

Tackling deadly diseases in Africa



Sep 2022



CHAD

After almost four years of support from the TDDA programme, Chad is on a path to building stronger health security systems. We were honoured to be an ally and facilitator in this progress that will help keep communities safer from infectious diseases and other health risks that threaten to destroy lives and livelihoods. The capacities strengthened with TDDA's technical and financial support - across civil society organizations (CSOs), border staff and community health worker networks – are tangible evidence of the fruitful partnerships we have forged together. They are achievements in which everyone involved can take pride.

Momentum in health security needs investment from all, from funders and multilateral institutions, to government bodies and civil society. We are working closely on this final stretch with the Chad government, as well as the country's technical and financial partners (such as UK FCDO¹, World Bank, SDC, WHO, OCEAC, OIE, FAO and UNICEF), to secure commitments to support the health security work already underway. We are offering recommendations for how our pilots might be replicated and scaled up, with value-for-money a strong focus. We hope these reflections can contribute to a shared vision of a healthier, safer future for the people of Chad.

The TDDA programme closes in November 2022. This is our last newsletter but we will continue to provide a range of resources via our website including a short documentary celebrating the work of Chad's CSOs, and a Community-Based Surveillance case study from Guélandeng health district. In the meantime, we humbly offer a few parting insights into what we see as the most crucial next steps to strengthen health security and keep more people safe.

"The greatest breakthrough during my time leading the TDDA programme in Chad was when the State Order was passed to create the National One Health Platform. After so many conversations and so much work to build consensus, I did not expect such a welcome result to come when it did. To deal effectively with health risks, all sectors need to work together and this platform provides the impetus to achieve exactly that.

"I am also delighted to have supported the developing partnership between government and civil society organizations (CSOs) and now to witness them working hand-in-hand to strengthen health security for all Chadians.

"These examples illustrate what an extraordinary experience and privilege it has been to work on this project. Despite limited resources, we have seen some great results. The progress we have achieved together demonstrates how, when all sectors strive towards shared goals, the country can realize its health security ambitions. I feel a great optimism for the future."



Dabsou Guidaoussou
TDDA Country Coordinator, Chad

¹ UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, TDDA's funder



One Health – recognizing health security needs coordination

Human, animal, plant and environmental health are all parts of one whole. Each is closely interlinked and relies on the other, which makes it vital that countries coordinate strategies and plans to keep people safe. A National One Health Platform (NOHP) will provide the mechanism for achieving this multi-sectoral coordination in Chad, joining up and strengthening efforts to deal with public health threats.

As testament to the importance of this approach, on 7 Sep 2022 the Transitional Prime Minister signed Order No. 7276 to establish a NOHP. TDDA is proud to have supported its development, assisting the government to organize workshops aimed at building consensus around the NOHP's terms of reference and structure. We helped to develop the draft Order and establish a One Health Champions team. We are also pleased to have helped bring together all those who are needed in this process – from the Transitional Prime Minister and his advisors, to sectoral ministries, advisors to the President of the Republic and heads of CSOs. It is vital to maintain this spirit of collaboration. Why? Because coordination will save lives.

What next?

We are at a critical juncture. TDDA hopes the Transitional Prime Minister will shortly hold an orientation meeting with all the sectoral ministers to set out the Government's priorities in this area. So that the NOHP can begin to implement its strategic plan, we hope to see resources allocated and appointments to key roles made swiftly. Our vision is for a NOHP that not only include ministries responsible for human, animal and environmental health but also other actors such as the ministry for women, families and infant care, and ministry for petroleum and energy, as well as community representatives. By fostering broad collaboration, Chad can ensure that no-one is left behind and health security is strengthened for everyone.



Temperature check at border crossings

Border health security measures to save lives

Deadly diseases can spread between populations without vigilance at border crossings. The COVID-19 pandemic taught us important lessons in this regard. TDDA supported the government's response, helping to strengthen the capacities of border staff, and develop and test protocols and procedures for dealing with sick people and animals arriving from other countries, and mobilize resources to prevent COVID's spread. As COVID cases decline, we mustn't forget these lessons. At the time of writing, Chad is suffering an epidemic of yellow fever that comes mainly from Sudan. The threat of cholera arriving from Cameroon and Nigeria is of equal concern.

What next?

Chad cannot afford to drop its guard. The effectiveness of surveillance at border crossings is already showing signs of waning and capacity strengthening needs to continue. The work to date has largely been financed by partners such as TDDA, the World Bank, WHO and Swiss Cooperation. We hope partner support will continue and be boosted by government investment in border health surveillance, as this will provide sustained funding that will protect Chadian lives for the long term.



Formalizing civil society's role in health security

No government has the capacity to respond to national health crises alone. Mobilizing communities makes a real difference and can support government efforts to strengthen health security.

- CSOs, whose capacities have been strengthened with TDDA's help, demonstrated their potential during the COVID-19 pandemic. They went out into often vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities, such as nomadic populations, raising awareness of disease risks and encouraging people to be vaccinated.
- Community volunteer networks can also act as an early warning system, helping to detect and report disease outbreaks so that decision-makers can mount quick and effective responses to prevent public health emergencies, as our Community-Based Surveillance (CBS) pilot in Guélendeng district has shown.
- TDDA-trained CSOs recently took part in missions to monitor progress against Chad's National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS). The exercise was carried out alongside the ministries for human, animal and environmental health, and is a tangible example of the developing collaboration between government and civil society.

We are delighted to see the government and CSOs working hand in hand for the good of the people. We also recognize there is still work to be done. The potential of civil society to contribute to health security is undeniable. The question is how to help them realize this fully.

What next?

The CSOs trained by TDDA have formed a network (ROSCISS) under the supervision of the Permanent Secretariat for NGOs and Humanitarian Action (SPONGAH). The integration of this network into health security delivery and monitoring now needs to be institutionalized by government. TDDA has offered recommendations for how this could be achieved, working closely with senior officials to progress it. Meanwhile, we are encouraging other technical and funding partners to take over our role, supporting regular dialogue between SPONGAH and CSOs through ROSCISS that can help to reach a shared perspective for collective action.

CSOs also need additional funding from partners. One way to achieve this could be to create a multi-donor funding pool, linked to the ROSCISS 3-5 year business plan. This would enable CSOs to continue their vital community awareness-raising activities to protect the most vulnerable.

There is real potential for rolling out CBS and we will offer recommendations to government, regional and district management teams, and potential funding partners, based on lessons learned from our Guélendeng pilot. With a formalized role and sustained funding, CSOs can continue to act as a vital bridge between government, communities and partners, as well as providing much-needed additional resources. Realizing CSOs' potential will help transform health security.



100%

of government, partners and CSOs surveyed (Mar 2022) said TDDA's work makes a positive difference to health security



representatives from One Health ministries and 6 provinces engaged in developing guide for integrating health security into national and sub-national plans



25 focal points from designated border PoEs trained on SOPs for managing sick travellers



participants from 21 CSOs trained in health security, health equity, community engagement and COVID-19



CSO-led pilot campaigns supported COVID vaccination, assisted by TDDA



people directly reached by CSO campaign, raising awareness of COVID and other health risks



870+

people agreed to COVID-19 vaccinations on day 1 of CSO-led pilot campaign

96%



of TDDA-trained CSOs supported vulnerable communities in Chad

DAI Global Health leads a consortium of partners who work together to deliver the TDDA programme.

Principal partners



The Operations Partnership



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For more information go to:

tacklingdeadlydiseasesinafrica.org