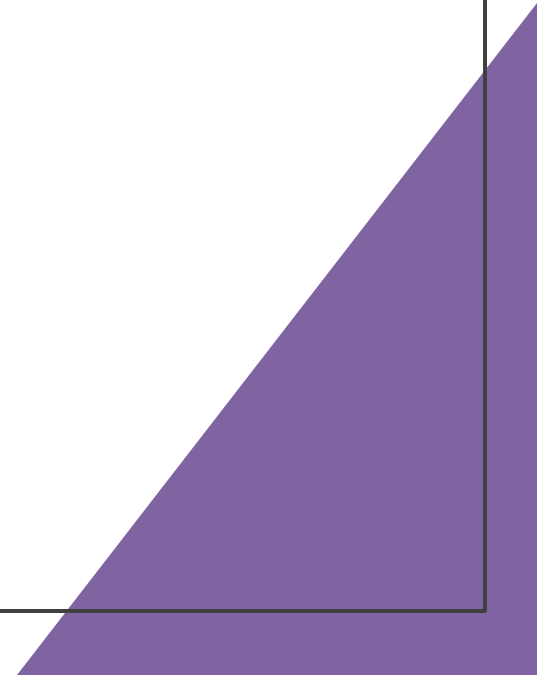


# Rabies in Pakistan: Animal Health Perspective

Dr. Muhammad Abubakar  
NVL, Pakistan



# Overview



- Rabies remains endemic with 2,000–5,000 human deaths annually.



- Dogs (mainly stray) cause >99% of human cases.



- Weak surveillance; underreporting common.



Veterinary reporting is limited, diagnosis capacity low.



- High public health burden and lack of vaccines.

# Epidemiology (Animal Health Perspective)

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- Large stray dog population; urban/rural exposure high.
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- Surveys show hundreds of thousands of stray dogs in major cities. One survey in Islamabad estimated ~175,094 stray dogs and ~48,899 pet dogs
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In Karachi, roughly “25-30 dog-bite cases per day” were being admitted in some reports

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- Limited animal vaccination and poor data collection.
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- Some livestock cases occur; risk to agriculture noted.

# Rabies Diagnostic Capacity and Reported Cases in Pakistan

Indicator	Available Data / Summary
Estimated human rabies deaths/year	Estimated 2,000–5,000 deaths annually
Dog-bite / exposure incidence	7,957 dog-bite cases reported nationwide in June 2024; 25–30 daily in Karachi hospitals.
Confirmed human rabies cases	21 deaths in Karachi reported in 2025; six deaths in hospitals in two months.
Diagnostic capacity (animals/humans)	Very limited lab capacity; mostly diagnosis is clinical; few labs with confirmatory testing.
Animal (dog/livestock) rabies surveillance	Limited data; surveillance for animal rabies weak, underreporting common.
Major diagnostic/research facilities	Dow University Virology Lab (Karachi) and NIH (Islamabad) have limited diagnostic capacity.

# Current Programs & One Health Approach

- Pakistan joined FAO program to eliminate rabies by 2030.
- National Rabies Control Plan developed (SARE-Stepwise Approach Toward Rabies Elimination- Stage 1.5).
- Rabies Control Programme Sindh” emphasizes dog vaccination, community education, and healthcare access
- Collaboration needed among veterinary, health, and municipal sectors.

# Key Challenges



- Weak surveillance and data systems.



- Vaccine shortages (both human and animal).



- Poor dog population management; reliance on culling.



- Lack of training, resources, and One Health coordination.

## Recommendations

- Conduct national dog population surveys.
- Reach  $\geq 70\%$  vaccination coverage in dogs.
- Strengthen veterinary surveillance and laboratory capacity.
- Ensure sustainable vaccine supply.
- Train veterinary/municipal staff.
- Enhance public awareness and community involvement.



THANKs