

## **The East Coast Fever training curriculum and manual for vaccinators script**

**Narrator:** Carlos Banda

**Producer:** Chelu Matuzya

### **Summary**

East Coast Fever (ECF) is a serious, often fatal, disease of cattle that causes major economic losses across 11 countries in eastern, central and southern Africa. Caused by single-celled parasite, the disease is transmitted by the brown ear tick, which is found in hay or standing grass. ECF is a significant constraint to livestock farmers in affected countries with one animal being lost every 30 seconds and more than 25 million cattle at risk.

ECF can be prevented by using the Muguga Cocktail vaccine, which is manufactured by the Centre for Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases in Malawi and distributed by local companies, Ronheim and PharmaVax in Tanzania.

GALVmed – an NGO that makes livestock vaccines accessible to smallholder farmers - and its partners has launched an initiative to standardize training provided to ECF vaccinators. A standardised training curriculum and manual originally developed by Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, and later with input from the International Livestock Research Institute, GALVmed and Tanzanian stakeholders including the Directorate of Veterinary Services, the Veterinary Council of Tanzania, and Tanzanian distributors is now being used for the training of ECF vaccinators.

### **Introduction**

#### **Signature tune “3-4 sec”**

East Coast Fever, or ECF, is a serious, often fatal, disease of cattle that causes major economic losses across 11 countries in eastern, central and southern Africa. Caused by single-celled parasite, the disease is transmitted by the brown ear tick, which is found in hay or standing grass.

ECF is a significant constraint to livestock farmers. One animal is lost every 30 seconds from the disease and more than 25 million cattle are at risk.

However, ECF can be prevented by using the Muguga Cocktail vaccine, which is manufactured by the Centre for Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases in Malawi and distributed by local companies, Ronheim and PharmaVax, in Tanzania.

To standardise training provided to ECF vaccinators, a new initiative has been launched by GALVmed – an NGO that makes livestock vaccines accessible to smallholder farmers - and its partners in Tanzania including the department of veterinary services. Standardised trainings enable the vaccinators to provide quality and consistent services to farmers across the country.

Alice Mbwile, is the Marketing Business Manager for Ronheam International, based in Dar-es-Salaam, which distributes the East Coast Fever vaccine across the country. The company works directly with farmers and vaccinators. Alice explains why the standardized training curriculum and manual is so important:-

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Alice: The manual and curriculum is very important because in the manual it gives you the step by steps from how to preserve the vaccine from reconstitution and until the vaccination process itself. So for example the vaccine has to be used within four hours and so another person may overlook this and can use it for six hours. The manual stresses the importance, after reconstitution the vaccine has to be used within a certain period of time. It is also for the farmer's sake because you have to take the temperature, you have to measure the weight in order to get the correct calculation of doses. So if this is overlooked basically you are not going to vaccinate properly.

**STUDIO:** So is it only the vaccinators that will benefit from this training? I asked Alice.

AB The people who benefit from the training are the vaccinators. They will be able to go out to the fields and collaborate with the farmers to get the farmers to realise the importance of vaccinating. It is a two way, the vaccinator gets a benefit, the farmer will also get a benefit and in turn the animal will also get a benefit because of being treated.

**STUDIO:** The training initiative in Tanzania by Ronheam started in Dec 2015. I asked Alice how many current and new vaccinators have been trained so far under the new certification programme.

AB To date we have trained two hundred plus vaccinators. Those are inclusive of refreshers. When I say refreshers those are vaccinators who have trained and come to other trainings for example, Mr Malya, he has been trained twice.

**STUDIO:** Festo Malya is a veterinarian and ECF vaccinator with 10 years' experience in the field around Dar-es-Salaam and the coastal region. He's successfully completed the ECF training, conducted by Ronheam, and has - in fact as Alice pointed out - been trained twice as he also received a refresher course and been issued with new certification credentials. This enables farmers to know that he is a genuine vaccinator. He tells me about his new experience and the changes after receiving his approved certificate.

Malya: My name is Festo Malya. I experienced a lot of changes because I added some experience of how to handle the vaccine because it is something which needs added techniques in handling it. So by attending this training I have gained a lot of experience which I will be using in conducting the ECF vaccination.

And also other practitioners have been learning from me and also farmers have been gaining a lot of advantages through this training because I have been convincing them to vaccinate their animals. So the number of farmers involved in this has increased. Before that actually I can say I was vaccinating not more than one batch in three months but currently I can vaccinate two batches which is eighty cattle per month.

**STUDIO:** Alex is a new vaccinator. He has recently attended the ECF training and he shares with us how the training is helping him to do his work.

Alex At first I just heard about it and I was not sure but now I have attended the ECF training so I know what to do and how to help the farmers. For the time being I am in progress of finding and educating farmers. I will be there to do it for them.

**STUDIO:** An important part of the training partnership between Ronheam and the vaccinators is the impact on the farmers and their livestock as Alice explains.

Alice: The big feedback is that they call the vaccinator, I have another herd of cows please come and vaccinate them. That is a positive feedback because you are going back to the same farmer but with new herd of animals. So that is positive showing that the vaccine has worked and I want you to vaccinate more animals. Definitely farmers are more comfortable because they know that they have got the back up from the government. It is like somebody is caring you know, like this is a serious issue so they are definitely more comfortable.

**STUDIO:** That was Alice Mwibile ending that report on the importance of standardized ECF vaccination training for vaccinators in Tanzania, which impacts the livelihoods of our cattle farmers. Similar training for ECF is also being initiated by Galvmed and its partners in Kenya.

**Final announcement:**

*This feature was compiled by Chelu Matuyza with narration by Carlos Banda. It was produced by WRENmedia on behalf of GALVmed. GALVmed is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Government.*