Preventing and controlling neglected parasitic zoonoses

A key role for the animal health sector

1 NEGLECTED PARASITIC ZOONOSES

These diseases are caused by parasites such as *Taenia solium*, *Trichinella*, *Echinococcus* and *Fasciola*. They are often forgotten or overlooked because:

- They cause mild, chronic or no disease in animals.
- Economic losses might not be evident.
- Primarily affect the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

Animals are crucial in the transmission of neglected parasitic zoonoses. The animal health sector* plays a vital role in breaking parasitic cycles by leading and implementing control measures in animals.

*Includes veterinarians and animal health practitioners, veterinary authorities, meat inspectors, animal traders, policy-makers and others.

2 DISEASE IMPACT

The disease impact is underestimated, and current data is likely to only represent the tip of the iceberg.

- **Taenia solium**
  - 2.8 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).
  - The total number of people suffering from neurocysticercosis is estimated to be between 2.56 and 8.30 million.

- **Echinococcus**
  - More than 1 million people are affected with echinococcosis at any one time.

- **Trichinella**
  - 10,000 infections annually worldwide.

- **Fasciola**
  - At least 2.4 million people are infected in more than 70 countries, with several million at risk.

3 ACTIONS FOR THE ANIMAL HEALTH SECTOR

The animal health sector can contribute to preventing and controlling neglected parasitic zoonoses.

**Field veterinarians and other animal health practitioners can:**

- Create awareness among farmers and local communities.
- Provide guidance to animal owners on how to prevent and control the diseases.

**Veterinary authorities can:**

- Establish surveillance programmes.
- Conduct awareness campaigns.
- Set up and support control programmes.
- Liaise with human health authorities and others as needed.

**Diagnose the diseases and alert animal owners and authorities.**

**Tailor the prevention and control measures to the local and epidemiological conditions.**

**Ensure that the recommendations are feasible for the farmers to implement.**

Veterinary authorities should provide leadership, support and resources to implement the needed actions.

For a more effective, efficient and sustainable control of neglected zoonoses, collaborating with other sectors under the One-Health approach is essential.