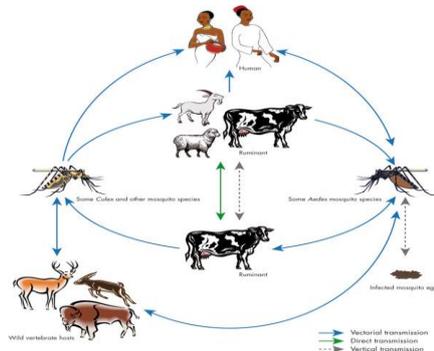


Regional Action plan for the Middle East

2020 - 2024



❖ Introduction

1. The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs), launched in 2004 is a joint initiative of OIE and FAO to achieve the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) and in particular to address their regional and global dimensions. The initiative is built on experiences in the past showing that progress in controlling TADs at country level is not likely to be successful and sustainable unless the efforts are part of a coordinated regional approach / embedded into supra-national frameworks.
2. The GF-TADs for the Middle East- the regional branch of the GF-TADs for the Middle East Region according to the OIE delineation - was established in 2006 with a view to responding to priority diseases of the region, in particular FMD, Rinderpest, PPR, RVF, and Brucellosis. It encourages the creation of regional alliances and partnerships and the definition of a common vision and subsequent action plans for the control of priority TADs in the region.
3. The GF-TADs for the Middle East governance is composed of a Regional Steering Committee supported by a Secretariat. The Regional Steering Committee acts as a regional stakeholder platform, involving OIE Regional Commission, FAO and OIE Regional and Sub-regional Representations, the leading regional technical organisations, country representatives, regional and international donors. The Secretariat is provided by the OIE Regional Representation for the Middle East. The GF-TADs for the Middle East operates under the overall guidance and supervision of the GF-TADs Global Steering Committee and Management Committee.
4. As the GF TADs five-year regional action plan 2012-2016 is ended, it is of paramount importance to propose a new one, taking in consideration all outcomes resulted during the previous years, and also the expectation of member countries for the coming years. There is evidence that Member Countries have progressed in the surveillance pathway of some diseases, but nevertheless, significant advance in the whole regional priority diseases situation is required. According to the above, a new GF-TADs action plan is more than necessary to be presented and validated.

This document presents the elaboration process, the objectives and the content, and the implementation mechanisms of the GF-TADs for the Middle East Strategy covering the period 2020-2024.

❖ Elaboration process

5. This draft GF TADs Action Plan is a proposal of the Regional Secretariat of the GF-TADs for the Middle East, based on
- experiences gained from the previous action plan
 - conclusions from the regional commission
 - strategies supported by global or regional organizations to address priority diseases relevant for the region
 - gaps identified to address priority diseases relevant for the region
 - recommendations of the GF-TADs Joint Evaluation

The draft Action Plan will be presented during the 7th GF-TADs Middle East Steering Committee meeting in Riyadh on March 15th 2020 and will be updated following discussions.

❖ Overarching principles for the elaboration of the Regional Strategy

6. The regional strategy is in line with:

- the GF-TADs founding document, the **2004 GF-TADs Agreement**;
- the **recommendations provided by the GF-TADs Global Steering Committee** over the past years;
- the **recommendations provided by the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Middle East** over the past years and the outcomes of the previous action plan 2012-2016;
- the recommendations made during the **3rd evaluation of the GF-TADs** carried out in 2018-19, notably those that particularly address regional aspects;
- The '**corporate**' **Strategies of the FAO** and the **OIE** respectively the FAO One Health Action Plan (2011-2015), the OIE Strategic Plan
- The Terms of Reference of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Middle East
- The principles of the **FAO-OIE-WHO Tripartite Strategic vision.. Sharing responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystems interfaces.** A Tripartite Concept Note

7. As its predecessor, the actual regional strategy has been developed in line with the following five main principles:

- The prevention and control mechanisms of transboundary animal diseases, in particular at source, are a **Global Public Good**. It requires coordinated efforts,

solidarity and the full political support from national and regional authorities and justifies public investments;

- **Early detection, early warning and rapid response**, based on robust national surveillance systems that rely strongly on the participation of both public private veterinarians (and paraprofessionals) and livestock breeders, is key to the fight against priority TADs, in the case of RVF it also involves prediction;
- The **Veterinary Services (VS)**, operating in line with the OIE international standards on **quality and good governance**, are the corner stones of efficient and cost-effective prevention and control of animal diseases;
- Investing **in the good governance of VS** and in prevention measures is much less costly than the economic losses incurred by major animal health crises;
- **Tackling diseases at the animal source** remains the most efficient and cost-effective way of dealing with **zoonotic threats and high impact diseases**;
- **Appropriate national and international collaboration** between the Animal and Human Health authorities, and where appropriate the environment authorities, is key to the prevention and control of zoonoses and high impact infectious diseases.

