

SOS partners COCTU and COVAB, Makerere given Innovation Award for sleeping sickness control campaign

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The successes achieved by the Stamp Out Sleeping sickness (SOS) campaign in the control of sleeping sickness in Northern Uganda have been recognised by the Ugandan Ministry of Public Service which has awarded COCTU and COVAB, Makerere with the prestigious Collaboration and Networking across Government Award". The Stamp Out Sleeping sickness (SOS) campaign is a public private partnership (PPP) that was launched in Kampala, Uganda in October 2006.



SOS partners COCTU and COVAB, Makerere given innovation award for sleeping sickness control campaign Awarded by Prime minister AMAMA MBABAZI

The Award recognises where two or more government institutions or teams have excelled through collaboration and networking to improve public services. The SOS partnership stakeholders include the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources & Biosecurity (COVAB), Makerere, Uganda and the University of Edinburgh (supported by UK Department for International Development), UK, IKARE, a venture philanthropy charity supported by IK Investment Partners and Ceva Santé Animale, a global veterinary health company, who in 2006 signed a Memorandum of Understanding with COCTU (Coordinating Office for Control of Trypanosomiasis in *Uganda*).

The SOS campaign provided emergency treatment to around 500,000 cattle in several districts in Northern Uganda. By controlling the disease in cattle, who act as a reservoir for the disease which is transmitted by tsetse flies, it is possible to greatly reduce or stop transmission to humans while also protecting the animals.

The innovative approaches of the PPP included, for the first time, engaging young veterinary students from Makerere to carry out the interventions in the districts of Dokolo, Kaberamaido,

Soroti etc. Other key building blocks are educating and teaching both farmers and key stakeholders on sleeping sickness and the links between animal health and human health, ensuring the availability of treatments and preventive spraying through the roll out of private veterinary services (self-employed 3 V vets and spray persons advised and supported by High Heights Services Ltd., a private company involved in the animal health services sector in Uganda) in these rural areas thereby enabling farmers and communities to treat their cattle on a regular basis. More than 125 new jobs have been created in the process.

The award will be presented at the Innovation Award Ceremony during the 2nd Public Sector Innovation Conference which takes place 9th-10th December, 2013 in Kampala. The SOS stakeholders will be represented at the ceremony by Professor Charles Waiswa, Executive Director COCTU, Professor John David Kabasa, Principal COVAB and Professor Ian Maudlin, University of Edinburgh.

Professor Charles Waiswa, speaking on behalf of the SOS stakeholders, said: "We are all honoured that the dedication and hard work of all those involved in the SOS campaign - not the least from the young vets, spray persons and students undertaking the field work - has been recognised by the Government of Uganda. The success of this partnership has come from bringing together resources from both the public and private sectors - an arrangement brokered by the Government Agency, COCTU. Having now developed best practices in dealing with the age old problem of sleeping sickness, the partnership aims to move forward to remove the threat of this disease from the whole of Uganda."

Some key facts and figures about SOS Uganda:

- 500,000 cattle treated in 7 districts in Northern Uganda
- 1,175 sleeping sickness cases averted in the area since SOS launch in 2006
- Savings on DALYs (or additional GDP contribution) an estimated 10,7 MUSD (1,075 x 25 DALYs x 365 USD)
- 5 veterinarian entrepreneurs operating commercially viable veterinary practices
- 125+ self-employed spray persons offering cattle spray services in these communities
- Cattle savings of approximately 6 MUSD (estimated 5% less mortality)

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For further information on the SOS campaign:

www.stampoutsleepingsickness.com