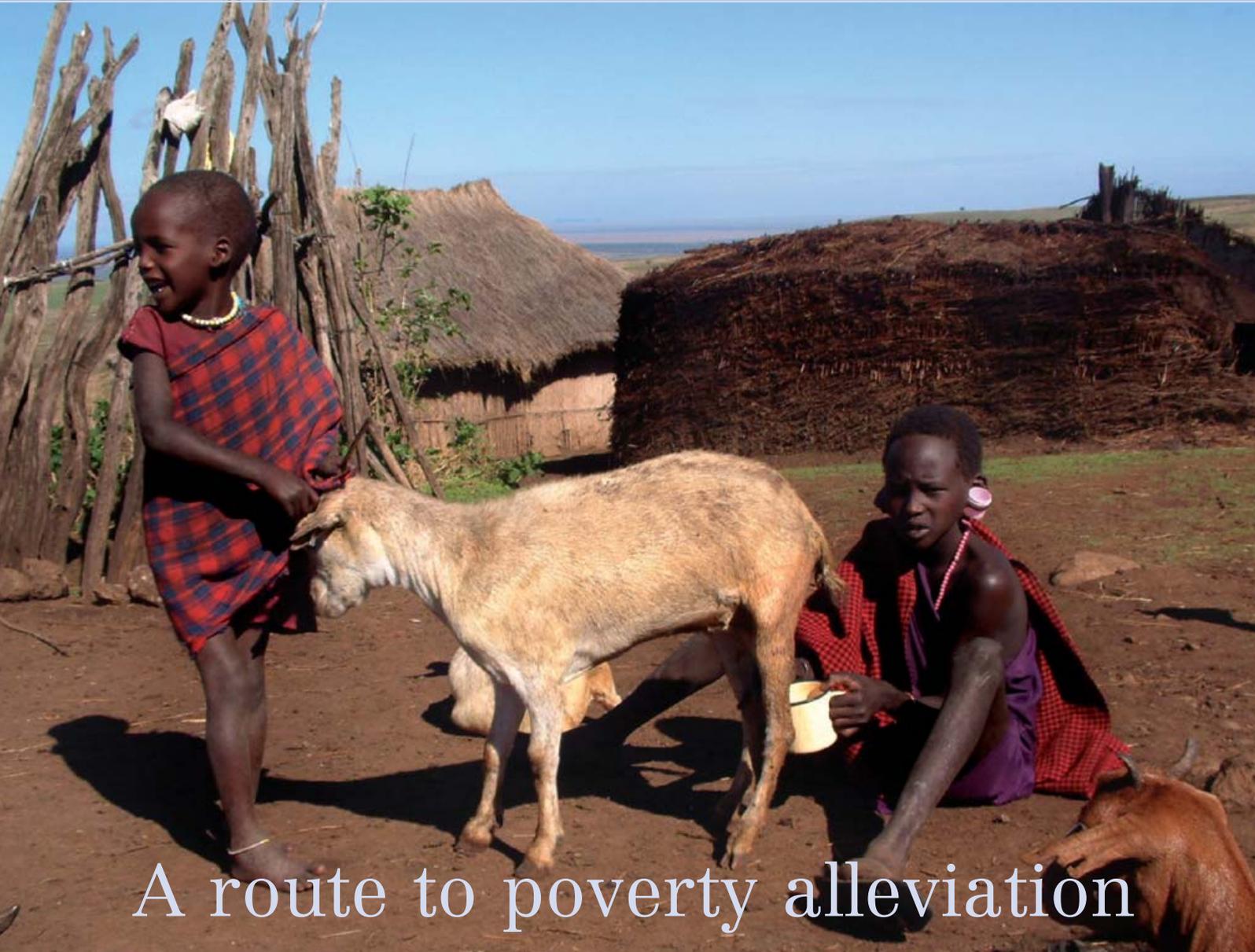


# The Control of Neglected Zoonotic Diseases



A route to poverty alleviation

Report of a Joint WHO/DFID-AHP Meeting  
with the participation of FAO and OIE

Geneva, 20 and 21 September 2005



DFID



**World Health  
Organization**



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Geneva, 2006

Zoonoses and Veterinary Public Health  
Department of Food Safety, Zoonoses, and Foodborne Diseases  
Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments

<http://www.who.int/zoonoses>

## **WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

The control of neglected zoonotic diseases : a route to poverty alleviation : report of a joint WHO/DFID-AHP meeting, 20 and 21 September 2005, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, with the participation of FAO and OIE.

