



Training in the use of personal protective equipment when taking samples



Deactivation of samples in the glove box using the *Buddy System*



Demonstration of use of personal protective equipment during the ceremonial handover of the mobile laboratory



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German-Tunisian Cooperation to Enhance Biosecurity in Tunisia



Context

Due to Tunisia's strategic position between Libya, Algeria and the Mediterranean Sea, the country is at risk of being used by terrorist groups for retreat, transit or as a terrorist target. A deliberate release of dangerous pathogens, for instance, could pose a major threat for the Tunisian population.

In this context, the Bundeswehr Institute of Microbiology (IMB), together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH [German association for international cooperation] and the Robert Koch Institute, in cooperation with Tunisian partners, is implementing a project to enhance the capacity to prevent and respond to biological threats.

Specifically, IMB and GIZ are carrying out a joint project in Tunisia to improve the detection of dangerous pathogens.



Objective and Approach

The project is intended to aid Tunisia in the preparation against and rapid response to biological threats. The core of the project involves:

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- **Provision of technical training and advice to the Tunisian partners by the IMB,**
- **Operative support of project activities by the GIZ,**
- **Supply of a mobile laboratory unit for early diagnosis of dangerous pathogens and biological toxins.**



The state-of-the-art mobile laboratory was developed by the IMB and has already proven successful during Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014/15.

The Directorate-General of Military Health of the Tunisian Ministry of National Defence and the Military Hospital of Instruction of Tunis are the main cooperation partners in Tunisia.

Achievements

The IMB frequently trains Tunisian technical staff in methods of diagnostics of dangerous pathogens. The practical application of these methods is taught during follow-on trainings for the further development and validation of molecular biological techniques.

In October 2017, IMB and GIZ delivered a mobile laboratory unit to Tunisia which in future will be maintained by a Tunisian Rapid Response Team. This will enable a rapid, on-the-spot response to deliberate releases and natural outbreaks of pathogens.

Alongside military technical staff, personnel from Tunisian civilian health facilities are trained in order to enhance the civil-military cooperation in the field of biosafety and biosecurity in Tunisia.

