

# Operationalizing 'One Health'



Sierra Leone Experience — Roland Suluku, Coordinator AHC

# Sierra Leone – profile



- Well endowed: fertile soils, favourable climate, minerals

- Population 6.2 mill.

- Highest infant mortality in the world - 160.3 deaths/1000 live births\*

- UN Human Development index (2009) \*\* – 180/182

- Recent History – civil war;

- ‘Expert Crisis’

- 70 medical doctors

- 3 veterinarians (all to retire in 2 – 6yrs)

- 21 livestock officers

*Sources:* \*UN Population Division, Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia 2009

\*\* UNDP Human Development Report 2009



**AHC**  
ANIMAL HEALTH CLUB

# AHC – How and why it started?

## ACTIVITIES THAT GAVE BIRTH TO AHC

- IAEA Fellowship to South Africa
- World rabies day celebration 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007 & 2008 – (Contact with FAO Italy)
- World rabies day celebration in Bo in 2009
- Reports of Human and dog rabies cases in Sierra Leone – explored potential role of school children for disseminating rabies awareness and public health information in communities and peers.

# Development & implementation Strategies

- Meeting and radio discussion held with health workers in the southern province.
- Animal Health Club Initiated – with the following membership:
  - *Primary school children*
  - *Secondary School Children*
  - *Students at Tertiary institutions and*
  - *Livestock farmers and rural communities.*
  - *University staff – mentoring and training*



# Objectives

- Promote awareness, sensitise communities on prevention, control & reporting of endemic/emerging zoonoses, animal husbandry and environmental protection practices, improved sanitation and environmental hygiene;
- Promote local consensus and ownership of initiatives to promote public, animal and environmental health;
- Adopt and embed 'one health' in school curricula (animal science, public health, nutrition, wildlife, environmental science, forestry);
- Engage school children at an early stage and encourage participation in 'one health' initiatives in their communities;
- Encourage school children to pursue careers in 'one health' related disciplines;
- Rationalize access to public services – by 'filling public service gaps, promoting sectoral and inter-disciplinary collaboration - esp. as national policies, institution service delivery systems are chronically weak & under funded;

# Development & implementation Strategies

- Developed MOU between AHCs and the community;
- Focused on animal production & health – so formulated animal rearing bye-laws (where there were no policies) including terms of reference for pupils, students, teachers and lecturers;
- Disseminated (mosques, churches, schools etc.) and interpreted bye-laws to all parties;
- Training of AHC students on bye-laws;
- Bye-laws signed by key stakeholders (village chiefs and university officials);
- Division of town / village by town/Village executive committee & election of Animal Rearing Group Chairmen, secretaries, and public relation officers;
- Set Dead line for implementation of certain clauses;
- Drama, Quiz, Debate ,Music **SEE VIDEO**



# Development & implementation Strategies



# Njala University – inter-disciplinary collaboration in AHC and curriculum development

- School of Agriculture - *Animal science/health and animal Nutrition;*
- School of Environmental Sciences - *water , sanitation and waste management;*
- Home Sciences Unit – *Human Nutrition, dietary health, home economics;*
- School of Technology- *Animal housing ,Appropriate Technology and Data Management.*
- School of Horticulture and Forestry- *wild life, ecosystems health control of wildfire*



# Examples of community-level interventions

LIVESTOCK AT BONGNEMIA VILLAGE

NAMES	Number of Goats	Number of Sheep
1 Eten A. Kain	1 goat	
2 Abie Kain	3 goats	1 sheep
3 Maninam Bekie	2 goats	3 sheep
4 Jane Kalkid	2 goats	
5 Bobou mendou	22 goats	
6 Mohamed Sessay	2 goats	
7 Winnie Melobie	5 goats	5 sheep
8 Robert Kouoma	5 goats	
9 Michael Vandi	2 goats	
10 Bai Ernest	2 goats	2 sheep
11 Abie Kansana	2 goats	
12 Kabiate Kansana	1 goat	
13 Sheku Banyu	4 goats	3 sheep



# Achievements

- Growing AHC membership – from 1 to 10 schools and growing;
- Brought the university 'to the doorstep of the community';
- Adoption of animal rearing bye-laws;
- Established collaboration with Municipal authorities – Freetown, Makeni and Bo;
- Neutral forum for multi-sectoral/multi-disciplinary stakeholder meetings – locally and nationally;
- Evidence of improved awareness and gradual adoption of 'one health' message;



# Challenges/constraints

- Voluntary initiative – not funded – limits efforts to disseminate the model;
- Critical shortage of human, animal health and wildlife staff – ‘expert crisis’;
- Weak capacities - policy development/implementation, weak institutions, weak health infrastructure;
- Lack of engagement from some government sectors - AHCs viewed as a threat rather than opportunity;
- Some village authorities and government officials initially expect payment for their roles;

# Recommendations & Conclusions from Sierra Leone AHC Experience

- Identify key stake holders and engage them from early stages of any new initiative;
- Engagement, dialogue and collaboration with all parties involved in animal, human and ecosystem health issues;
- . Institutionalization requires - Multi-sector, multi-disciplinary collaboration, political will/support, focused actions, sustainable initiatives, trust and transparency, patience;
- Community-level actions can help stimulate improvements and potentially influence actions at higher levels and policies/actions at national level;
- At the global level - 'One Health' should integrate developed and developing world perspectives;
- Identification of constrains and opportunities will enhance planning, and implementation of policies and shaping of the road map.

# AHCs in action



# Thank You

