

**Title:** Programme Against African Trypanosomiasis (PAAT) Information System

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**Internet:** <http://www.fao.org/PAAT/html/home.htm>

**Description:** *Background:* Human and animal tsetse-transmitted trypanosomiasis, is unique to Africa. The disease occurs in 37 sub-Saharan countries covering more than 9 million km<sup>2</sup>, an area which corresponds approximately to one-third of Africa's total land area. In tsetse infested countries, half of the population suffers from food insecurity. Approximately 85 per cent of the poor are located in rural areas where tsetse mainly occurs and more than 80% of the population depends on agriculture-livestock production. Perhaps is not coincidence that out of the 37 tsetse-infested countries, 32 are in the list of Low-Income Food Deficit of the world and 28 of these are listed as Least Developed Countries.

The infection threatens 60 million people and 50 million head of cattle. An estimated 500,000 people are infected. Every year, African animal trypanosomiasis causes about 3 million deaths in cattle while approximately 35 million doses of trypanocidal drugs are administered to enable livestock to survive in tsetse-infested areas. While the economic losses in cattle production alone are in the range of US\$1.0-1.2 billion, the indirect impact engendered by the disease on the total agriculture-livestock production is estimated at US\$4.5 billion a year. The overall negative impact extends to the access and availability of cultivable areas, changes in land use and exploitation of natural resources, restriction of opportunities for diversification and intensification of agricultural activity. The magnitude of the problem requires a multidisciplinary approach for effectively promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) strategies.

*Objective:* PAAT is the umbrella for an inter-agency alliance (FAO, IAEA, AU/IBAR, WHO) and research institutes, field programmes, NGOs and donors. The overall goal is to improve the livelihood of rural people. PAAT and its information system (PAAT-IS) represents a forum aiming to contribute on an equal basis to information exchange, links and facilities on criteria, standards, guidelines, policy strategy and formulation of development actions. PAAT-IS provides support to assemble, analyse and collate the necessary inter-sectoral information, e.g. scientific, technical and policy development aspects, which is needed for decision making.

*Beneficiaries:* PAAT-IS assists and enhances regional and international co-operation, and increases the capacity of concerned countries, policy makers, international agencies and research institutions in the transnational and inter-sectoral research and development aspects as they relate to the T&T problem and SARD aspects. Additionally, PAAT-IS serves the African tsetse-infested countries as a multidisciplinary and participatory support for promoting advocacy and awareness on the problem at local, national, regional and international level, and, ultimately, formulating T&T field interventions programmes in respect to the needs of the rural poor.

**Outputs:**

- Organized, co-ordinated and enhanced cross-sectoral data base package on T&T and SARD related aspects. The information is made available, on an equal basis, through the system.
- Assisting rational programmatic choice of T&T intervention strategies (decision tree) and supporting capacity building of affected countries.
- Enhanced concerted SARD policy among involved stakeholders.