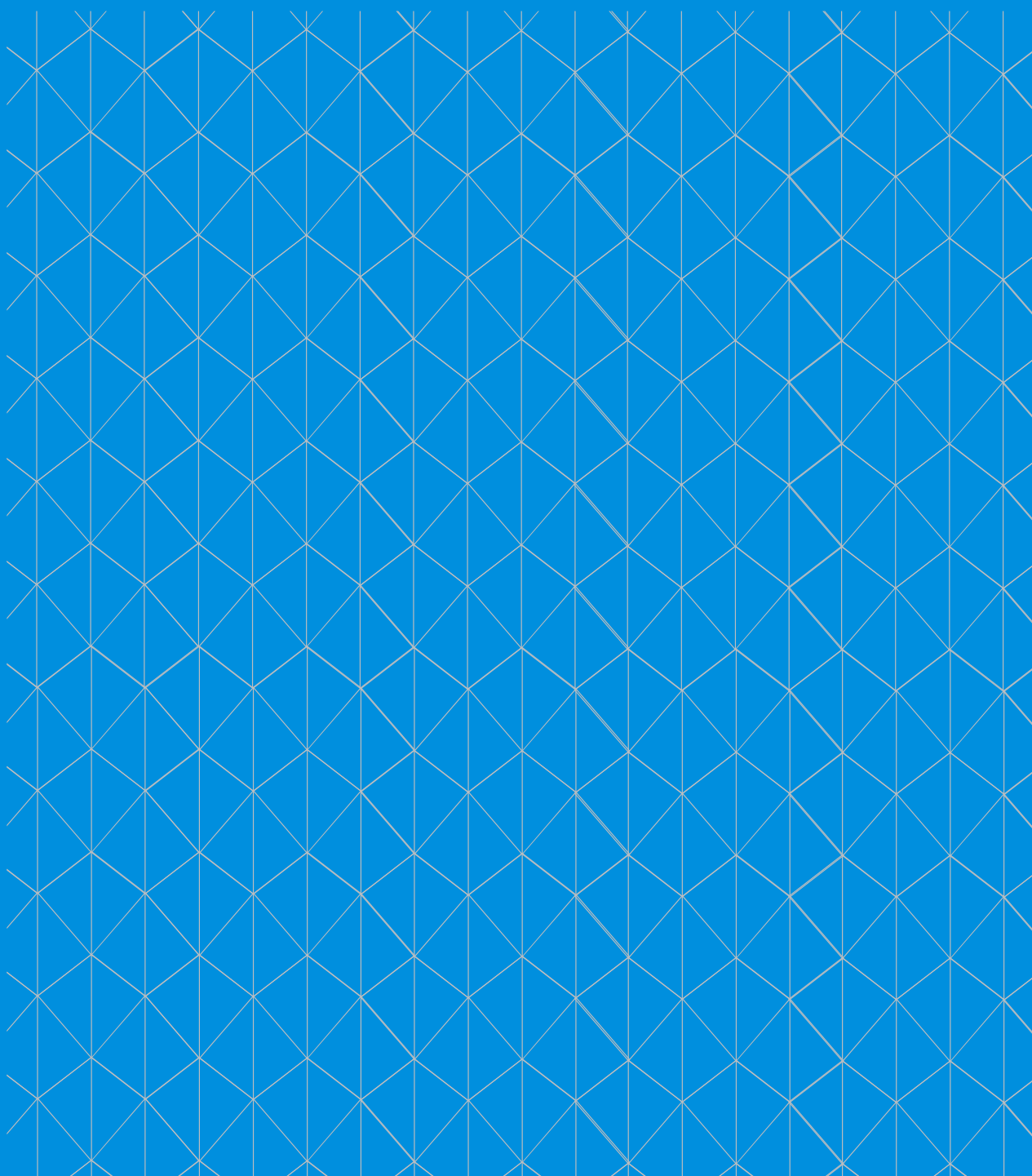
Dr A. Bulut, newly elected WELNET leader, thanked participants and organisers, especially the OIE SRR for Central Asia. He stressed the need for strong political commitment from each Member to implement WELNET activities and reminded country representatives to share email addresses of WELNET points of contacts.

Dr S. Kharatyan, newly elected EPINET leader, stated that she stood ready to collaborate with all EPINET members. She stressed the need to build a team and conduct activities as a team and requested email addresses of EPINET points of contact be shared.

Dr G. Nurtazina, Chairperson of the RAG for West Eurasia, praised the intensive two-day discussion that had taken place and commended all countries for sharing valuable information. She invited all OIE Delegates and the Chief Veterinary Officers to embark on PCP-FMD activities and indicated that she was looking forward to further collaborations.

Dr M. Taitubayev (OIE SRR for Central Asia), also thanked the participants and the organisers for a successful meeting on behalf of OIE colleagues from the region and closed the meeting.

Annexes



Annex 1

Agenda

DAY 1	17 AUGUST 2021	
Schedule CET	Topics	Chair/Speaker/Rapporteur
10.30–11.00	Access and registration	All
13.30–13.40	Welcome and adoption of agenda	Facilitator: OIE SRR Central Asia (M. Taitubayev)
11.00–11.20	Welcoming remarks and opening of the meeting	OIE RR Moscow (M. Taitubayev) FAO REU Budapest (E. Raizman)
11.20–11.30	Meeting objectives and adoption of the agenda	GF-TADs FMD-WG (OIE: N. Mapitse)
	Session 1. Setting the stage for the Networks	Chair: OIE Delegate Kazakhstan (G. Nurtazina) Rapporteur: E. Chevanne
11.30–11.45	Roles of the regional leading laboratory, EPINET and WELNET team leaders	GF-TADs FMD-WG (M. Dhingra)
11.45–12.05	Updates on implementation of WELNET work plan from the 8th West Eurasia FMD roadmap meeting of the GF-TADs	WELNET leader (N. Bulut)
12.05–12.25	Updates on implementation of EPINET work plan from the 8th West Eurasia FMD roadmap meeting of the GF-TADs	EPINET leader (T. Chaligava, J. Aliyev)
12.25–12.45	Global and regional FMD update	WRLFMD (D. King)
12.45–13.00	Laboratory capacity survey report in the South East European Neighbourhood	ANSES (L. Bakkali-Kassimi)
13.00–13.05	Break	
13.05–13.15	Identifying regional needs/priorities for both Epidemiology and Laboratory Networks and preparation for the break-out sessions	GF-TADs FMD-WG (F. Rosso)
	Session 2. Election of EPINET and WELNET leaders (parallel sessions – break-out rooms)	Chair: Iran (D. Abdollahi)
13.15–13.25	Elections of the EPINET and WELNET team leaders	All participants
13.25–14.05	Session 3. Update of EPINET and WELNET work plan 2021–2022 (parallel sessions – break-out rooms)	
	Epidemiology session Updating the work plan for 2021–2022	FAO/OIE/EuFMD Rapporteur: B. Purevsuren
	Laboratory session Updating the work plan for 2021–2022	FAO/OIE/EuFMD/ WRLFMD/ANSES/ARRIAH Rapporteur: M. Arshed
14.05–14.10	Wrap-up of the plenary session (closure of Day 1) and introduction of Day 2	GF-TADs FMD-WG (N. Mapitse)

DAY 2	18 AUGUST 2021	
Schedule CET	Topics	Chair/Speaker/Rapporteur
10.45–11.00	Session 3. Update of EPINET and WELNET work plan for 2021–2022 (Cont.) (parallel sessions – break-out rooms)	
	Epidemiology session Updating the work plan for 2021–2022	FAO/OIE/EuFMD Rapporteur: B. Purevsuren
	Laboratory session Updating the work plan for 2021–2022	FAO/OIE/EuFMD/ WRLFMD/ANSES/ARRIAH Rapporteur: M. Arshed
	Session 4. Technical presentations	Chairperson: J. Perchet Rapporteur: E. Chevanne
11.00–11.20	Overview of the PCP-FMD Support Officer (PSO) system	EuFMD (E. Chevanne; C. Potzsch)
11.20–11.40	Vaccines and vaccine selection in support of FMD prevention and control programmes	ARRIAH (D. Mikhalishin)
11.40–12.00	Introducing the PCP-FMD self-assessment tool (SAT) to monitor progress	IZSLT (G. Ferrari)
	Session 5. Presentation of EPINET and WELNET work plans	Chairperson: S. Kharatyan Rapporteur: M. Letshwenyo
12.20–13.00	EPINET work plan for 2021–2022 WELNET work plan for 2021–2022 Discussions	EPINET and WELNET newly elected leaders EPINET: S. Kharatyan WELNET: N. Bulut
13.00–13.10	Break	
	Session 6. Discussions	Chair: OIE SRR Central Asia (M. Taitubayev) Rapporteur: E. Chevanne
13.10–13.30	Regional Advisory Group (RAG) and implementation of the work plans	RAG
13.30–13.40	Closure of the virtual meeting	GF-TADs FMD-WG/EPINET and WELNET leaders