1.Zoonoses - prevention and control. 2.Veterinary medicine. 3.Animals, Domestic.  
4.Poverty. I.World Health Organization. II.United Kingdom. Dept. for International Development. Animal Health Programme.

ISBN 92 4 159430 6  
ISBN 978 92 4 159430 1

(NLM classification: WC 950)

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## Preface

As we enter the second phase of our attempt to meet the Millennium Development Goals, it is important to identify special areas where targeted interventions can have a real impact in reducing poverty in households and communities.

Because they affect both people and animals, especially where they involve livestock, interventions to control zoonoses require concerted action between the veterinary and the human health sectors, while also offering substantial benefits to both sectors. WHO has long taken the lead in bringing together international and national organizations to deal with the problems posed by both emerging and endemic zoonoses. Although much publicity has been accorded to the emerging zoonotic diseases, it is the endemic, and occasionally epidemic zoonoses, which year in, year out affect poor livestock keepers in marginalized communities. These diseases were the focus of this meeting.

Meanwhile, the DFID Animal Health Programme (DFID-AHP) has been engaged in research on zoonotic disease for two-and-a-half decades. It has become increasingly obvious that the results obtained in the field of animal health need to be very firmly linked with the work being done on disease in humans and this challenge has been enthusiastically taken up by the research community.

However, in order for the work being done on research and control to have a real impact, it needs to achieve a higher profile and attract more substantial and long-term funding. This meeting, organized jointly by WHO and DFID-AHP, brought together donors, researchers and those working on the control of endemic zoonoses in three continents, to discuss the current situation, recent achievements and map out a way forward.

It is our view that the control of endemic zoonotic diseases offers a very real and highly cost-effective opportunity for alleviating poverty in remote rural and marginalized peri-urban communities of poor livestock keepers. This report outlines some of the reasons why, as seen by those involved in research on and control of these diseases.

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## Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank all those who participated in this meeting and who provided the background material and presentations from which this report was compiled. Details of individual presentations can be found in the attached meeting agenda and these correspond to the relevant sections in this report. Other sections are based on the working group reports and the recommendations were formulated at plenary sessions of the meeting.

Particular thanks go to Winyi Kaboyo for chairing the meeting, Maria Vang Johansen for acting as rapporteur, and Marion Reverdin for the day-to-day organization of the meeting and for assembling an impressive dossier of background material and abstracts. For those readers who are interested, the full dossier can be obtained by e-mailing her at [reverdinm@who.int](mailto:reverdinm@who.int).

Special thanks are also due to Alexandra Shaw for her tireless efforts in finalizing this comprehensive report.



## Summary

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Measures to safeguard human health and to control disease in livestock and other animals for the prevention of the transmission of animal-borne or zoonotic diseases are too often undertaken in isolation of one another. The meeting, organized jointly by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Animal Health Programme of the UK Department for International Development (DFID-AHP), showed the dual benefits to be gained by both the animal and human health sectors by investing in the integrated and coordinated control of these diseases.

The meeting saw how, with more effective measures, we have the chance to simultaneously save lives and secure livelihoods. Effective control of zoonotic diseases would mean a decreased disease burden, poverty reduction and increased food supply for large numbers of the rural poor worldwide, thereby contributing towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>.

Cost-effective control measures already exist for several neglected zoonotic diseases such as rabies and brucellosis. More integrated interventions can be packaged through these existing structures. In certain cases, with the right programmes and adequate funding, this could lead to regional or even global control, or complete elimination of individual diseases such as dog rabies and echinococcosis in North Africa or brucellosis and echinococcosis in northern China.

The meeting recommended that the possible next steps to achieve an integrated animal-human health approach should include:

- promoting the concept of 'one health' by dealing with health problems in both people, their livestock and other domestic and wild animals they depend on through the development of integrated 'control packages' that address several disease/health problems;
- undertaking a number of measures to raise the profile of the neglected zoonotic diseases both internationally and within affected countries;
- systematically collecting data on the incidence of these diseases supported by studies to estimate their dual burden on people and on livestock, quantify under-reporting and identify communities and groups at risk;
- investing in the development of new tools needed to effectively control these diseases, particularly in the field of diagnostics.

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