SOME FACTS ON RABIES

1. Rabies is a zoonotic viral infection caused by viruses belonging to the Lyssavirus genus. It is transmitted by saliva through bites and scratches of infected mammals.

2. Dogs are the main source of human rabies deaths, contributing up to 99% of all rabies transmissions to humans.

3. More than 150 countries worldwide still report rabies cases and yet rabies is a vaccine-preventable viral disease; by epidemiological week 37 of 2019 (9-15 September), Zambia alone had notified 10,858 dog bites country wide through its Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response program.

4. Rabies can be fatal; the majority of deaths due to rabies infections occur mainly in Asia and Africa at 95%; death commonly occurs within 1 to 2 weeks of manifestation of symptoms.

5. The best feasible strategy that would contribute to interruption of rabies transmission is vaccination of dogs and prevention of dog bites.

6. 40% of people bitten by suspect rabid animals are children under 15 years of age.

7. First AID to prevent rabies - Immediate, thorough wound washing with soap and water or povidone iodine for a minimum of 15 minutes after contact with a suspect rabid animal is crucial and can save lives.


9. The alliance membership comprises of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) with the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the lead organisation.

References
2. IAMAT. https://www.iamat.org/country/zambia/risk/rabies