

Minutes of the 8th meeting of
The GF-TADs regional steering committee meeting for the Middle East
17 November 2020

Participants:

RSC Board: I.Qassim (Chairman), S.Alharbi (KSA), F. Alsalloum (BAH), R.Dodeen (JOR), R. Bassam(LEB),

Organisations: AAAID, AOAD, FAO, EC, EU-FMD, and WHO/EMRO

FAO: K. Sumption, H.J. Ormel, F. Mayen, M. Tibbo, F. Njeumi, C. Benfield, A. Diallo, J. Mariner, R. Singh,

OIE: J-P. Dop, A. Fediaevsky, A. M. Baka, G. Yehia, M. Al Hosani,

WHO/EMRO: H. Mahrous

AOAD: M. Hanatleh, K. Hanafi, M. Mohamed

EC: F. Reviriego-Gordejo

EUFMD: F. Rosso

AAAID: S. Abdelsamad

Summary:

The 8th meeting of the GF-TADs regional steering committee (RSC) meeting for the Middle East, is held virtually, on the 17th of November 2020, hosted by the GF TADs regional secretariat.

- Dr. Ibrahim El Qasim, elected chair of the RSC, welcomed the participants and wishes that it will be a first successful step toward more beneficial activities in the surveillance of priority diseases prevailing in the region. He stressed on close collaboration with all organisations working in the same line, in order to achieve common beneficial objectives.
- After a brief welcome address from Dr. JP Dop (OIE DDG) and Dr. K. Sumption (FAO CVO), Dr. Qasim gave the floor to the regional offices.
- Dr. Mayen, Senior Livestock Development Officer in FAO Regional Office, welcomed all participants to the 8th Steering Committee meeting and she added that Livestock is extremely important in the Region. The Transboundary animal diseases such as Foot-and

Mouth disease, Pest of small ruminants, Lumpy Skin disease are able to cause devastating impacts on animal productivity and the economic development of the region. FAO is working closely together with OIE on the control of Transboundary Animal Diseases in the Region, supporting National Governments in Surveillance and control programs.

- Dr Mayen underlined FAO's strong commitment to the GF-TAD Agreement, its strong and fruitful partnership with OIE and the Organization's availability to provide support in the important task of control and eradication of Transboundary Animal Diseases.
- Dr Yehia, OIE regional representative for the middle East, based in Beirut-Lebanon, and after introducing the participants, he informed the committee, that the comments received from the participants on the ToR and the Regional action plan for 2020 – 2024, both presented during the 7th RSC meeting on the 5th of October 2020, were taken in consideration, and now they are ready for adoption. Accordingly, the ToR are adopted, while the RSP will wait until the final and 3rd meeting of the GSC on the 17th of December, in order to take in consideration any potential related recommendation.
- Dr. Ormel and Dr. Fediaevsky from the global secretariat, presented a briefing on the Gf-TADs 11th Global steering committee held on 3 and 4 November. On the first day, the institutional activities of the GF-TADs at global and regional levels were presented by the global and regional secretariats which include revision of terms of reference, priority diseases and continuation or establishment of standing group of experts. Chairs congratulated Dr Qasim for his nomination and reactivation of the RSC in Middle East.
- The progress on global priority diseases were presented (ASF, FMD, PPR and rinderpest post eradication) and the regions presented their current or on-going discussion about regional priority diseases where it appears that HAPI, LSD, Rabies, RVF and Brucellosis are considered which raise questions on the linkages with tripartite. On the second day the context and plan for the future strategy of the GF-TADs were discussed. The main ideas discussed were presented:
 - Promote GF-TADs capacity to bring together organisations, veterinary services and experts and exchange information
 - GF-TADs is expected where coordination is necessary, focus on its capacity to deliver
 - GF-TADs should also serve strengthening of veterinary services in particular for early warning and emergency preparedness and implementation of international standards
 - Public-private partnership should be developed in the definition and implementation of strategies
 - GF-TADs advocacy should include the broader context where TADs control takes place for resource mobilisation and national engagement in disease control strategies
- Dr. Yehia, reminded the participants, that GF TADs is a mechanism for policy definition, coordination between the different partners, and need to be efficient, an operational workplan for two years with yearly evaluation and updating.

- Dr Yehia highlighted briefly on the major activities to be included in the operational plan, such as support to member countries in the surveillance and control of major diseases: FMD, PPR, RVF, Brucellosis and Rabies, as well as any other disease seen important to the region such as LSD (raised by FAO and Syria) and tuberculosis (raised by Bahrain). The workplan will also take in consideration the reinforcement of the capacity of the Veterinary Services, as a major component for the success of the plan.

