

Bridging the gaps, building the future: Operationalizing One Health surveillance and information sharing operational tool (SIS-OT) in Nigeria

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Introduction

Zoonotic diseases represent a substantial growing threat in Nigeria, exacerbated by rapid urbanization, population pressure, and complex interactions at the human animal environment interface. Nigeria, implemented the Surveillance and Information Sharing Operational Tool (SIS-OT), developed by the Tripartite organizations FAO, WHO, and WOA, in response to these risks. This initiative aimed to evaluate, prioritize, and strengthen coordinated surveillance capacities within the National One Health (OH) framework across sectors and administrative levels.

Methods

A participatory national workshop was conducted from September 28 to October 1, 2024, convening over 60 experts across the human-animal-environment health sectors and key technical partners. Utilizing the SIS-OT Excel based workbook, participants assessed 32 core activities critical to functional multisectoral surveillance systems. Evaluation covered five thematic domains:

pre-planning, assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation. Four priority zoonotic diseases: Lassa fever, Mpox, Bovine tuberculosis and Rabies guided discussions. Capacity levels were scored, and targeted activities selected to develop a five-year roadmap for implementation.

Results

Assessment revealed critical systemic gaps. Of the 32 activities evaluated, 56.3% were at the lowest capacity level (level 1), with only 6.3% reaching full completion. Key weaknesses were observed in legal frameworks, workforce planning, infrastructure mapping, and data interoperability. The presence of a national OH secretariat, growing political momentum, multisectoral participation and willingness to institutionalize OH coordination at sub-national levels were highlighted as enablers. The developed roadmap outlined progressive actions; stakeholder mapping, training on data systems, legal harmonization workshops,

simulation exercises, and establishment of data sharing agreements.

Conclusion

The SIS-OT process revealed key gaps and fostered cross sector dialogue, producing a clear roadmap to enhance OH surveillance and laboratory networks. Addressing workforce development, digital systems, legal frameworks, and coordination is vital. This approach provides a scalable model for ECOWAS countries.