Developing practical biosecurity guidelines for FMD endemic situations

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FMD virus is a highly contagious disease affecting cloven hooved animals including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats and pigs. The disease is endemic in several parts of Asia, as well as most of Africa and the Middle East. Large-scale vaccination of livestock against FMD has led to the successful eradication (or control) of the disease, for example in the Philippines. In 1997, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) established the South-East Asia Foot and Mouth Disease (SEAFMD) campaign with the aim of increasing livestock sector productivity and economic output through the control and eradication of FMD in South-East Asia. In 2010 the program was extended to include China, and in 2016 Mongolia. Despite the benefit associated with large-scale vaccination, additional biosecurity risks can be created. Veterinarians, traditional healers, village or community animal health workers and vaccinators all pose heightened risk of spreading infectious agents given their close contact with animals and because their role requires moving from herd to herd, farm-to-farm or between villages. It has been recommended that biosecurity measures must be adapted by vaccination teams to prevent the inadvertent spread of disease, however the majority of existing guidelines are focused on developed countries experiencing exotic animal disease (EAD) outbreaks (as opposed to the endemic disease state currently in Myanmar and Lao PDR). Little material is currently available that accounts for the realities in developing countries, where cultural context and low biosecurity awareness need to be addressed for any such effort to be successful. Supported by a literature review and in-country workshops, biosecurity guidelines for vaccination teams in Lao PDR and Myanmar have been developed to address this gap. The procedures follow the core principles of: situational awareness, segregation, cleaning and disinfection. Guidelines and factsheets are currently being disseminated to support cattle vaccination campaigns in both Myanmar and Lao PDR.

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