CAMEROON – MOBILE LAB DETECTS ANIMAL DISEASES

VIDEO

IAEA CAR DRIVING IN THE ROAD
ROAD/VET WALKING/HERDING AT SUNSET
CLOSE UP GOAT WITH SORES/DEAD GOAT

AUDIO

NARRATION:
A four-hour drive over dusty, potholed roads. // Dr. Abel Wade and a team of vets arrive at a remote village in Cameroon’s far north region where goats have reportedly been dying. (14.5)

They have diarrhea, infected eyes and sores in their mouths. (4)

DR. ABEL WADE: (In English) M
“Yes there are a lot of mortalities, a lot of losses. You see some people crying because they lose a lot of animals…” (6.5)

NARRATION:
Fatal animal illnesses such as Foot and Mouth disease are endemic here. They can spread quickly and can destroy entire herds. (7.5)

ANIMAL HERDS
Now a revolutionary device - based on a nuclear related technique - could help in limiting the spread of threatening diseases. (6.5)
Some 300 million people in African society depend on livestock— a critical lifeline to financial and food security.  (7.5)

Cameroon in West Africa is no exception. Animals are raised throughout the country and over one third of the population breed livestock for a living. (9.5)

Cattle, sheep, goats and chickens bring in much-needed revenue for families. They also serve as a bank - for savings. If a family needs cash for medical or school fees or marriage – animals are sold at market. (13.5)

Yet all this can be shattered by disease. (2.5)

Galgava’s animals have PPR – Peste des Petites Ruminants, a highly contagious virus that kills goats and sheep in large numbers. (9)

“Now disease has killed almost all of them. Poverty has stepped into my house and I don’t know how I will feed my family. “ (15)

To control and contain an outbreak, it’s vital for vets to diagnose a disease at an early stage. (5.5)

After four years of research, scientists from the Joint FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization and IAEA – International Atomic Energy Agency succeeded in finding a solution. (13.5)
They have condensed a sophisticated laboratory-based diagnostic system into a simple, portable tool kit using a nuclear related technique known as LAMP-PCR. (10)

Today, Cameroon’s national veterinary laboratory—which is responsible for monitoring and responding to outbreak of diseases – is taking this portable laboratory directly to the field. (11)

“You see, before, what I used to do is to come and take some samples, take them back to the lab, find time to run them before I produce the results.”. (9.5)

And that meant days or even weeks before anyone could confirm an outbreak. Now, Dr. Wade says, the result is almost instant. (8)

“With the LAMP-PCR, once in the field, I can run the test, in the bush, in the farm, and get the result in less than an hour.” (9)

By putting samples into a device linked to a computer powered by a car battery, the reaction can be monitored and a disease diagnosed. (8.5)

With an instant diagnosis, veterinarians can advise farmers how to contain and control the disease -
by quarantine, treatment or vaccination. (9)

Fast action can NOT ONLY limit damage to the affected herds, but can also prevent the disease from spreading into neighboring villages or even other countries. (9.5)

With the population rising and the ever present risk of drought and famine – Cameroon needs to protect one of its most precious commodities – livestock – for future generations. (10.5)

This report was produced by Louise Potterton and Petr Pavlicek for the United Nations. (4.5)