The known and the unknowns: A multipathogen survey to identify diseases in cattle herds in Tanzania

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Introduction

Livestock farmers in Africa are facing important challenges on animal health.

DISEASES OF CATTLE ARE REPORTED BY FARMERS AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR LIMITING PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOME GENERATION.

- Limited capacity and infrastructure of government services for disease identification and control.
- Lack of systematic disease surveillance – Ad hoc surveys give biased picture on priority diseases.

Materials and methods

Project objectives: (i) confirm presence of well-known cattle pathogens; (ii) investigate presence of other pathogens rarely looked for.

Results

Project objectives:

- 153 cattle farmers interviewed
- Smallholder dairy farmer (intensive, few animals)
- Pastoralists (extensive, large herds)

1. Tick borne diseases quite widespread in the study areas
2. Preliminary results suggest discrepancies with farmers perception of disease relative importance
3. Se / Sp of diagnostics not considered
4. Further lab work to be conducted
5. Understand disease patterns according to (i) geographical location (ii) farming systems and (iii) farmers practices.

Research into use

- Feedback to farmers – meetings at village/district level to
  (i) discuss findings,
  (ii) share knowledge on disease,
  (iii) discuss control options (e.g. treatments, vaccination, biosecurity)
- Feedback to Government Veterinary Services