

**Library Frontiers: Disasters, Emergency Preparedness and Emerging Diseases  
IFLA conference side event 18 Aug 2007**

**Title**

**Providing information support services for diseases of animal origin: epidemic and endemic: the role of the  
ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute Library**

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**Abstract**

The paper will start with some background on the institutions involved in combating animal diseases in South Africa. This include the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute of the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa (ARC), a central component of animal health in the national Department of Agriculture, and similar components in provincial departments of agriculture. Another role-player is the state-owned company Onderstepoort Biological Products. The role of each body will be highlighted.

The ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute Library is responsible for information service to all of these. The response of the library to an outbreak of Foot-and-mouth Disease in 2000 will be described. It will be compared with a response to similar outbreak in the UK the next year, at the hand of a paper written on that incident.

The general preparedness of the ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute Library for outbreaks will be analysed, as well as its situation in providing information for endemic diseases and emerging threats, like Avian Influenza. Constraints will be discussed. The role of the mother body (Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute) as "insurance policy" and how the library can support that, will be described as well.