❖ Focus / priorities

8. The regional strategy addresses areas of intervention including animal diseases and topics that have qualified as 'priority' for the region¹, namely:

- Reactivate GF-TADs in the region and planning several activities carried out under the GF TADs flag, including those that are not GF-TADs labeled but which contribute to the GF-TADs objectives for ME.
- **As a first priority, to improve generation of information/data on and establish programs for the specific control of priority TADs: FMD, PPR,**
- **As a secondary priority level, to improve generation of information/data on and establish programs for the specific control of priority TADs: Rift Valley Fever**
- **Brucellosis and Rabies, in addition to the reinforcement of Veterinary Services.**
- Liaise with other regional or supra-regional initiatives to establish continuous intra- and inter-regional and cross-border collaboration and concerted action.
- Encourage countries to invest considerably in extension campaigns to farmers and vets, since the level of awareness and especially of biosecurity is likely to be very low in the field.

9. However, given the current situation as of *2020, the year of elaboration of the regional strategy* :

¹ See recommendations and minutes of the GF-TADs for the Middle East Steering Committee meetings 1, 2, 3 and 4

- The main focus will be on regional priority diseases:
 - ▶ **FMD**
Given strong emphasis at the global level, with the implementation of OIE/FAO global strategy based on the successful PCP mechanism.
 - ▶ **Peste des petits ruminants (PPR)**, given the clear and practical pathway directed by the global strategy, (PMAT)

- As a secondary level of priority, the following diseases may also be addressed
 - ▶ **RVF**
Which is a disease of growing concerns in the Middle East, especially for trade in livestock between the Middle East and the Horn of Africa which needs the mobilization of the whole region.
 - ▶ **Brucellosis**
Currently considered as the most important zoonotic disease in the region, it needs special approaches involving regional accredited laboratories, inter-sectoral collaboration and setting relevant legislative governance.
 - ▶ **Rabies** and especially the implementation of the eradication strategy of “Dog mediated human Rabies,

- The strategy also integrates the regional component of strategies decided at global level under the GF-TADs mechanism (e.g Rinderpest post eradication activities); and

- The Action Plan is flexible enough to address new or rising concerns (emergence or re-emergence of an animal disease, which would become a regional priority, such as Vector Borne Diseases other than RVF).

❖ General objectives

10. The same as for the previous action plan, the overall objectives of the GF-TADs for the regional strategy remain as follows:

- Objective 1: Facilitate collaboration and maximize synergies among the countries, organisations and stakeholders in the region, good visibility of actions and avoid overlapping of activities.
- Objective 2: Prevent the occurrence and reduce potential impacts of animal disease events on animal production, animal health, human health, livelihoods and economies in the region;

- Objective 3: Promote adequate governance of Veterinary Services in accordance with OIE standards through capacity building programmes at national and regional levels (that provide for appropriate legislation, human and financial resources and alliances between the public and private sectors);
- Objective 4: Ensure adequate funding to support implementation of disease prevention, detection and control activities, both in peace time and in crisis periods (including the establishment of funds for compensation of animals culled during eradication campaigns).

11. More specifically, the regional strategy aims to:

- Support the strengthening of Veterinary Services;
- Facilitate regional and cross-border collaboration in the field of control of animal health and trade requirements, including networking activities;
- Raising awareness and improve national and regional knowledge and sharing of information/data on priority animal diseases in a transparent way;
- Facilitate planning of activities and identification of gaps in activities relevant to address the priority diseases for the region;
- Improve reporting and outreach communication on activities carried out by the different partners; Provide technical guidance to improve disease prevention, surveillance, early detection, notification and rapid response systems (i.e., including OIE WAHIS and Good Emergency Management Practices [GEMP]) in order to address all factors that affect or threaten animal health including Zoonoses;
- Improve diagnostic laboratory capacity and performance at national level and support the establishment / reinforcement of national and regional reference laboratories, including laboratory networks;
- Ensure the appropriate auditing of the plan efficacy and evaluation of expected results

❖ GF-TADs regional strategy and operational action plan

12. The 5-year regional strategy shall provide a coordination mechanism between the different partners active at regional or sub-regional levels for the prevention, surveillance and control of priority diseases for the region, given the specific objective(s) of the strategy adopted for each disease.

