



Twinning Project for the Establishment of the Namibia Institute for Public Health

TwiNit

Strengthening Public Health in Namibia

Duration

2020 – 2021

Budget/year

approx. 620,000 EUR

Partner country

Namibia

Challenges addressed by the project

As part of Namibia’s initiative to improve national Public Health protection, the creation of a Namibia Institute of Public Health (NIPH) was proposed by the Ministerial Management Committee of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) in 2016. The intention of the MoHSS of Namibia is that the NIPH shall be the coordinating body and the hub for all public health activities and issues in the country. The Robert Koch Institute was requested by the MoHSS to support the establishment of the NIPH.

Objectives

The long-term goal of TwiNit is the establishment of the Namibia Institute of Public Health (NIPH). The objectives are:

- » Improving national surveillance, alert and crisis management systems with regard to infectious diseases
- » Establishment of a “Namibia Research and Training Laboratory” (NRTL), which serves as a connecting element between the Namibia Institute of Pathology, Central Veterinary Laboratory, the University of Namibia and NIPH through a common development and training platform, and
- » Strengthening the Namibian Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (NamFELTP) to foster sustainable training of public health workers in Namibia

Overview of activities

TwiNit is a twinning project between the MoHSS and other stakeholders in Namibia with the Robert Koch Institute. The focus of the activities is on strengthening the surveillance of infectious diseases, supporting the management of the Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC), strengthening the NamFELTP and expanding laboratory capacities and capabilities to enable Namibia to detect relevant pathogens. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the activities were either shifted or expanded to support the Namibian partners in their COVID-19 response:

- » Building up local capacities for SARS-CoV-2 testing in Namibia
- » Provision of technical support and urgently needed laboratory equipment, reagents, consumables, personal protective equipment as well as IT-equipment for the PHEOC
- » Intra-action review (IAR) of the COVID-19 response at national level to collectively analyze the ongoing activities by identifying achievements, challenges and recommendations (October 2020)



Supported by:



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag



Assessment mission in Namibia, August 2019



Meeting with Executive Director Ben Nangombe
at the Ministry of Health & Social Services,
Windhoek, March 2020



Go.Data training of Public Health professionals
from regional and national level in Windhoek,
October 2020



SARS-CoV-2 serology workshop with laboratory
technicians in Windhoek, October 2020

- » Revision of the Namibian PHEOC Standard Operating Procedure and development of emergency communication structures
- » Trainings on contact tracing at national, regional and district levels
- » Support of the implementation of Go.Data, a digital tool for outbreak investigation and contact tracing, through trainings and IT-equipment
- » Establishment of a COVID-19 serology laboratory
- » Support of SARS-CoV-2 sero-epidemiological studies amongst health care workers
- » Trainings for health care workers in case management of COVID-19 patients and infection prevention & control

Most of these COVID-19 response activities will strengthen and support the long-term goal and the objectives of TwiNit.

Partner institutions

- » Ministry of Health & Social Services (MoHSS), Namibia
- » University of Namibia (UNAM), Namibia
- » Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL), Namibia
- » Namibia Institute of Pathology (NIP), Namibia
- » Research Center Borstel (FZB), Germany
- » Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI), Germany

Supporting institution in Germany/Contact

Robert Koch Institute

- » ZIG 1 | Information Centre for International Health Protection
Christian Winter, Jadrana Laußmann, Andreas Jansen
- » ZIG 4 | Public Health Laboratory Support
Heinz Ellerbrok
- » Unit 38 | Unit for Crisis Management, Outbreak Investigation and Training
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