

Rift Valley fever (RVF) is a devastating, vector borne, zoonotic disease, first described in the Rift Valley in Kenya in 1931. Most of Africa is endemic for RVF which is characterised by long inter-epidemic intervals. The historical prevalence of the disease both in Eastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula indicates that these regions are always at risk.

The cross border risks associated with RVF have made the disease one of the priorities of the Global Framework for Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs).

In order to contribute to the GF-TADs agenda, the OIE Regional and Sub-Representations for the Middle East and East Africa have included RVF in their action plans.

In this regard, the objective of this conference is to review the main challenges of RVF in relation to safe trade in animals between the Horn of Africa and Middle East.

To this end, the recent progress made in describing, detecting, diagnosing and preventing the disease will be highlighted.

In addition, specific issues related to surveillance, diagnosis, vaccine production and development, vaccination strategies including vaccine distribution, risk analysis, regional disease behavior and movement of animals will be addressed. Translation of these subjects into action for our two regions will be discussed first in workshop sessions.

In conclusion, the conference will deliberate and make recommendations on diagnostic tests, availability of vaccines and general research and development in line with OIE Terrestrial Manual Chapter on RVF.

Recommendations of previous meetings on RVF e.g. Rome 2011, Bloemfontein 2009 and Cairo 2007 will also be taken into account.