13. GF-TADs is a mechanism for policy definition, coordination and harmonization and not an operational tool for programmes/projects implementation. As a consequence, GF-TADs does not have a programme of

activities *per se*. However, activities can be labeled GF-TADs if implemented under the umbrella of the GF-TADs and thus receiving the guidance of the GF-TADs Steering Committee for the Middle East. In addition, stakeholders in animal health are encouraged to use the GF-TADs platform whenever appropriate according to the decision of the Steering Committee for the Middle East, including for activities that are not labeled GF-TADs but which contribute to the GF-TADs for the regional objectives.

14. Therefore it is appropriate that the regional strategy be accompanied by a two years operational action plan providing the vision of the GF-TADs labeled activities to be implemented in the region. The Regional Secretariat oversees the follow up of the operational action plan and reports to the regional steering committee and to the management committee. The operational action plan is updated on an ad hoc basis and at least every year. It is publicly available on the regional GF-TADs website. The preparation of the operational action plan involves consultation of the FAO and OIE regional offices and headquarters and all relevant regional partners of the regional steering committee.

❖ GF-TADs labeling attribution process and expected results

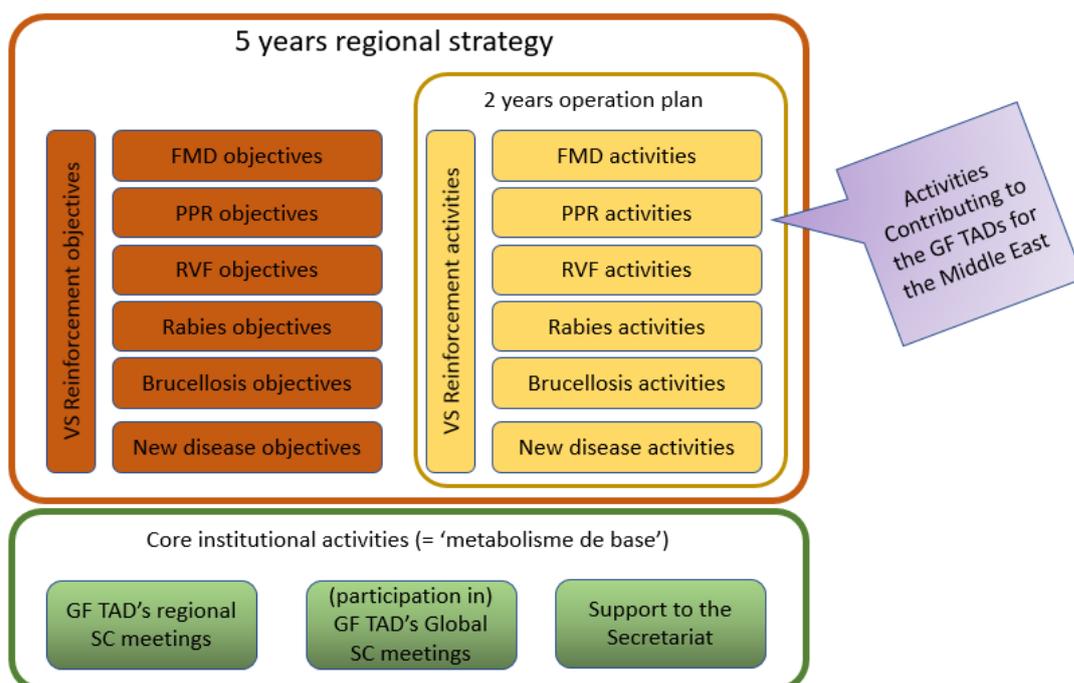
15. Organizations and stakeholders in the region decide on an ad hoc basis if they want to have certain activities labeled as GF-TADs activities. The organizations are requested to bring planned GF-TADs activities to the attention of the GF-TADs for the Middle East Steering Committee via the GF-TADs for Middle East Secretariat for their labeling and if accepted (see point 17) to present the results during the GF-TADs Steering Committee for the Middle East meetings.

16. To be labeled 'GF-TADs', the activity should meet all 5 following criteria:

1. Address one of the priority diseases or topics of the GF-TADs for the region;
2. Contribute to the expected results as listed under Point 19 below;
3. Avoid duplication of or contradiction to any other activity in the region, and be in line with the stakeholders portfolios in the region;
4. Have its effects maximized if implemented at regional rather than at national level, and two (cross-border activities) or more countries (sub-regional / regional activities) are involved; and
5. Be endorsed by the GF-TADs Steering Committee for the Middle East during its regular meetings or an e-consultation procedure on an *ad-hoc* basis (see point 22).