It was noted, that the workplan will also, cooperate with regional organisations, working in the same line (AOAD and EUFMD), on joint efforts to harmonize goals and activities.

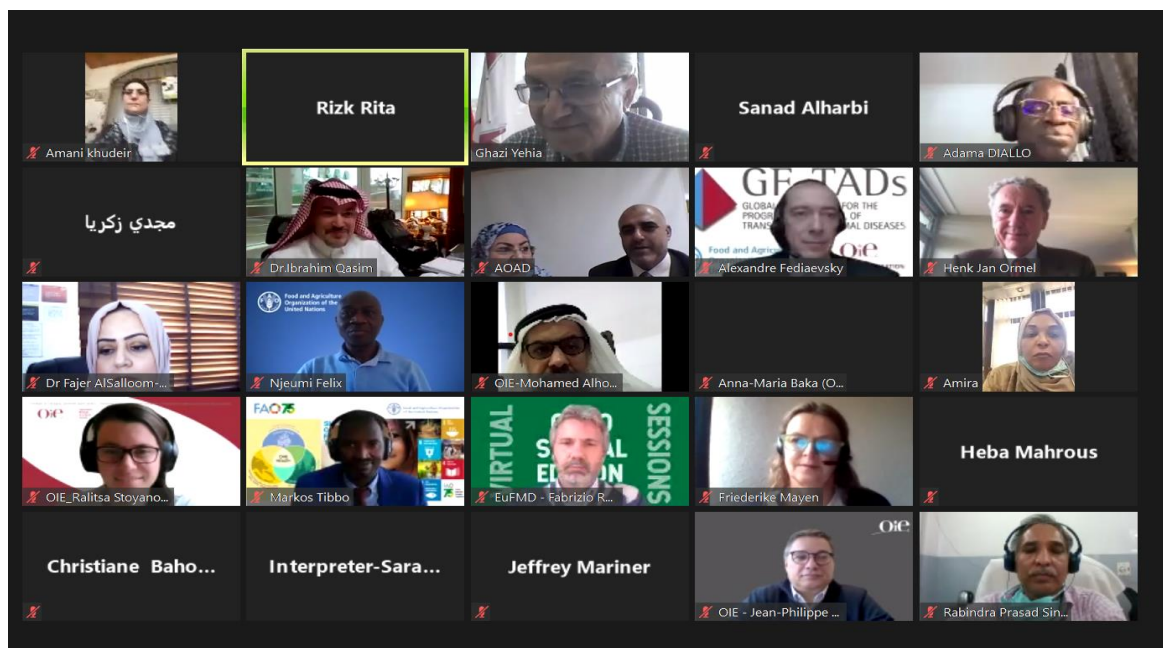
- Since the 3 other priorities diseases, RVF, Brucellosis and Rabies), identified by the region are zoonotic diseases, there will be close cooperation with WHO and FAO in the tripartite planning activities.
- The Chair gave the floor to Dr Adama Dialo, Head of the PPR working group, to address on the updates given to the PPR procedures on PMAT, in order to sensitize countries in the region on the guidelines to be followed to present their PPR control plan for assessment in March 2021.
- Dr. Dialo, noted that:
- The Peste des petits ruminants Global Control and Eradication Strategy (PPR -GCES) was adopted with its companion tools by participants at the international conference organized in 2015 by the FAO and OIE in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. One of those tools is the the PPR Monitoring and Assessment Tool (PMAT). It was designed with the objective to assess activities of the PPR eradication activities to enable: (i) providing feedback to the countries on where they might be located along the pathway (Assessment tool), ii) identifying gaps that may affect the progression along the pathway and providing an indicative list of activities to implement in the year to come (Monitoring tool).
- The first PPR Global Eradication Programme (PPR-GEP) was initiated in 2017. In 2019, FAO and OIE asked a group of experts (PPR Revision Team) to use of PMAT and revise it if needed. The Team developed a questionnaire on the use and perception of PMAT, questionnaire that was sent to PPR endemic countries or at PPR risk; More than 85% of those countries have responded to the questionnaire. Their feedback can be summarized as follows:
 1. PMAT is a useful tool to be used for the assessment of the PPR eradication activities (wish to include all three components in future version);
 2. PMAT is fit for purpose and would help identifying gaps in the PPR eradication pathways;
 3. PMAT is too complex and this is certainly why it is not widely used (countries are requesting more training);
 4. PMAT is too prescriptive in claiming the requirement of achieving all the activities of the previous stage in order to move to the next one. There is a need of more flexibility.
 5. Finally, a restructuration of PMAT is wished and needed.