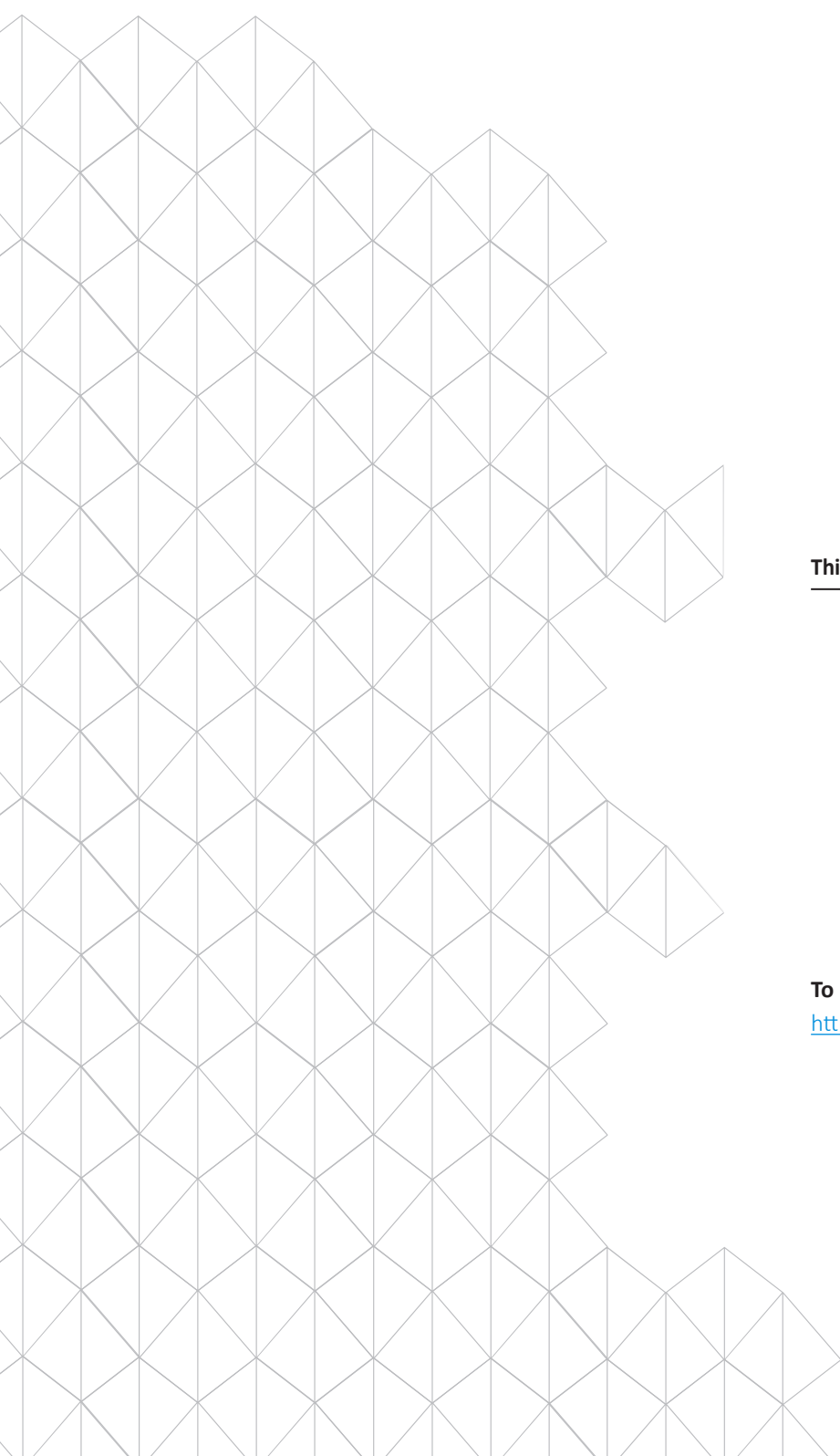
Annex 2

List of participants

COUNTRY/ORGANISATION	NAME	SURNAME	POSITION	BREAK-OUT GROUP
Armenia	Georgi	Avetisyan	OIE Delegate	EPINET
Armenia	Perch	Tumanyan	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Armenia	Satenik	Kharatyan	EPINET leader (2021–2023)	EPINET
Azerbaijan	Jeyhun	Aliyev	EPINET leader (2019–2021)	EPINET
Azerbaijan	Aytan	Hajiyeva	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Azerbaijan	Tamilla	Aliyeva	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Georgia	Vasili	Basiladze	OIE Delegate	EPINET
Georgia	Tengiz	Chaligava	EPINET leader (2019–2021)	EPINET
Iran	Darab	Abdollahi	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Iran	Reza	Hassanzadeh	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Kyrgyzstan	Adilet	Sotovaldiev	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Kyrgyzstan	Murat	Abdrayev	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Kyrgyzstan	Larisa	Ermakova	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Kyrgyzstan	Emil	Akybayev	Observer	EPINET
Kazakhstan	Gulzhan	Nurtazina	OIE Delegate/RAG Chair	EPINET
Kazakhstan	Samat	Tyulegenov	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Kazakhstan	Sayan	Kurmangaliyev	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Kazakhstan	Azimkhan	Tegzhanov		WELNET
Kazakhstan	Talgat	Karibayev		EPINET
Kazakhstan	Maksat	Berdikulov		EPINET
Pakistan	Riasat	Wasee Ullah	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Pakistan	Muhammad	Abubakar	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Tajikistan	Ismoil	Andamov		–
Turkey	Abdulnaci	Bulut	WELNET leader (2019–2023)	WELNET
