



ERFAN Working Group Meeting on Brucellosis RESOLUTIONS

Giulianova, Italy, 15 September 2022

The following resolutions were passed at the ERFAN Northern and Southern Africa Working Group meeting held on 15 of September 2022, in Giulianova, Italy.

This document has been prepared by the ERFAN Secretariat and Working Groups (WG) members.

The ERFAN partners decided that:

PILLAR 1 -IMPROVEMENT OF DIAGNOSTIC CAPACITIES THROUGH NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

1.1 Diagnostic tests

All Institutions declare to be able to isolate *Brucella* spp., to carry on traditional PCR for *Brucella* spp. identification and also serological tests for Brucellosis.

1.2 . SOPs

The harmonisation of Brucellosis SOPs is required to achieve comparability of results among all ERFAN partner laboratories at regional level.

The following SOPs are available on the ERFAN Website:

- Isolation and identification of *Brucella* spp. in food;
- Isolation and identification of *Brucella* species in animal biological samples;
- Molecular identification of *Brucella* species by polymerase chain reaction;
- Rose Bengal plate agglutination test for Brucellosis;
- Brucella Milk Ring Test;
- Complement Fixation Test (CFT) for Bovine Brucellosis.

The Secretariat reminds participants how to search for SOPs on the website:

Website:

Enter in the Partners Area and Log in.

The SOPs are categorized per Regional area and per Working Group. Choose Northern/Southern Africa and then Brucellosis.

The World Organisation for Animal Health Reference Laboratory (WOAH RL) for Brucellosis in Teramo will share, in 2022, SOPs concerning diagnostic methods.

The ERFAN partner Institutions can also share accredited SOPs used in their laboratories. The SOPs will be validated by the WOAHL RL in Teramo.

The ERFAN Secretariat will be responsible for uploading the SOPs on the website.

1.3 Proficiency test

For the period of 2022-2023, ring trials on serology (RBT and/or CFT and/or ELISA) and traditional PCR will be organized by the CVL in Harare and WOAHL RL for Brucellosis in Teramo. ERFAN budget will cover costs for shipment of samples.

1.4 Reference Materials

The CVL in Harare and WOAHL RL in Teramo will provide, when requested by the ERFAN members, positive and negative sera.

ERFAN budget will cover the costs for the shipment of reference materials.

PILLAR 2 -CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

2.1 Training courses

All participants request to organize training courses (remotely and physical) on:

- Proficiency Test organization and management;
- WGS and bioinformatics, basic training course.

The Secretariat will be available to gather further training requests in the period 2022-2023, reminding WG members that asynchronous courses concerning WGS and Bioinformatics and Organisation and Management of Proficiency Test are already available on the ERFAN website.

2.2 Technology innovation and transfer

Concerning sequencing and bioinformatics analyses all participants agreed on the need to use NGS and Bioinformatics studies applied on *Brucella* spp. strains isolated in the field.

WOAHL RL in Teramo offered support for sequencing and performing bioinformatics analyses of *Brucella* spp. DNA.

ERFAN budget will cover the costs for reagents and shipment of samples.

ERFAN partners could process their own *Brucella* DNA in Italy if they have their own budget or according to the financial availability, ERFAN budget could cover the costs for their stay in Italy.

PILLAR 3- CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH RESEARCH

All participants agree on the priority of mobilizing additional resources to finance research activities.

Particular efforts must be dedicated to fundraising and capacity building for project design.

The Secretariat will take care of sharing funding opportunities by email or newsletter.

A new concept was presented by the Secretariat, namely the Small-scale research projects (SSRP). ERFAN budget can fund actions dimensioned in terms of money, time and number of activities. All information about the SSRP is available on the website, within the RESOURCES Section.

SSRP will be used by North African partners for research activities concerning Brucellosis in dromedaries. Algerian and Tunisian ERFAN partners will work together to draw up a research project proposal to be shared with the other North African ERFAN members and submitted to the Secretariat for funding in December 2022-January 2023.

During the ERFAN Brucellosis WG meeting, emphasis was put on sharing research project proposals that are already written by the partners as Mozambique and Zimbabwe did. They will share their proposals with Brucella WG partners in few weeks.

The partners are therefore invited to send research project proposals to the Secretariat.

ERFAN NORTH AFRICA WORKING GROUP ON BRUCELLOSIS; ELECTION OF AFRICAN COORDINATOR

The ERFAN partners for North Africa and Ethiopia elected **Dr Sonia SAKHRIA** as the coordinator, together with Dr De Massis, of the ERFAN WG on Brucellosis North Africa.

CONCLUSIONS AND REMARKS

All participants valued and recognized the importance and the impact of the ERFAN project in building a Brucellosis collaborative network, supported by the WOAHA Brucellosis Reference Laboratory in Teramo, strengthening the capacity of veterinary Institutions for Brucellosis diagnosis and sharing the experience on disease control.

Also, ERFAN participants, from North Africa, considered an interaction between REMESA network and ERFAN as strategic. For the ERFAN partners the two networks, working together could address the human and animal health priorities defined by the Northern African countries from the veterinary field activities to the diagnostic test results.

All participants approved the resolutions.

The Verbalisers

Laura de Antoniis & Massimo Scacchia

Giulianova, 17 September 2022