Ancient farming styles and old zoonoses: 
**brucellosis** and **Q fever** among pastoralist and smallholder cattle herds in Tanzania

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Introduction

Brucellosis and Q fever are old and well known zoonoses associated with livestock keeping. They are the cause of reproductive illness in ruminants and are associated with important economic impacts. Both diseases are widespread in the African continent. In Tanzania two main cattle herding styles co-exist: pastoralism (large and extensively raised herds) and smallholder (few animals under zero-grazing). The differences in management practices in both systems are likely to impact the spread and burden of these diseases. This poster outlines the methods and preliminary findings on prevalence and farming practices.

Materials and methods

Project objectives: (i) estimate presence of these pathogens among cattle keeping communities in 2 different ecological zones in Tanzania; (ii) explore factors that may explain differences in burden and practices associated with zoonotic transmission.

Results

Table 1. Seroprevalence results by category (preliminary findings)

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<tr>
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<th>Brucellosis (# animals tested)</th>
<th>Q fever (# animals tested)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall (among SICK cattle)</td>
<td>11.7% (403)</td>
<td>15.0% (393)</td>
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<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Morogoro</td>
<td>15.3% (190)</td>
<td>14.9% (181)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanga</td>
<td>8.5% (213)</td>
<td>15.2% (211)</td>
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<td><strong>Farming system</strong></td>
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<td>Intensive/semi-intensive</td>
<td>4.5% (89)</td>
<td>6.8% (88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral</td>
<td>14.8% (237)</td>
<td>19.3% (228)</td>
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Other relevant findings:

- 44% of farmers reported abortion events in the previous year
- Most farmers report low conception rates (possible undetected early abortions)
- Less than 1% of farmers reporting brucellosis as “common” in the herd; Q fever disease (both animal and human) is unknown to vast majority of farmers
- 38% of farmers reported always consuming raw milk (primarily pastoralist) vs 52% consuming always boiled milk

Food for thought

- Evidence of circulation of these zoonotic pathogens in dairy and pastoralist herds in the two regions in Tanzania
- Brucellosis and Q fever seroprevalence (among sick animals) 3 times higher in pastoralist farms than in intensively raised herds
- Lack of knowledge on presence and transmission pathways of both diseases, despite likely presence of clinically ill animals
- Evidence of risky practices for zoonotic transmission

Acknowledgements: The CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

Funding: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany) and the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH)