



Management of the 2023 of Avian Influenza outbreak: A proof of value for the Mozambican One Health Platform

Overview

For the first time, in October 2023, Mozambique faced an outbreak of Avian Influenza, in a poultry farm of Inhambane Province. Avian Influenza (AI) is a One Health (OH) issue: it can affect the health of humans, domestic and wild animals but also the agricultural economics and trade.

The management of zoonosis outbreaks in farm animals is the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADER). However, effective management requires a multisectoral coordination, which can be a challenge.

The Mozambican One Health platform was officially set up in 2018. The platform comprises of the Ministries in charge of Health, Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment, and has a complementary role to that of these entities. Its mission is to facilitate multi-sectoral coordination in the implementation of the National Health Security Agenda (2022-2027), in order to provide comprehensive responses to complex health problems.

The AI outbreak provided an opportunity to showcase the relevance of this Platform, with technical support from the capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (COHESA) project.

Timeline of 2023 AI outbreak

13/10/2023 - The MADER was notified of a suspected outbreak in a poultry farm of Morrumbene, Inhambane Province.

16/10/2023 The MADER, confirmed an outbreak of AI (H7N6).

17/10/2023 - The outbreak was declared to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). Strengthened multi-sectorial control measures were implemented.

18/10/2023 - A technical note was circulated through social media. Training was organized for technicians (in human and animal health, specifically in poultry production).

16/04/2024 - The event officially ended (WOAH).

Results

The Mozambican One Health Platform enabled real-time information-sharing between MADER and the other Ministries through regular meetings. These Ministries were shared technical facilities (e.g., the laboratories of the Ministry of Health provided technical support to subtype the AI virus present).

Coordinated interventions were easier and prompt. As no new outbreak was recorded in the following months, the event was officially closed in April 2024. These multisectoral interventions included the development of a technical note to raise public awareness through social media; coordinated control measures (targeted culling, restriction of animal movements in the affected district, bans on trade from South Africa, strengthened surveillance in domestic and wild animals); and technical training for laboratory staff.

Such collaborations are not new. However, in the past they depended on interpersonal relationships. They are now formalized and sustainably engage the whole institutions.

Recommendations

To address challenges faced by the platform, the following is recommended;

1. The institutionalization of the Platform, needs to be taken forward by a National decree.
2. The Platform should promote coordination with socio-economic actors in order to help mitigate the socio-economic impacts of OH events and of related control measures.
3. The role of the Platform in coordinating International OH Partnerships is now well recognized and needs to be strengthened.

Related documents

1. Monjane I., et al., 2024. H7N6 highly pathogenic AI in Mozambique, 2023, *Emerging Microbes & Infections*, 13(1), 10.1080/22221751.2024.2321993
2. Araújo L., et al., 2024. Advancing One Health Capacities in Mozambique: A Case Study of COHESA, *One Health Cases*. 10.1079/onehealthcases.2024.0023

República de Moçambique:

1. Plano de contingência de Moçambique para preparação e resposta a pandemia de AI (2023).
2. Mozambique strategic plan for the implementation of OH (2023-2028)
3. Plano Nacional de Segurança Sanitária (2022-2027)
4. OH Zoonotic Disease Prioritization for Multisectoral Engagement in Mozambique (2018) . <https://www.cdc.gov/>

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A poultry farm in Mozambique
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