

PANORAMA

Thematic portfolio



Strengthening preparedness
and resilience to emergencies



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PERSPECTIVES

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AROUND THE WORLD

*Namibia is an arid country situated in the south-west of Africa. This region is rich in wildlife, including the African buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), a known carrier of foot and mouth disease (FMD). A large proportion of the Namibian people depend on livestock for their livelihoods. With a population of 2.4 million people, and 90% of agricultural land suitable for livestock, the Namibian livestock and meat sectors have, over a number of years, developed into a successful export-orientated industry. The Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS) has long been recognised as playing a crucial role in safeguarding both animal health and international trade. The outcome is a strategic collaborative partnership between industry and the DVS.*

Background

The Meat Board of Namibia (MBN) was established in 1981 by the livestock industry, with the mission of promoting the interests of the industry in Namibia and elsewhere, and is fully funded through the payment of levies by producers and traders of livestock and livestock products. Representatives of the livestock and meat industry are members of the MBN.

An Emergency Animal Health Fund was established by the MBN in 1994 for the sole purpose of providing resources that can be mobilised quickly during animal health emergencies which threaten Namibian livestock and meat export markets. This partnership was driven by the industry's need for market access, i.e. by the private partner.

The partnership

In 2015, an FMD outbreak in the FMD protection zone of Namibia (Fig. 1) required swift action from the public–private partnership to prevent spillover into the part of Namibia that is recognised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) as an FMD-free zone [1], and the possible suspension of export markets.

The role of each partner during the outbreak is set out in the table below.

Public partner (DVS) input

Technical expertise and activation of the FMD contingency plan

The DVS mobilised financial resources – NAD 180 million was approved by Cabinet – and implemented outbreak control measures, such as intensified disease surveillance, a mass vaccination and tagging campaign, and establishing and staffing road blocks to enforce movement restrictions and disinfect vehicles.

Provision of personnel and appointment of temporary staff

A total of 826 temporary staff were recruited and trained to augment veterinary personnel for the disinfection of vehicles at road blocks and the vaccination campaign.

Emergency disease control measures

As stated above.

Private partner (MBN) input

An animal health consultation forum to establish the situation, identify needs and coordinate and mobilise assistance

This included the procurement of equipment, creating awareness campaigns, appointing expert consultants, hiring veterinarians to conduct post-vaccination surveys, providing rations to temporary staff and managing the maintenance of the veterinary cordon fence.

Early mobilisation of finances to the amount of NAD 7 million

Personnel assistance

The outcome

Through this partnership, a 'win-win' situation was created for both the public and private partners. For the public partner, funds were available immediately, with buy-in and support from producers to contain the outbreak. The result was a swift implementation of emergency control measures and the containment of the outbreak. For the private partner, fast action and containment of the outbreak resulted in the maintenance of the FMD-free zone and access to livestock and meat export markets.

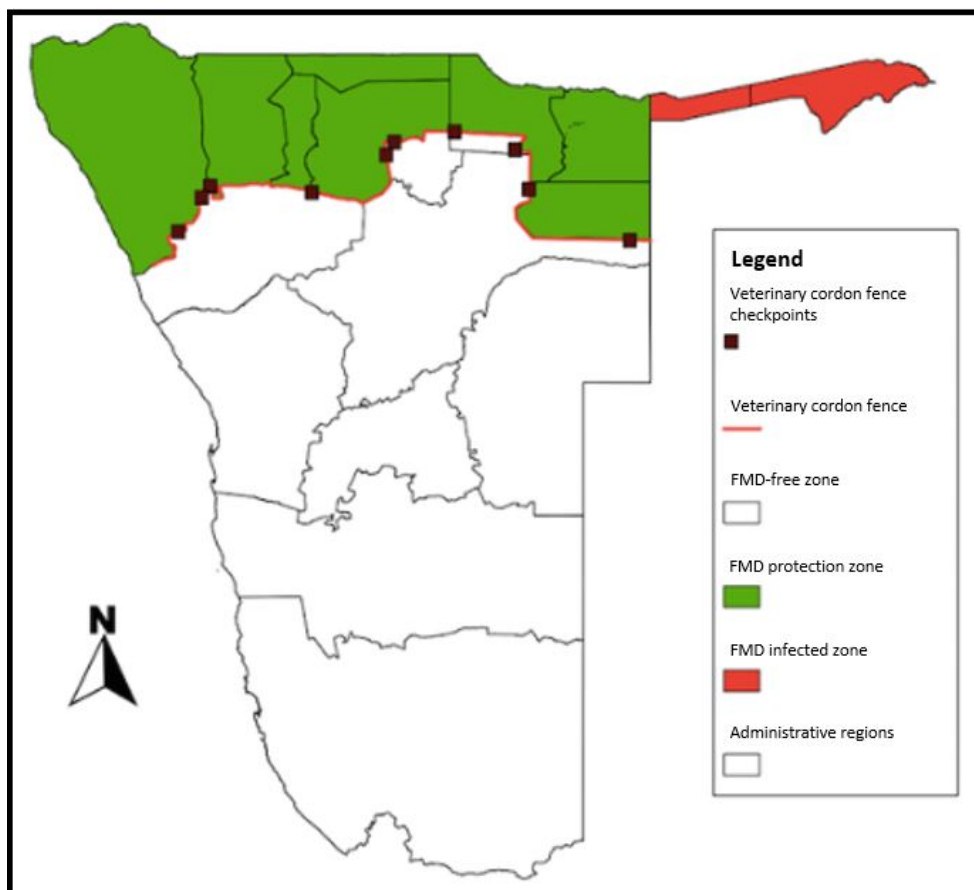


Fig. 1. FMD control zones in Namibia. © Directorate of Veterinary Services, Namibia.



Fig. 2. Roadblock on the Namibia–Angola border. © Anja Boshoff



Fig. 3. Ring vaccination against FMD. © Anja Boshoff



Fig. 4. Recordkeeping. © Anja Boshoff

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AROUND THE WORLD

► SUCCESS STORIES

Emergency preparedness through strategic partnerships

KEYWORDS

#emergency preparedness, #Namibia, #public-private partnership, #Veterinary Services.

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