

Impact Assessment of RSU

Background:

The Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum within SAARC is the highest technical level of consultative institution comprising the Chief Veterinary Officers/Animal Husbandry Commissioners/Director Generals/Directors from the Ministry of Agriculture/Livestock (from the eight SAARC Member States (MSs) dealing with livestock production and animal health. The first SAARC CVOs forum met in New Delhi, India on 9-10 June 2008 largely to discuss the challenges of Trans-boundary animal diseases (TADs) and other aspects of livestock in the region. So far four subsequent SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum (Bangladesh-2009, Sri Lanka-2010, Kathmandu-2014, Kathmandu-2016) and one special CVOs Forum (Bangkok-2015) have met which, inter alia, agreed on various actions related to animal production and TADs control, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). The Sixth meeting of the SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum will be held in Thimphu Bhutan from 9-10 May 2017. The Forum laid a solid foundation of a platform for multilateral discussions and paved way for the establishment of a framework for sustainable regional cooperation on animal health in South Asia.

On the recommendation of the CVOs Forum and with approval of the SAARC Summit, the Regional Support Unit (RSU) was established in June 2010 as a FAO Project with external donor support to implement regional projects to control and manage priority Trans-boundary Animal Diseases of livestock through a harmonized regional policy for South Asia. Two successive externally supported projects were implemented by FAO in partnership with the SAARC Secretariat, FAO Regional Office for Asian and Pacific (RAP) and the SAARC Member States (MSs).

The overall objective was to contribute to the improvement of food safety, human health, sufficient and balanced nutrition and wellbeing, and alleviation of poverty in SAARC MSs through improved control of important TADs, including the then ongoing crisis due to HPAI. The specific objective was to strengthen and empower SAARC in its ability to prevent, control and eradicate TADs, including HPAI, through improved veterinary and public health services and inter-sectoral collaboration on a regional basis. This regional project also strengthened the Regional Diagnostic Laboratories (RDLs) for FMD, PPR and HPAI in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan respectively and had created valuable network of Epidemiology and laboratory experts in the region.

While specific outputs have been shared with the stakeholders, e.g., Member States, through various meetings including SAARC CVOs Forum, the time has come now to make an objective assessment of the contributions of RSU as viewed by the stakeholders and the necessity to continue with the Institution, i.e., RSU. In order to do so, a brief questionnaire-based survey is contemplated on the usefulness of RSU as perceived by the stakeholders. This will help in assessing the urge to continue and find ways to sustain beyond the donor supported initiatives. The CVOs are requested to kindly apply their best judgment in responding to the questionnaire and send in confidence to RSU. A synthesis of the collective responses will be shared during the 6th CVO's Meeting in May, 2017.

Country:

Name:

Designation/Title:

Department/Ministry

Date:

Part 1. General Information

This section comprises of general information about SAARC CVO forum, genesis of RSU and awareness about the activities undertaken by RSU. Your answers in this section will help in assessing your understanding of RSU working mechanism in partnership with SAARC CVO forum.

- | | | | |
|---|--|-----|----|
| 1 | Do you know that SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum is the highest technical level of consultative institution dealing exclusively on livestock sector within SAARC? | Yes | No |
| 2 | Do you know that Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had been fully funding RSU for SAARC through external donor support since 2010 | Yes | No |

| | | | |
|---|---|-----|----|
| 3 | Do you know that all the SAARC CVOs meeting since 2014 till date were being co-funded by RSU through its project grant | Yes | No |
| 4 | Do you know that 6 th meeting of the SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum will be held in Thimpu Bhutan from 9-10 May 2017 and will be co-funded by RSU? | Yes | No |
| 5 | Do you agree that SAARC CVO's Forum is a good platform for multilateral discussions on animal health, production and related issues including regional trade in animal and animal products? | Yes | No |
| 6 | Do you know that the establishment of RSU was proposed by SAARC CVO's Forum in their ever first meeting held in India in 2008? | Yes | No |
| 7 | Has CVO office received all invitations for nomination for participation of his or representative in the meetings/workshops/events organized by RSU? | Yes | No |
| 8 | Have you or your Office been invited/nominated or participated any of the below events organized by RSU since August 2015 (√ the box) | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> ADB Project Launching Workshop: 26 August 2015, Bangkok, Thailand | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> SAARC EpiNet Meeting, 2-4 February 2016, Kathmandu, Nepal | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> PPR Regional Roadmap Meeting, 12-13 April 2016, Nagarkot, Nepal | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 th SAARC CVOs Meeting, 14-15 April 2016, Nagarkot, Nepal | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Lab Directors Meeting and Workshop, 1-2 June 2016, Dhaka, Bangladesh | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> FMD Regional Roadmap Meeting, 14-16 Dec 2016, Colombo, Sri Lanka | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> SAARC EpiNet Forum Meeting, 27-28 Feb 2017, New Delhi, India | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other events through RSU/FAO (please specify): | | |

Part 2. Mandate and Performance of RSU

The mandate of RSU is to bring regional harmonization in control of priority TADs among the SAARC Member States through enhancing national and regional epidemiology and laboratory capacities. Various activities including meetings, workshop, trainings etc were conducted under both EU and ADB funded projects to build technical capacity and to harmonize approaches/protocols aiming to prevent, control, and eradicate TADs and Emerging Infectious Diseases (EIDs) in the region. Your response to questions in this section will help assessing the relevance of activities undertaken under EU and ADB funded projects between 2010 to 2016 with that of the RSU mandate, vision and mission.