17. Three categories of activities can receive the GF-TADs labeling:
- ▶ Vertical = disease-oriented activities;
 - ▶ Horizontal = topic-oriented activities; and
 - ▶ Core institutional activities (= ‘metabolism de base’), to ensure the proper functioning of the regional governance and platform (Regional Steering Committee, regional Secretariat, participation in Global Steering Committee).

The overall architecture of the Action Plan is depicted in the following chart:



18. The expected results of the GF-TADs labeled activities are presented in [Annex 2](#).

❖ Implementation arrangements

19. The implementation arrangements of the Regional GF-TADs for the Middle East strategy refer to the Terms of Reference of the Regional Governance of the GF-TADs (ToR), namely of the GF-TADS Regional Steering Committee for the Middle East and the Secretariat. More specifically:

20. The GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Middle East is in charge of the overall monitoring of the implementation of the operational Action Plan, with the support of the Secretariat (see point 4.1 and 4.3 of the ToR).

21. In between the regular meetings of the GF-TADs for the Middle East Regional Steering Committee, the GF-TADs labeling of activities is done via an e-consultation procedure on an *ad-hoc* basis led by the GF-TADs for the Middle East Secretariat. The procedure involves the Global GF-TADs Management Committee and the Chairperson of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Middle East as follows: on the initiative of FAO, OIE or any other stakeholders in the region, the proposal will be circulated electronically by the Secretariat to the Members of the Regional SC for a tacit consent or comments within 10 working days. In exceptional cases, emergency procedures may be foreseen. Endorsement is made by mutual consent.

22. Whenever needed for the implementation of the Action Plan, the GF-TADs for the Middle East

- liaises with other regional GF-TADs SCs;
- liaises with other regional or supra-regional initiatives, (e.g AOAD)
- requests the support of the GF-TADs-related tools, namely FAO/OIE/WHO GLEWS, OIE/FAO OFFLU and FAO/OIE CMC-AH.

23. Progress report of the Action Plan is made during the meetings of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Middle East by the Chairman. In years when there is no such meeting, progress reports may be provided during the Conferences of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East. The GF-TADs for the Middle East Chairman – assisted if needed by the GF-TADs for the Middle East Secretariat - reports annually on the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan to the Global Steering Committee during the Global Steering Committee meetings.

Annex 1 – Summary of the main recommendations made during the GF-TADs related meetings.

Title of the meeting	Main recommendations
Previous GF-TADs related Meetings, 2016-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a regional and sub-regional programmes, including establishment of epi and lab networks to control the FMD in the Middle East in compliance with the conclusions and recommendations of the previous related meetings; • Develop a regional programme on RVF prevention and control; • Assessment of PPR impact in the Middle East, developing sub-regional strategies (GCC, East Med countries). • According to the endemic situation of brucellosis in the Middle East, to develop coordinated and harmonized actions on the control of this disease; • Based on the increase of rabies cases in regional countries, and the development of new guidelines towards eradication of Dogs mediated Rabies, the implementation of national and regional plans is encouraged. • To continue in all countries the reinforcement of their Veterinary Services to strengthen prevention and control transboundary and zoonotic emerging diseases through OIE PVS evaluation and its complementary processes: the PVS Gap Analysis in collaboration with FAO and donors, OIE PVS Follow Up and Legislation; • To encourage laboratory and veterinary educational institutes twinning projects and other national laboratory capacity building initiatives in support of regional needs;

Specific objectives

- FMD O1 – Sub region, Countries or zones will be at least on stage 3 of the PCP Roadmap within the next five years
- FMD O2 – Full establishment of epi and laboratory networks.
- FMD O3 – effective coordination of the different countries / sub region and organisations appears operational action plan
- FMD O4 – diagnostic capacity is established and maintained and vaccination plans take into account regional risks for the different strains/serotypes with an harmonized approach that includes post vaccination monitoring

► Eligible activities:

- FMD A1 - All activities included in the FAO-OIE Global Strategy for the control of FMD applicable to the region. (table)
- FMD A2 – Joint activities with other organisations programs (EUFMD, AOAD...) including coordinated activities in the sub region (GCC countries).
- FMD A3 – Evaluation of national Laboratories, twinning programs.
- FMD A4 – Capacity building on application of the OIE standards for FMD, especially in trade.
- FMD A5 – FMDV mapping and FMD vaccines evaluation.

