



## Call for Afrique One-ASPIRE Fellowships



The research consortium Afrique One-ASPIRE (African Science Partnership for Intervention Research Excellence) is seeking to recruit **2 Master Fellows** for its Thematic Training Programme on canine rabies elimination.

Ref: [TTP1-Rabies-MSc2](#)

**Project Title:** Evaluation of One Health surveillance approaches to increase the proportion of rabies ascertained human exposure and improve outbreak response

**Enrolment:** The MSc fellow will be enrolled at CSRS.

**Project Summary:** Despite being 100% fatal rabies still belongs to the neglected tropical diseases. One root cause of the neglect is the absence of surveillance and consequently reliable incidence data on human and animal rabies. To reach the target of zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies set for 2030 and to support future large-scale control programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa a functional surveillance system is a prerequisite. Rabies exposure and case detection rate can only be improved by close collaboration between veterinary and public health workers in a One Health approach. However, there is very limited practical experience on the organisational, logistical and political approaches that would lead to a long-term sustainable collaboration between the animal and human health sector.

Within the GAVI funded project on the estimation of the burden of rabies in East and Central Africa intersectorial collaboration is currently being strengthened in Mali, Chad and Ivory Coast. The presented MSc project will evaluate the success of the efforts undertaken in regard to the approaches taken, the budget involved and the outcome achieved in the different study zones. To gain more insight through feedback from field workers interviews will be undertaken in the respective research zones in Mali, Chad and Ivory Coast with veterinary workers and human medical staff that are involved in the currently on-going project. Through focal group discussions and in-depth interviews gaps, unmet demands, strength and weaknesses of the current approaches can be assessed and integrated in future strategies.

Collaboration with Project Ref: [TTP2-Rabies-PhD2](#), suggested for East Africa is favoured.

**Mentorship Team:** The project will involve an international supervisory team including Issiaka Tiembre (INHP), Bassirou Bonfoh (CSRS), Jakob Zinsstag (Swiss TPH) and Monique Léchenne (Swiss TPH).

**Qualifications:** The candidate must be a citizen of an African country. Candidates from any discipline contributing to One Health but preferable with background in either public health, veterinary public health, sociology or health systems economy will be considered.

**Duration and Training:** The project duration will be 2 years. The MSc student will especially be trained in qualitative data analysis. Training will be provided primarily in Ivory Coast, with opportunities for further training within the Afrique One-ASPIRE consortium and with supervisory partners in Europe.

Ref: TTP1-Rabies-MSc3

**Project Title:** Exploring successful determinants for dog vaccination campaigns and population control measures using a mixed methods approach

**Enrolment:** The MSc fellow will be enrolled at a university in West Africa and affiliated to EISMV or CSRS.

**Project Description:** Rabies is a fatal zoonotic disease that is transmitted from dogs to humans and is highly prevalent in African and Asian countries. Vaccination of domestic dogs has been identified as the most sustainable and effective approach to control rabies and prevent human deaths. Actions to control rabies occur on one level in households when individuals take the decision to vaccinate their dogs and take responsibility of their pet and towards society. Control also depends on provision of vaccination services, community participation and dog population management at the intermediate level of social resilience. However, there has been little exploratory work to understand the social and cultural factors limiting accessibility of dogs to vaccination, veterinary care and registration. This MSc thesis will be built up on a mixed method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative tools, developed to evaluate the effectiveness of dog mass vaccinations for rabies elimination. Mixed methods are necessary as the problem-driven transdisciplinary subject includes epidemiological components in addition to social dynamics and cultural, political and institutional aspects. An assessment of individual effectiveness parameters of vaccination campaigns like availability, affordability, accessibility, adequacy or acceptability will be undertaken. In addition the relationship of dog owners towards their pet and the barriers to successful dog population management will be studied. Triangulation of quantitative methods (i.e. household survey, empirical coverage estimation, dog demography and spatial analysis) with qualitative findings (i.e. participant observation, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews) will facilitate a better understanding of the weight of each effectiveness determinant, and the underlying reasons embedded in the local understandings, cultural practices, and social and political realities of the setting.

Clarifying these aspects is critical to the design of optimal dog population control and vaccination interventions to reduce the burden of rabies.

The study areas will depend on locations with recently undertaken or planned vaccination campaigns in West and Central African countries (e.g. Dakar, Ivory Coast, Kongo and Mali)

Possible collaboration West-East collaboration is identified with Project Ref: TTP2-Rabies-PhD3.

**Mentorship Team:** Researchers at partner institutions with expertise in intervention research and sociology health economics, including: CSRS, Swiss TPH, IHI and UoG

**Qualifications:** The candidate must be a citizen of an African country. Candidates from any discipline contributing to One Health will be considered, but preference will be given to candidates with previous experience in social sciences.

**Duration and Training:** The project duration will be 2 years. Training will be provided in Ivory Coast, with opportunities for further training within the Afrique One-ASPIRE consortium and with supervisory partners in Switzerland.

**For more information on the TTP Rabies**, contact the co-leads:

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**For any other information**, contact the Programme Manager:

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### Application documents

- (i) Fill in the application form: <https://afriqueoneaspire.typeform.com/to/VERdK3>
- (ii) CV including a list of publications and active conference participations (i.e. posters and oral presentations)
- (iii) Application letter describing your interest in the Afrique One-ASPIRE programme and One Health, any prior experience relevant to the proposed topic and your longer term ambitions and goals (max. 2 pages)
- (iv) Contact information of two academic referees
- (v) Summary of your last qualification work (max. 500 words);

Submit the application with the fellowship reference number to [application.afriqueone-aspire@csrs.ci](mailto:application.afriqueone-aspire@csrs.ci) by **July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 5 pm GMT**. Candidates that are selected for the next stage will be invited for an interview at Afrique One-ASPIRE institutions in their respective countries or where most convenient.

### About Afrique One-ASPIRE

Afrique One-ASPIRE is a research consortium addressing questions of disease elimination based on the 'One Health'-concept. Our research aims at identifying integrated approaches for disease elimination in relation to zoonotic and emerging diseases by taking human, animal and environmental components into consideration. The consortium comprises nine core institutions in East and West Africa. **More information about the consortium and the calls can be found online:** ► [www.afriqueoneaspire.net](http://www.afriqueoneaspire.net).

