Capacity building for animal disease risk modeling and related decision support systems in Liberia

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The authors present developments in the infrastructure for veterinary services in Bong County, Liberia, explaining the values of the installed capacity of Trans-boundary Animal Disease Information (TAD-info) system, a Decision Support System for national veterinary services. The role of epidemiological stations established in four zones of the country in feeding data from animal population, clinical observations and specimens collected for confirmatory diagnosis at the Central Veterinary Laboratory in Fendal is provided. TAD-info was first installed at the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI), Bong County in April 2010, with support from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. In spite of technical challenges in manpower development, it has since contributed reasonably to national statistical record gathering on animal health and disease modeling. The potential use and improvements in manpower development for optimal use of this information gathering and processing facility is presented in this poster. There is need for training and retraining of users to fully utilize the potentials of the facility for the country in order to achieve the desired developmental goal. Emphasis has been placed on the training on geo-referencing and laboratory diagnostic support at the Central Veterinary Laboratory. The growing relationship between this facility and a consortium of Universities for control and prevention of endemic, emerging and neglected human-animal diseases in West Africa is discussed.