

Abstract:

Peste des petits ruminants (PPR), a disease of the sheep and goats, remains a major constraint to small stock production in Turkana Kenya. The disease has not been known for long period in Kenya, though the Turkana pastoral community has acquired some indigenous knowledge from their encounter with the disease. Through focused group discussion employing participatory epidemiology methods the Turkana ranked PPR among the ten most important diseases in their small ruminant flocks. Turkana respondents characterized *Peste des petits ruminants*, differentiating the disease from other small ruminant diseases and providing clear association of clinical and post mortem signs as well as risk factors. The respondents provided estimates of the relative incidence of PPR in sheep that ranged between 19% (9.87, 40) in young adults (>6 but <24 months) to 25% (11.4, 40.8) in adults (> 24 months). The relative mortality ranged between 16% (7.3, 37.1) in young adults and 20% (7.8, 34.9) in adults. Case fatality was highest in young adults at 84.2% (68,100). The estimated relative incidences of PPR in goats ranged between 17.8% (8.5, 32.1) in new born kids (< 2 months of age) and 20.9% (10.4, 36) in adults (> 24 months). Relative mortalities varied from 14.2% (6.1, 28.6) in newborn kids to 17% (5.5, 25.5) in older kids (>2 but <6 months). Case fatality was highest in young adults (>6 but <24 months) at 84.5% (58.6, 100). Turkana perceive vaccination as an effective PPR control methods but have problem in accessing the service. This study has illuminated further the need to utilize the indigenous knowledge for purposes of understanding diseases in the community and setting up strong participatory surveillance systems that involve the communities as the basic element of disease surveillance intelligence gathering.