Turkey	Anıl	Demeli	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Turkmenistan	Shohrat	Bashimov	WELNET Network member	WELNET
Turkmenistan	Arslan	Soltanmyradov	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Uzbekistan	Amirkhon	Tukhtasinov	Observer	EPINET
Uzbekistan	Shamurad	Rahmatullaev	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Uzbekistan	Abrar	Akbarov	OIE Delegate	WELNET
Uzbekistan	Sabitdjan	Tulyaganov	EPINET Network member	EPINET
Uzbekistan	Asqarali	G'oziev	WELNET Network member	WELNET
EU - DG Health and Food Safety	Moritz	Klemm	Observer	EPINET
EC - DG SANTE	Francesco	Berlingieri	Observer	WELNET
WRLFMD/Pirbright Institute	Donald	King	Virologist	WELNET
ARRIAH	Alexey	Mischenko	Virologist	WELNET
ARRIAH	Ilya	Chvala	Virologist	WELNET
ARRIAH	Artem	Metlin	Virologist	WELNET
ANSES	Labib	Bakkali-Kassimi	Virologist	WELNET
IZSLT/EuFMD	Giancarlo	Ferrari	EuFMD Specialist/PSO	WELNET

(Cont.)

COUNTRY/ORGANISATION	NAME	SURNAME	POSITION	BREAK-OUT GROUP
OIE	Néo	Mapitse	GF-TADs FMD-WG (OIE - Chair)	WELNET
OIE	Bolortuya	Purevsuren	GF-TADs FMD-WG (OIE)	EPINET
OIE	Moetapele	Letshwenyo	GF-TADs FMD-WG (OIE)	EPINET
OIE	Jean	Perchet	OIE Regional Representation in Moscow	EPINET
OIE	Mereke	Taitubayev	OIE SRR for CA	EPINET
OIE	Aigerim	Zhorgabayeva	OIE SRR for CA	–
FAO	Madhur	Dhingra	GF-TADs FMD-WG (FAO)	EPINET
FAO	Muhammad Javed	Arshed	GF-TADs FMD-WG (FAO)	WELNET
EuFMD	Fabrizio	Rosso	GF-TADs FMD-WG (EuFMD)	WELNET
EuFMD	Carsten	Potzsch	EuFMD Specialist/PSO	EPINET
EuFMD	Francesca	Ambrosini	EuFMD Pillar II Supervisor	WELNET
EuFMD	Paolo	Motta	EuFMD Pillar III Supervisor	–
EuFMD	Etienne	Chevanne	EuFMD Specialist	WELNET



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