



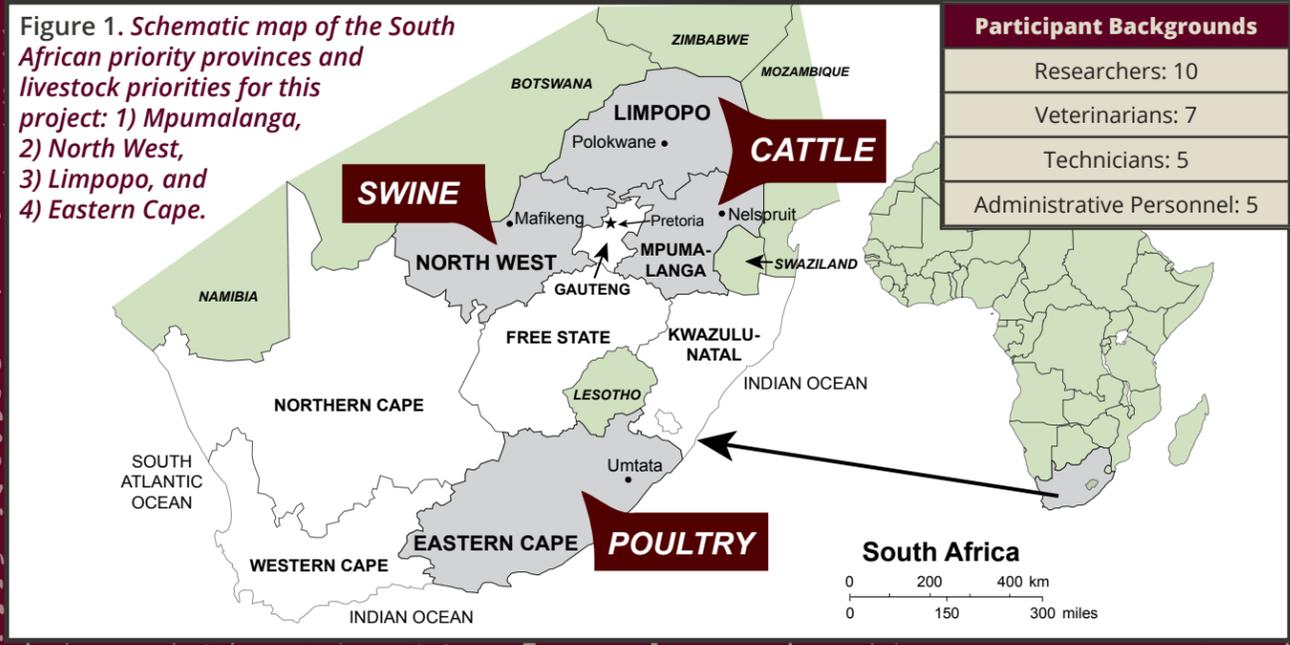
**Program Summary:** In February 2018, 27 local and regional veterinary and laboratory diagnostic personnel from selected provinces of South Africa (see Figure 1) received training to enhance their current practices in laboratory biosafety and biosecurity across the country in the first Train the Trainer course of the AgSecure Africa Programme™. The training was supported by the United States Department of Agriculture – Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA FAS) and developed by the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (CVM), Texas A&M Global One Health, and the Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases (IIAD).

This training began February 1 with a 40-hour online course culminating in a 2-day in-person program which was held February 21-22 at the Agricultural Research Council-Onderstepoort Veterinary Research (ARC-OVR) at Onderstepoort, South Africa. It is the first course of its kind covering such material that has been submitted for accreditation to the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC).

**Impact of the Program:** The program covered basic laboratory biosafety and biosecurity protocols, controls, and techniques used to prevent accidental or intentional release of infectious substances from the laboratory to the environment.

Veterinary and laboratory diagnostic personnel who participated in the program now have a better understanding of biosafety and biosecurity practices that will empower them to work safely and securely in the lab. They also gained knowledge on how to conduct a laboratory risk assessment to identify gaps and strengths, how to teach others about these concepts, and how to use a risk assessment tool to evaluate specific risks of animal pathogens while conducting research diagnostics.

Tailored teamwork with colleagues from across the country gave trainees a wider perspective of how others are tackling these same issues, which will lead to a more cohesive approach to minimizing the risk of infectious disease spread in South Africa, benefitting the nation's economic and health outlook.



At the end of the program, trainees were asked how they were planning to apply the knowledge and skills they obtained once they returned to the workplace. Examples of feedback follow:

*"My plan is to start working on risk assessment and compiling standard operating procedures. We will then train and plan on continuous teaching."*

*"During the workshop I was able to identify the biosecurity gaps in our laboratory. I will share the knowledge and skills with colleagues and then apply them."*

**Trainee feedback about what they liked the most about the program:**

*"The training opened up my mind and increased knowledge and understanding with regards to biosafety and biosecurity in the lab as well as its IMPORTANCE!"*

*"I'm enjoying the online course. It has proven to be an excellent platform; clear, informative, well-paced and relevant."*