Proposal:

2021: - Update progress in FMD PCP by virtual meeting, planning roadmaps for stage 3

2022: - Development of the Epi/lab networks. (Abu Dhabi and Amman)

- - Workshops on application of FMD standards in trade, (Oman)
- - Evaluation of surveillance planning (Djeddah)

► Expected results:

- FMD R1 – Sub region, Countries or zones progress toward control of FMD / areas without FMD are recognized and maintain FMD free status.
- FMD R2 – Countries have a robust surveillance plan implementation roadmap.
- FMD R3 – Coordination with neighboring countries / sub regions established
- FMD R4 – National laboratories well equipped for the diagnosis of FMD
- FMD R5 – FMD vaccines and vaccination strategy validated
- FMD R6 – OIE standards for FMD applicable for trade.

. Peste des petits ruminants (PPR)

Countries	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Bahrain	2	3	3	4	Status Free											
Egypt	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	Status Free						
Iraq	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	Status Free				
Jordan	2															
Kuwait	2	2	3	3	3	4	Status Free									
Lebanon	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	Status Free							
Oman	NA															
Palestine	NA															
Qatar	1	2	2	3	3	4	Status Free									
Saudi Arabia	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	Status Free							
Syria	NA															
UAE	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4							
Yeman	NA															

Specific objectives

- PPR O1 – Sub region, Countries or zones will be progressing in the PMAT for at least stage 3 within the next five years. (Amman 2017 assessment table)
- PPR O2 – Full establishment of epi and laboratory networks.
- PPR O3 – effective coordination of the different countries / sub region and organisations appears operational action plan
- PPR O4 – diagnostic capacity is established and maintained and vaccination plans take into account regional risks with an harmonized approach that includes post vaccination monitoring

► **Eligible activities:**

- PPR A1 – Regional and sub-regional assessment for PPR status (**virtual meeting September 2020**)
- PPR A2 - Regional training on OIE standards for PPR and application in trade. (**Cairo 2021**)
- PPR A3 - Cross-border / sub-regional coordination meetings on PPR
- PPR A4 - Workshops/seminars on surveillance/contingency planning. (**Muscat and Beirut 2021**)
- PPR A5 - Planning on PPR vaccination strategy, including vaccine manufacturers meetings,

► **Expected results:**

- PPR R1 – Surveillance programme of spread of PPR in the region is implemented.
- PPR R2 - PPR is progressively controlled in countries where the situation is endemic
- PPR R3 - At risk countries are better prepared for the prevention and control of PPR
- PPR R4 – countries where the disease is not present acquire and maintain PPR free status

. Rift Valley Fever (RVF)

► **Specific objectives**

- RVF O1 - Assessment and mapping of RVF status in the region
- RVF O2 - Establishment of an active early warning system for the prevention and prediction of RVFV activity.
- RVF O3 – Improvement of laboratory competency for the diagnosis of RVF.
- RVF O4 – Implementation of OIE standards for RVF by trading partners.
- RVF O5 - Improve tripartite coordination at the regional level and between regional and HQ level.
- RVF O6 – Well understanding of the vector activity
- RVF O7 –Improve reliable vaccine production and vaccination strategy.
- RVF O8 – Improve inter-sectorial collaboration with public health authorities

► **Eligible activities:**

- RVF A1 - RVF Portfolio Review; reports of previous meetings analysis;
- RVF A3 - Regional training workshops on RVF on contingency planning and vector activities.
- RVF A4 - Cross-border / inter-regional coordination meetings on RVF
- RVF A5 – Seminars/ workshops on Early warning on virus activity and climate change prediction, surveillance (passive and active)
- RVF A6: establishment of Laboratory regional capacity / network
- RVF A7: risk mapping in context of animal population, climate, water bodies, land use change

► **Expected results:**

- RVF R1 - Further spread of RVF in the region is prevented and detectable
- RVF R2 - RVF is progressively controlled in countries where the situation is endemic
- RVF R3 - RVF is actively monitored and controlled in countries where cases previously occurred.
- RVF R4 – Environmental risk is assessed (climate change mapping on vector and virus activities designed and active but also land use change gets neglected in risk assessment e.g. building of dams, irrigation systems, changes in dynamics of trade or movement of animals etc.
- RVF R5 – Reliable vaccine is used and vaccination strategy comply with OIE standards.
- RVF R6 – Coordination with Public Health Authorities well established.

