

**Short-term Mission on
“Improve Veterinary Inspection Organisation - Rabies”
- Animal Health -**

**within the Twinning Project BA05 IB AG 01
Sarajevo, 17th to 20th of March 2008**

1. Name and Function of the Experts

Dr. Thomas Müller, FLI (Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute), Wusterhausen

Dr. Josef Diekmann, Task-Force Veterinary Affairs, LAVES (Lower Saxonian Federal State Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety), Oldenburg

2. Objectives and Tasks of the Mission

The objective of the mission was to hold a workshop on Animal health (Rabies) for Veterinary Inspectors from the Cantons and the Entities. These Veterinary Inspectors are to be trained as future trainers (multipliers of general and disease specific knowledge). An elaboration of proposals on a suitable organization for the veterinary inspections and development of guideline compendium including checklists for inspection shall be distributed to concerned parties (e. g. CD with presentations).

3. List of Acronyms

BiH	= Bosnia and Herzegovina
CA´s	= Competent Authorities
DB	= District of Brčko
EVS	= Entity Veterinary Services
FBiH	= Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
KM	= Convertible Marks (BiH Currency)
MoAFWM	= Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of RS
MoAWMF	= Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of FBiH
MoFTEA	= Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Affairs
RS	= Republic of Srpska
SVO	= State Veterinary Office

4. Meetings and Identification

- 17th March 2008: Meeting at the State Veterinary Office (SVO) in Sarajevo (Twining Bureau)
 - Persons visited:
 - DVM Darko Čobanov, Deputy SVO
 - Dr. Karoline Schollmeyer, RTA
 - Exchange of ideas for the ongoing workshop
 - Discussion on the recommendations given after the last mission and the activities taken by the Ministry, the Entities, the Cantons, the Veterinary Inspections since last

mission

- 18th March 2008 (Müller and Diekmann):
 - Training at the Veterinary Faculty of Sarajevo
 - Participants: Veterinary Inspectors from different Cantons and Entities of BiH (list of participants see annex)
 - Presentations about Rabies, the IPA-Programme for Rabies Control in Western Balkan Countries (2009-2014),
 - Presentation about multiplying informations.

- 19th March 2008 (Diekmann and Müller):
 - Training at the Veterinary Faculty of Sarajevo
 - Participants: Veterinary Inspectors from different Cantons of BiH (list of participants see annex)
 - Presentation of World-Rabies-Day-2007-PowerPointPresentation (ppt)
 - Discussion on the usability for trainings of Veterinary Inspectors and public
 - Presentation of Rabies Bulletin Europe Website programmed by Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute, Wusterhausen (www.who-rabies-bulletin-europe.org)
 - Discussion on the necessary contents of a CD-ROM for training and multiplier usage
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 - Meeting at the Veterinary Faculty of Sarajevo
 - Persons visited:
 - Prof. Tarik Bajrovic
 - DVM Raniz Velic
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 - Meeting at the Veterinary Faculty of Sarajevo
 - Persons visited:
 - Ms. Vesna Grkovic, task manager EC delegation
 - Discussion on the Rabies situation in BiH and further actions to be taken
 - Counselling on the IPA programme to be implemented in BiH (estimation of costs for oral immunisation of foxes against rabies, e.g. costs for vaccine baits, distribution of baits, storage and cooling, monitoring of oral vaccination campaigns)

- 20th March 2008:
 - Final meeting on future steps to be taken in rabies control in BiH at State Veterinary Office, Sarajevo
 - Persons visited:
 - DVM Darko Čobanov, Deputy SVO
 - Dr. Karoline Schollmeyer, RTA
 - DVM Edin Lendo, Assistant to RTA
 - First results of the actual mission
 - Recommendations by the experts for the next steps
 - Discussion on the findings and recommendations

5. Description of activities during visit:

- to give information to the future multipliers in BiH on Rabies and the upcoming FVO inspection mission
- to provide basic information on the IPA programme issued for the West Balkan countries
- to give information to the multipliers on training basics
- to give information to the multipliers where to get basic and additional information (internet-websites, Organisations concerned with Rabies, etc.)
- to show possibilities for organizing low-cost trainings,
- to get information on the needs of the multipliers,
- to prepare a basic training collection CD-ROM
- final discussion on future steps to be taken in rabies control in BiH.

