



Good veterinary governance

Public and private veterinarians acting in the framework of national Veterinary Services have a major role to play in ensuring animal and public health as well as the sustainability of local and global rural livelihoods. Their mission, involving animal health surveillance, early detection of and rapid response to animal disease outbreaks as well as animal welfare, cannot be fulfilled without the appropriate regulatory framework and the necessary means to enforce the corresponding legislation, including appropriate human and financial resources and effective private and public partnerships. Good governance is a key to enhancing agricultural production and income generation, in addition to improving public health, poverty reduction and animal welfare worldwide

KEY FACTS

- The cost of disease prevention 'in times of peace' is lower than the cost of implementing mitigation measures once animal disease crisis have occurred.
- Through the good governance of Veterinary Services, animal health systems strongly contribute to the improvement of food security, public health, animal welfare and alleviation of poverty.
- The OIE develops tools to improve the Performance of Veterinary Services, such as the PVS Pathway and capacity building programmes.

A GLOBAL PUBLIC GOOD

Given their pivotal role in animal disease prevention and control, the activities of the animal health systems operated by the public and private components of the Veterinary Services constitute a global public good. One billion poor livestock keepers in rural areas worldwide depend at least partially on animals as their means of livelihood. Furthermore, as 60% of human diseases are of animal origin, the mission of national Veterinary Services has never been so invaluable. To be efficient, they must be able to act and react within an effective, structured national legislative framework, and be provided with the appropriate financial and human resources to enforce it.

Animal health systems, which comply with OIE international standards on quality, and which function under good governance principles, contribute better to the achievement of an effective and sustainable global system, responsive to the present and future needs of society.

They must have the capacity and resources to protect society against threats from natural, accidental and deliberate release of animal pathogens and must be able to conduct operational surveillance, early on-farm detection of and rapid response in addition to establishing the necessary biosafety and biosecurity measures. Through the good governance of Veterinary Services, animal health systems are also contributing to the improvement of other Public Goods such as food security, public health, food safety and the alleviation of poverty.

It is the responsibility of all governments to establish the good governance of animal health systems. Failure to do so by a single country could place the entire world in jeopardy.

OIE RECOMMENDATIONS ISSUED TO VETERINARY SERVICES

- Compliance with an appropriate legislation;
- Creation of a network throughout a country for surveillance monitoring and controlling animal diseases (based on a 'tripod' for effective surveillance, composed of official veterinarians, private veterinarians and animal owners);
- Early detection of diseases, transparency and immediate outbreak declarations (notifications);
- Rapid response to animal disease outbreaks, including any necessary vaccinations or culling of sick or in-contact animals if appropriate;
- Application of biosecurity and biocontainment measures when outbreaks have been detected;
- Conception of strategies to provide farmers with financial compensation mechanisms in the event of sanitary measures affecting livestock producers.

ONE HEALTH

A better understanding of the causes behind the emergence and spread of infectious diseases of animal origin has been provided by the 'One Health' approach. In 2010, the three main international technical agencies published a Tripartite Concept Note, *'The FAO-OIE-WHO Collaboration - Sharing responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystems interfaces'*.

The Strategy of the three organisations relates in this context to the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases at the animal-human-ecosystems interface: those with the potential to cause epidemics and pandemics, but also the non-zoonotic animal diseases impacting food security (production of animal proteins), public health and poverty alleviation. Under the concept of 'One Health', FAO-OIE and WHO have identified the following priority actions: rabies, zoonotic influenza, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), as well as the control of zoonotic diseases at animal source.

The 'One Health' approach also includes the maintenance of efficient public health and animal health systems, well-coordinated in accordance with the International Health Regulations (IHR) of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the international standards of the OIE.

These actions encompass the implementation of concrete processes and methods in building capacities of several strategic bridging points between the animal-human interface.

Bridging WHO and OIE Tools to better control global health risks at the human-animal interface



The project, 'National Human and Animal Health Systems Assessment Tools and Bridges', financed by the World Bank (through an EU funded trust fund) under which this collaboration has been developed, has seen the elaboration of an *OIE-WHO Operational framework for good governance at the human-animal interface: Bridging WHO and OIE Tools for the assessment of national capacities*. This Guide provides a comprehensive and parallel overview of both the IHR Monitoring Framework and the PVS Pathway, and should be used by Member Countries to develop a coherent system of coordinated national health governance of risk management at the animal-human interface.



