

“DISEASES ARE INVISIBLE, BUT THEY CAN CROSS BORDERS”

In Tanzania, a One Health Coordination Unit has been established at the East African Community Secretariat that seeks to work with all eight EAC partner states' governments. In parallel, capacities among the regional One Health workforce have been developed, such as in a rapid response team for epidemics and pandemics. Furthermore, Uganda and Tanzania address animal and zoonotic diseases across borders better by strengthening their coordination.



“Seasonal migration of wildlife within the transboundary conservation areas, and the frequent cross-border movement of large herds of cattle, sheep, and goats contributes to the heightened

risk of transmission of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses,” says Dr David Balikowa. Along with his colleagues, the Senior Livestock Officer at the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat is one of the driving forces in implementing the One Health approach at a regional level. With the help of GIZ in developing and implementing the regional One Health Strategy (2022–2027), the EAC managed to devise a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania that was signed last year by the respective Ministries of Livestock and Fisheries.

The MoU changed the health of both animals and people for the better. The non-governmental organisation Vétérinaires sans Frontières Germany (VSFG) helped strengthen the cooperation between the two countries at a local level. The VSFG project – which has been enabled

through the support of GIZ – works on enhancing the cooperation between all parties involved as well as surveillance and control of Rift Valley Fever and Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) at the Tanzania-Uganda epizone. The two fatal diseases mainly affect goats and sheep, which leads to a huge economic loss for their owners, many of them women.

“Diseases are invisible, but they cross borders,” Dr Joshua Waiswa explains. Waiswa, who coordinated the project, highlights the possible impact of livestock movement on disease spread. The support of the EAC Secretariat has inspired him. Today, Uganda and Tanzania use the same laboratory for diagnostics and have agreed on the same standards, he says and adds: **“There is no need to import vaccines over long distances anymore and samples can be tested in nearby laboratories across borders. We experts from Uganda and Tanzania are able to share our experiences today.”**

A great foundation for further cooperation.



READ MORE ON JOSHUA WAISWA'S WORK AND THE EAC IN OUR ONLINE BROCHURE HIGHLIGHTS

About the EAC

The GIZ Global Programme Pandemic Prevention and Response, One Health (PPOH) cooperated in the East African Region with the GIZ Programme “Support to Pandemic Preparedness in the EAC Region” (PanPrep). It has worked across sectors and cooperated closely with key stakeholders such as the Quadripartite Alliance, the East African Community (EAC), the Africa Centres for Diseases Control and Prevention and the Africa One Health University Network (AFROHUN). Through implementing the One Health approach across different institutions, and fostering collaboration from national, regional, and continental to global levels, the PPOH utilised all synergies.