



Working with Partners Around the World to Make Rabies History

Despite being 100% preventable, rabies kills an estimated 55,000 people around the world each year. Dogs that have rabies expose 10 million people to rabies annually. Children are particularly susceptible, accounting for almost 50% of all rabies deaths. Primary prevention lies with systematic dog vaccinations, animal control, and educating those at risk. Mass vaccination of dogs and other companion animals has proven effective over large geographic areas. Nevertheless, rabies remains a serious health issue in the developing world.

In 2007, CDC teamed with the Alliance for Rabies Control and international scientists to spearhead a World Rabies Day campaign for animal rabies control and human rabies prevention. CDC led all of the communication efforts globally for the inaugural campaign. At least 74 countries held events in conjunction with World Rabies Day, including vaccination clinics, educational sessions, museum and zoo exhibits, festivals, and dog walks. In many countries, rabies experts convened to strengthen rabies prevention and control



Children bring their puppies to a vaccination clinic in Freetown, Sierra Leone, run by the Sierra Leone Animal Welfare Society (SLAWS). Photo from the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA).

plans, with several countries initiating national Rabies Control Programs in honor of the event. Veterinary colleges in the U.S. and the Caribbean, India, Indonesia, West Africa, and the Philippines also joined the effort. CDC staff also helped concentrate efforts in areas most affected by rabies. In Peru, a country threatened by canine and vampire bat rabies, CDC's Sergio Recuenco coordinated education efforts with the Peruvian Ministry of Health, including the development of a stamp recognizing World Rabies Day 2008. In West Africa, CDC's Sebastian Kiogou coordinated the distribution of 12,000 educational posters developed in a public-private partnership.

Around the world, mass education and outreach events, such as a week-long celebration in Hisar, India, region-wide participation of 18 countries in Latin America, and national television broadcasts by the Nigerian Minister of Health helped educate more than 54 million people. And over 600,000 animals were vaccinated on and around World Rabies Day – an important step forward. CDC and its partners in the World Rabies Day team continue to foster a comprehensive approach of coupling education with dog vaccination to eliminate canine rabies and eradicate human rabies worldwide.



Rabies awareness walk in Pakistan.
Photo by Naseem Salahuddin

For more information about CDC at Work, please contact us at (202) 245-0600 or go to <http://www.cdc.gov/washington/>.