. Rabies

► **Specific objectives**

- Rb O1 – Reduction of human deaths from dog mediated rabies in the next 5 years in all countries.
- Rb O2 - National strategies and control programmes are in place in all countries (including surveillance system)
- Rb O3 – submission of official rabies control programme to the OIE in the next 3 years
- Rb O4 – Intersectoral commission on zoonosis are established and active

► **Eligible activities:**

- Rb A1 - Rabies national strategies review and analysis;
- Rb A2 - Regional training workshops on dog-mediated Rabies prevention and including dog population management;
- Rb A3 - Cross-border / inter-regional coordination meetings on Rabies
- Rb A4 - Workshops / seminars on dog-mediated Rabies prevention and control

► **Expected results:**

- Rb R1 – Rabies and stray dog population are controlled in countries
- Rb R2 - Surveillance Plans for Rabies are available in all countries.
- Rb R3- Dog mediated rabies cases are visibly reduced;
- Rb R4- Intersectoral coordination is established.

. Brucellosis

► **Specific objectives**

- Bru R1 - The brucellosis risk for humans is reduced in affected countries,
- Bru R2 - Sustainable brucellosis control programmes are in place in endemic and at risk countries
- Bru R3 - Enhanced national capacity for effective surveillance and control of brucellosis in animals and humans
- Bru R4 - Brucellosis control activities are coordinated and harmonized at regional and sub-regional levels
- Bru R5 – Intersectoral coordination well established,

► **Eligible activities**

- Bru A1 - Surveys (contribution to) to determine the prevalence of brucellosis in livestock in countries where the situation of brucellosis is not known
- Bru A2 - Assistance to the national veterinary authorities in developing and implementing informed strategies for effective control of brucellosis in animals
- Bru A3 - Promotion of inter-sectoral collaboration and public awareness for brucellosis.
- Bru A4 - Promotion of regional coordination and harmonisation of brucellosis control and surveillance activities

. Reinforcement of Veterinary Services (VS)

► *Specific objectives*

- VS – O1 - Countries in the region have progressed in their engagement with the PVS pathway
- VS – O2 – Countries in the region share and report with transparency in their animal health situation
- VS – O3 - Countries in the region have appropriate level of technical capacity for surveillance and control animal diseases and zoonosis.
- VS – O4 - Countries in the region adequately implement and comply with international standards to maintain and improve their animal health situation
- VS – O5 – Countries in the region improve Intersectoral coordination through the one health concept,
- VS – O6 – Countries in the region have appropriate legislation to govern adequately the mandated activities of their Veterinary Services

► *Eligible activities:*

- VS A1 - Investment programmes supporting the improvement of governance of the Veterinary Services, (including legislation and Veterinary Education)
- PVS pathway missions, assessment of surveillance system and laboratory network
- VS A2 – Reinforcing the capacity of laboratories, control at BIP, Quarantine facilities,
- VS A3 – Compliance with International standards, (OIE standards, Codex,.)
- VS A4 – Workshops/Seminars on VS capacity building on information/data collection, notification and communication
- VS A5 – Activities and investment in reinforcing solid coordination for safer trade

► *Expected results:*

- VS R1 - Good governance of VS has improved (PVS reports and follow up)
- VS R2 - Animal Health systems are in place,
- VS R3 – Compliance with OIE standards for trade respected and disease notification improved.

. Core activities

Specific objectives

- The regional GF TADs addresses the relevant priority TADs for the region, with specific objectives
- The regional GF TADs has the capacity to identify priorities for the reinforcement of veterinary services
- Regional partners share information on their activities, coordinate action plans, identify synergies and avoid overlapping and identify gaps
- The progress on specific objectives is supported by operational action plan
- The regional secretariats facilitate coordination, reporting and communication on the advancement of the operational action plan

► *Eligible activities:*

- Core A1 - Organisation of GF-TADs for the Middle East SC meetings
- Core A2 - Participation in GSC meetings
- Core A3 - Support to the Secretariat activities (facilitation, coordination and monitoring role), relationship between the GF-TADs for Middle East Secretariat and the Global GF-TADs Secretariat.
- Core A4 – Enhance communication

► *Expected results:*

- Core R1 - The GF-TADs for the Middle East SC functions as a platform bringing added value to the countries for the prevention and control of TADs
 - Core R2 - Coordination for the progressive control of priority TADs in the Middle East and with neighboring regions is improved,
 - Core R3 – GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee meeting **annually**.
 - Core R4 – VS Capacity is increased in implementation of guidelines for safer trade,
-