Editorial

A Unified Front Against Zoonoses — Embracing the One Health Approach This World Zoonosis Day

July 6th, marks World Zoonosis Day, a global observance that commemorates Louis Pasteur's monumental achievement of administering the first successful rabies vaccine on this very day in 1885. While it's a day to reflect on scientific triumphs, it's also a critical reminder of the pervasive and ever-present threat of zoonotic diseases – infections that jump from animals to humans. From well-known adversaries like rabies and avian influenza to the more recent and devastating COVID-19 pandemic, zoonoses underscore a profound truth: the health of humans, animals, and our shared environment are inextricably linked.

The statistics are stark and sobering. An estimated 60% of all existing human infectious diseases and a staggering 75% of emerging infectious diseases originate in animals. These diseases not only inflict immense human suffering, leading to countless illnesses and deaths annually, but they also cripple economies, disrupt trade, and undermine global health security. The rapid spread of pathogens across borders, fueled by increased global travel, trade, and ecological shifts, has made the threat of a localized outbreak escalating into a global crisis more real than ever.

The lessons learned from past pandemics and ongoing zoonotic threats unequivocally point towards one crucial strategy: the "One Health" approach. This integrated, unifying framework recognizes that optimal health outcomes can only be achieved by fostering collaborative efforts across diverse sectors. It breaks down the traditional silos between human medicine, veterinary science, and environmental health, urging experts from public health, healthcare, agriculture, wildlife, and ecology to work together.

Imagine a world where veterinarians, physicians, environmental scientists, and policymakers are in constant dialogue, sharing data, insights, and resources. This is the essence of One Health. It means early warning systems that monitor animal populations for unusual disease patterns, proactive vaccination programs in both animals and humans, and collaborative research that delves into the complex interplay of ecological factors, animal reservoirs, and human behaviors that drive disease transmission.

Successful One Health initiatives are already demonstrating their power. Global early warning systems like GLEWS (Global Early Warning System for Major Animal Diseases) pool data from human and animal health sectors to detect and respond

to threats more effectively. Integrated vaccination campaigns against diseases like rabies, targeting animal populations, have proven instrumental in protecting human lives. Furthermore, multi-disciplinary research teams are unraveling the intricate dynamics of zoonotic spillover, paving the way for more effective prevention and control strategies. Even within India, the National One Health Mission is actively working towards strengthening disease outbreak investigation mechanisms and building a network of high-level biosafety laboratories, highlighting a concerted national effort.

This World Zoonosis Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the One Health approach. It is not merely a concept; it is a necessary paradigm shift. It calls for sustained investment in research and surveillance, enhanced capacity building, and robust intersectoral coordination at local, national, and global levels. By fostering a truly collaborative spirit, by understanding and respecting the intricate web of life on our planet, we can move from reacting to outbreaks to proactively preventing them. Only through a unified front can we truly safeguard human health, animal well-being, and the health of our planet for generations to come.

Hony Editor, JIMA **Kakali Sen**

Further Reading

IAVI
www.iavi.org
World Zoonoses Day 2024: IAVI celebrates progress in Lassa vaccine development
World Zoonoses Day 2024: IAVI celebrates progress in Lassa vaccine development. A series of publications highlight advancements in countermeasures for Lassa ...

FOUR PAWS in US
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Humans, Animals & the Health of the earth - FOUR PAWS in US
It recognises that the health and well-being of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment are closely linked and interconnected. With ...

CDC
www.cdc.gov
About One Health - CDC
By promoting collaboration across all sectors, the One Health approach can achieve the best health outcomes for people, animals, and plants in a shared ...

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www.fao.org
The Global Early Warning System Safeguarding against future pandemics
This makes GLEWS+ vital for coordinating information sharing and fostering collaborative approaches to early detection and response to health threats that span ...

National Institutes of Health (NIH) | (.gov)
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
Tackling rabies by one health approach: Pitfalls on the road to global eradication - PMC
Three strategies have been demonstrated to be successful in controlling and preventing rabies; 1) raising awareness

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Three strategies have been demonstrated to be successful in controlling and preventing rabies; 1) raising awareness about rabies, 2) post-exposure prophylaxis ...

MDPI
www.mdpi.com
Holistic Approaches to Zoonoses: Integrating Public Health, Policy, and One Health in a Dynamic Global...
Zoonotic diseases pose a significant global health threat, driven by factors such as globalization, climate change, urbanization, antimicrobial resistance ...

World Health Organization (WHO)
www.who.int
A unified call for One Health: driving implementation, science, policy and investment fo...
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