6. Results

Rabies training strategy and communication to concerned groups and to the public

- In BiH there is no appropriate rabies surveillance system implemented meeting international standards (sample size and target animals). In general, rabies surveillance in BiH is insufficient and considerably biased at a regional level.
- There is insufficient information at the respective veterinary administrative levels on the number of animals submitted for testing. So far, only positive rabies cases are recorded. There exist no laboratory documentation system at the national reference laboratory for rabies at the veterinary faculty. Also, the spatial arrangement of laboratories has not been changed yet and is still to be improved.
- On a monthly basis, rabies cases from municipalities are collated by the veterinary inspectorates of the Kantons. Rabies data are subsequently compiled and forwarded as part of disease reports both to the Ministries for Agriculture of the Kantons and the Veterinary Inspectorate of the entities on a quarterly and monthly basis, respectively.
- At a federal level veterinary bulletins are issued on a monthly basis containing information on the occurrence and number of animal diseases outbreaks, e.g. rabies in the respective entities of BiH. Those bulletins are issued and delivered by the Veterinary Inspectorate of the entities to all veterinary services.
- Although there are contacts to and collaboration with hunters at a local level, there is currently still no access to hunting statistics.

7. Next steps (to-do-list for the veterinary authorities in BiH as a preparation for further STE-visits)

Please provide details of any follow-up actions:

ACTIVITY NO.	DESCRIPTION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE
3.3.	Establishment of a rabies task force dedicated to the implementation of the upcoming IPA programme	SVO	Immediately
3.3.	Training of veterinary inspectors	Multipliers trained by the experts	June 2008

3.3.	Planning of ORV campaigns to be started in 2009	Rabies task force	Immediately
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8. Conclusions

As in other European countries, rabies in BiH can be eliminated using a focused and sustained eradication strategy supported by international organisations, a well functioning national veterinary / medical infrastructure and with sufficient governmental financial support. However, the necessary foundation for a successful implementation of a national rabies eradication program urgently need to be laid in the near future.

To meet international standards and comply with requirements for the implementation of the upcoming IPA program the short-term experts recommend the following:

1. With regard to the upcoming IPA programme on the control of Rabies and CSV in the West Balkan countries it is strongly suggested to establish a National IPA Task-Force. That Task-Force should comprise four to five representatives including selected Veterinary Inspectors, representatives from the Federal authorities and scientists from the respective laboratories.

For rabies control the objectives of this Task-Force are to:

- (i) Develop an oral rabies vaccination strategy for BiH meeting international standards
 - (ii) Gain expert knowledge in rabies control using ORV
 - (iii) Plan and organise oral vaccination campaigns in BiH and assist in the nationwide implementation, coordinate measures in rabies surveillance and rabies control
 - (iv) Assess the success of ORV campaigns and to counsel the SVO
 - (v) organise countrywide training programmes in Rabies control,
 - (vi) prepare and to hold Rabies control trainings for other Veterinary Inspectors (next level multipliers),
 - (vii) increase public awareness and education on rabies throughout BiH,
 - (viii) enhance contacts and exchange of information on rabies data between veterinary and public health services at different administrative levels
2. Adequate funding of the Task-Force for rabies trainings needs to be guaranteed by the government to allow proper rabies education programmes (e. g. funding of travel costs for the multipliers, technical equipment, availability of training rooms etc.).
 3. The experts would like to stress that the EU can stop the funding of the IPA project at any time in case the necessary requirements for the implementation of an oral rabies vaccination programme are not met.
 4. Veterinary Inspectors should use any available and widespread media (like Farmers magazines, local newspapers, local radio stations, placing info-folders at municipality bureaus etc.) to inform the affected professional groups (farmers, hunters, etc.) about Rabies facts and control. This also seems to be the best way to get the public used to search contact to authorities in case of Rabies (and other health or zoonose problems), because this will improve fast and proper reactions on any suspicion or outbreak of transmissible animal diseases like Rabies.
 5. There is an urgent need to reconsider the still existing rule book and to replace it with a more specific secondary legislation meeting international standards. Oral rabies vaccination of wildlife as ultimate tool of rabies control needs to have a legal basis and therefore, needs to be addressed in the national legislation on rabies control.

9. Date and Signature of Expert

Date: 20th March 2008

Dr. Thomas Müller

Dr. Josef Diekmann