OIE PVS PATHWAY

The OIE economic studies have clearly identified that the cost of disease prevention “in times of peace” is lower than the cost of implementing mitigation measures once animal disease crisis have occurred. The **OIE PVS Pathway** shifts away from short-term, emergency response type ‘vertical’ approaches addressing only specific diseases, and contributes to a more sustainable, long term strengthening of ‘horizontal’ (animal health) systems.



Objectives of the PVS Pathway

The process targets good governance and capacity building for key national players via improved compliance with the OIE democratically adopted international standards, including those relating to the quality of Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services. It also enables national Veterinary Services to better advocate for their needs related to investments at national and international level based on independent PVS Evaluation reports led by the OIE.

A voluntary basis process

The OIE PVS Pathway is a voluntary basis process implemented at the request of Member Countries.

Core components of the PVS Pathway

The PVS Pathway identifies in each evaluated country, taking into account the country's own priorities, the priority actions and investments needed to improve the compliance of national animal health systems with the intergovernmental standards of quality of governance of the Veterinary Services adopted and issued by the OIE.

It encompasses several components:

- **Initial PVS Evaluation:** systematic evaluation of Veterinary Services with regard to international standards (based on 47 Critical Competencies, and for each of them, five levels of compliance with OIE standards on quality);
- **PVS Gap Analysis / PVS Costing Tool:** quinquennial costed investment plans based on integrating the PVS Evaluation findings with national priorities;
- **PVS Veterinary Legislation Support Programme:** assistance in the development and/or modernisation of national Veterinary Legislation in compliance with corresponding OIE standards;
- **PVS Pathway Laboratory Mission and Laboratory Twinning Programme:** review and improvement of the Veterinary Laboratory national networks and support to laboratories for admission as OIE Reference Laboratories;
- **Veterinary Education Twinning Programme:** strengthening Veterinary Education Establishments and aligning their curriculum with corresponding OIE guidelines and recommendations;
- **Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme:** ensuring the excellence of the veterinary profession in the private sector by establishing measures regarding quality on education and licensing and monitoring of veterinarians and professionals;
- **PVS Evaluation Follow-up Missions:** a consistent mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of progress of all PVS components (PVS Evaluation Follow-up Missions).

CAPACITY BUILDING

The OIE has developed regional capacity building programmes for Veterinary Services that aim to strengthen animal disease surveillance and control, and facilitate networking between OIE Delegates and their team of national Focal Points in each country and between Member Countries.

Thus, newly appointed OIE Delegates receive a training explaining their rights and obligations, their role in the relations with the Organisation and the OIE's objectives and missions.

In addition, the eight national Focal Points of each Member Country of the OIE participate in specific training workshops held every two years in each of the five OIE regions for the following key topics:

- animal disease notification;
- animal production food safety;
- veterinary products;
- aquatic animal diseases;
- animal welfare;
- wildlife;
- communication;
- laboratories.

Strengthening of Veterinary Services

Veterinary legislation

Veterinary legislation is key to achieving good governance and must, at a minimum, provide a basis for Competent Authorities to meet their obligations as defined in the OIE's *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. In addition, Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) are obliged to notify the WTO of changes in sanitary measures, including changes in legislation that affect trade, and provide relevant information. Further information on veterinary legislation can be consulted in the OIE's *Terrestrial Code* ([Chapter 3.4.](#)).

Veterinary education

PVS Evaluations have highlighted major and worrying differences in the quality of veterinarians worldwide. Consequently, the OIE, in collaboration with an expert group comprising of deans of veterinary establishments from all five continents, has developed OIE *Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum*, in addition to a list of ‘Day 1’ *minimum competencies for veterinary graduates* around the world.

Communication

The OIE provides guidance on information management and communication, which are fully integrated into the capacity building strategies of national Veterinary Services. At the 79th General Session of the OIE, the first Code chapter on communication was adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates.

For more information

- Quality of Veterinary Services in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, [Section 3](#)
- [OIE Collaboration with FAO and WHO](#)
- [OIE PVS Tool](#)
- [OIE PVS Tool: Aquatic](#)
- [OIE Biological Threat Reduction Strategy – Strengthening Global Biological Security](#)
- [Scientific and Technical Review, Vol. 31\(2\): ‘Good governance and financing of efficient Veterinary Services’](#)
- [Fact sheet on Veterinary statutory bodies](#)
- [Fact sheet on veterinary legislation and the OIE veterinary legislation support programme \(VLSP\)](#)
- [OIE recommendations on ‘Day 1 graduates’ minimum Competencies for veterinary graduates](#)
- [OIE Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum](#)
- [OIE Guide to Veterinary Education Twinning Projects](#)