Note: The description of projects and details of the activities can be seen at RSU website: <http://www.rsu-saarc.org/eu-funded-project>; <http://www.rsu-saarc.org/adb-funded-project.php>; <http://www.rsu-saarc.org/activities-and-reports>.

| | | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 9 | What is your assessment about the appropriateness of the current mandate of RSU, as mentioned above? | Fully compliant | Not compliant at all | Need modifications |
| 10 | If you answer is "Need modification" to the question above, please suggest modification in the current mandate of RSU: | | | |
| 11 | Were the events organized by RSU since 2010 relevant to the needs of your country? | Yes | No | |

| | | | | |
|----|---|---------------|------------|--------|
| 21 | Do you think RSU has contributed in your efforts towards poverty reduction in SAARC MSs by lowering animal disease incidences through improved control of priority TADs in the region? | Yes | No | |
| 22 | Do you agree that epidemiology capacity (surveillance, risk analysis, outbreak investigation, reporting, etc) has been strengthened/improved in the region by RSU implemented projects and activities ? | Yes | No | |
| - | If answer to above is “Yes”, then how valuable were these for your countries? | Significantly | Reasonably | Poorly |
| 23 | Do you agree that laboratory capacity (Proficiency testing, Quality Assurance, reagent sharing, early diagnosis, etc) has been strengthened/improved in the region by RSU activities? | Yes | No | |
| - | If answer to above is “Yes”, then how valuable were these for your countries? | Significantly | Reasonably | Poorly |
| 24 | Do you agree that Information Sharing mechanism in the region has improved through weekly disease E-info, Quarterly Info Bulletin and website launched by RSU? | Yes | No | |
| - | If answer to above is “Yes”, then how valuable were these for your countries ? | Significantly | Reasonably | Poorly |
| 25 | Do you agree that RSU has improved disease contingency / strategic planning capacities in the region to follow global initiatives of FMD/PPR control pathways? | Yes | No | |
| - | If answer to above is “Yes”, then how valuable were these for your countries ? | Significantly | Reasonably | Poorly |
| 26 | Do you agree that RSU has highlighted the new /emergng threats of animal origins having global and regional significance, e.g.: AMR/AMU, bioinformatics, Zoonotic diseases etc for appropriate planning /action by the Member States? | Yes | No | |

Part-4: Sustainability of RSU

So far the activities of the RSU have been implemented by FAO through external supports, first by EU-HPED (201-2014) and then AD/JFPR (2015-2017) in partnership with SAARC Secretariat and cooperation and support from the Member States. As was originally envisaged, RSU will have to be eventually institutionalized within SAARC for long-term sustainability of the mandates of RSU. The following questions are aimed in obtaining your views on sustaining RSU after the current ADB-funded project closes on 31 July, 2017.

| | | | |
|----|--|---|----|
| 27 | Do you agree that RSU has played a positive role to enhance coordination among SAARC Member States for control of priority TADs (FMD, PPR & HPAI) in the region? | Yes | No |
| 28 | Do you foresee usefulness of RSU to meet the future needs for TADs control in the region? | Yes | No |
| 29 | Should RSU be sustained? | Yes | No |
| 30 | In your opinion what should be the mandate of the RSU in the future? (Tick the appropriate one(s)) | Facilitate overall regional cooperation among MSs on control of animal diseases Harmonize regional approach for TADs control Continue Epi and Lab networking and capacity building in the region Monitor emerging threats of animal origin-AMR, food safety, animal waste management | |
| 31 | Do you think countries in the SAARC should contribute (in cash or kind) to sustain the RSU? | Yes | No |
| 32 | How can your country contribute to sustain RSU? | By direct financial contribution according to prevailing SAARC mechanism | |

By seconding 1-2 professional as per need of RSU as provided in SAARC mechanism

Both of the above

None of the above

- 33 In your opinion, what should be minimum human resource requirement for RSU to implement activities defined above?(Tick and give number in the relevant column in the table below you think imperative)

| Core Technical Expertise | | Core Support Staff | |
|--|----|--|----|
| Positions | No | Positions | No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RSU Coordinator/Team Leader | | <input type="checkbox"/> Program/Operations Officer | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laboratory Expert | | <input type="checkbox"/> Admin/Operations Assistant | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Epidemiology Expert | | <input type="checkbox"/> Website manager | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data expert | | <input type="checkbox"/> Driver | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Disease expert | | <input type="checkbox"/> Others,-please specify _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others,-please specify _____ | | | |
| TOTAL (Tech Experts) | | TOTAL (Support Staff) | |

- 34 Would you like to depute either an Epidemiology Expert, a Laboratory Expert or any other human resources from the Table above from your country to RSU at your cost ?
Yes No

- 35 If constrained by financial resource, What **minimum core activities** RSU should undertake anyway (assign numbers in the order of your priority from the list below):
SAARC CVOs Forum Lab Directors Forum
EpiNet Forum Capacity building through training
Information sharing Progressive Control Pathway assessment and advocacy(PPR and FMD)
Technical advisory services on emergency preparedness for emerging diseases
Assisting development of risk-based control strategies for important TADs
Any other activities:

- 36 Any other comment (not covered above)

Thank you for your time!

**Regional Support Unit for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
(RSU-SAARC)**

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