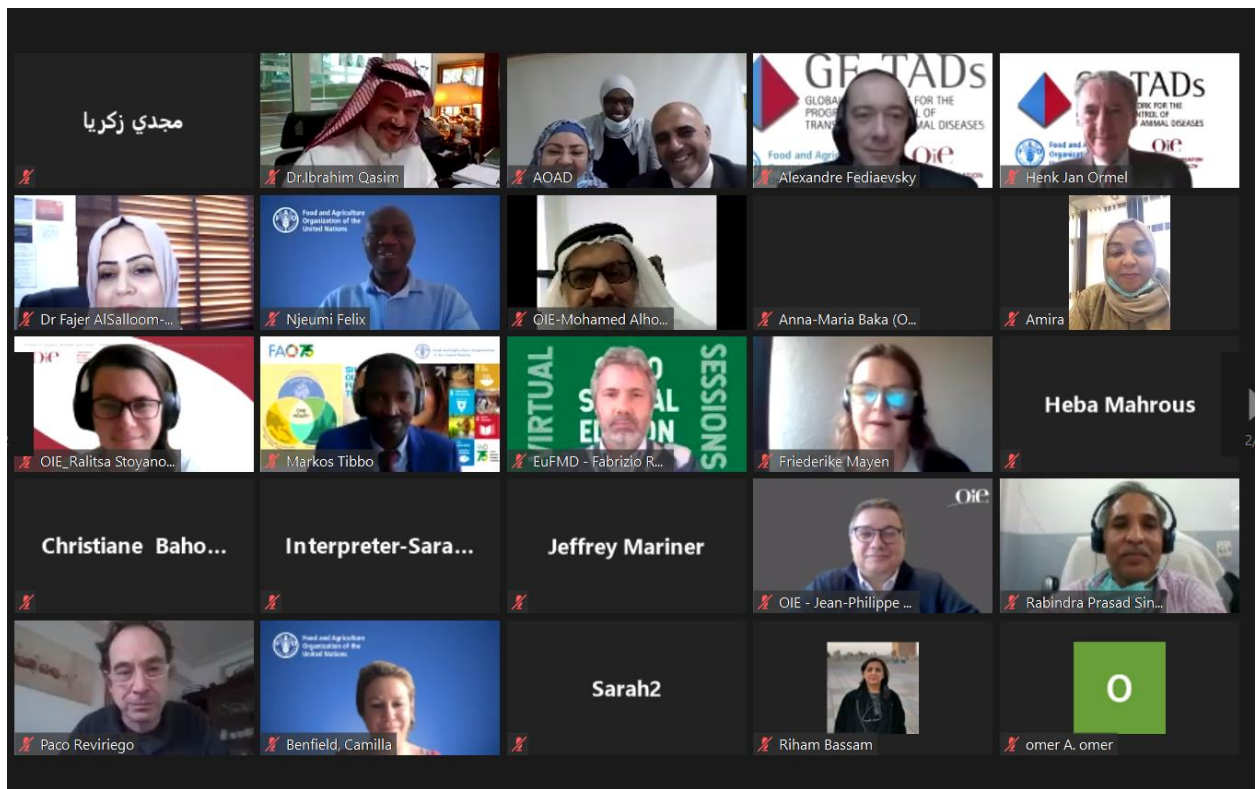
Based on above, the Team has initiated the revision of PMAT with the following objectives:

- (i) Incorporate of the three components (PPR specific activities, Strengthening veterinary services and control of other small ruminants diseases). However only responses to questions related to PPR specific activities will be considered for the move from one stage to another within the pathway. However, countries will have to take into consideration requirements of the component related veterinary services to comply with the OIE Code when they will have to submit dossiers for OIE endorsement of PPR free status declaration;
- (ii) The PMAT should be flexible and not too prescriptive on how to control and eradicate PPR because this can change from country to country according to the prevailing epidemiological situation;
- (iii) PMAT should be simplified to make it easy in use (probably in a way that no need of special training or less “demanding on training”): the questions, or some of them, already utilized in the current version of PMAT and associated with each of the 4 stages can be used and reformulated as appropriate in particular for the simplification purpose;
- (iv) New PMAT version should be written in a way to facilitate its use as self-assessment tool: on-line version with easy access, to be downloaded from a digital platform and to be filled in on-line;

Dr. Adama added that the review process is ongoing and it is expected to finish it by January 2021.

- At the end, the chairman thanked the participants for their attendance and their fruitful discussion. He, then closed the meeting, after confirmation that communication with all to be continuously managed.





Group Photos