Position paper: Improving governance for effective Veterinary Services in developing countries – a priority for donor funding

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Summary
Livestock contributes significantly to the world economy. However, animal diseases and food safety are still major constraints on livestock-sector productivity, economic growth, the reduction of poverty and food security. Efficient and effective governance of Veterinary Services throughout the world is a fundamental requirement for addressing the global animal health and related public health threats. Recent work by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) through the application of the Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS Tool) and related Gap Analysis (both of which form part of the PVS Pathway) has indicated that a significant proportion of the national Veterinary Services worldwide do not meet the essential requirements for good governance. This shortcoming poses a significant risk for many developing countries and their trading partners when considered in the context of the growing trade in animal-source foods, and the burgeoning global livestock population. Well-managed, transparent and credible Veterinary Services, in both the public and private sector, are essential for mitigating animal disease risks and ensuring sustainable incomes for vulnerable producers. They are also vital for limiting the public health risks posed by zoonotic diseases. This paper is intended to highlight the impact of governance on the delivery of veterinary services in a development context and the benefits generated by improving veterinary governance. It recognises ‘global public good’ elements embedded in the good governance of Veterinary Services, and it could also provide an operational development investment roadmap that builds on the OIE PVS Pathway, and innovative financing options based on government commitments supported by donor programmes.

Keywords
Introduction

Livestock contributes significantly to the world economy but, equally importantly, this sector is of high social, environmental and political importance. It is estimated that livestock accounts for 40% of Global Agricultural Product, employs 1.3 billion people and generates livelihoods for one billion poor people (10). Livestock is also the main source of protein and other nutrients for 830 million food-insecure people and an important factor in the mental development of children (1), in the form of meat, milk or eggs. One of the major contributions that livestock makes in the developing world is that it provides a source of cash for essential expenses (e.g. food, education, health). Moreover, it is often the only solution to valorise arid land, contributes to the conservation of biodiversity, is an important source of traction to till the land and harvest crops, provides manure for soil fertilisation and is a central issue for social networking in many communities, in Africa and Asia in particular. A significant leap in world demand for animal protein is expected between now and 2020, and beyond, coming from the emerging middle class in developing countries and their new consumer habits. With globalisation, the number of animals and the volume of their products being exchanged at national and international levels are in constant growth.

For the livestock sector to fulfil these potential roles in both industrialised and developing countries, well-managed, transparent and credible Veterinary Services, in both the public and private sector, as defined by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), are essential for controlling animal diseases, ensuring sustainable incomes for the more vulnerable producers, contributing to food security and food safety and reducing the impact of diseases occurring at the human-animal-ecosystem interface. Good governance of national Veterinary Services is a fundamental underlying principle for responding to emerging global animal health risks and related public health threats. Well-governed Veterinary Services are those that are sustainably financed, are universally available and are provided efficiently without waste or duplication and in a manner that is transparent and free of fraud or corruption. It is widely acknowledged that good governance in the provision of public goods and services is associated with faster and more equitable economic and social development. However, rigorous evaluations of the performance of Veterinary Services worldwide (using the OIE PVS Tool) have indicated that a significant portion of national Veterinary Services are failing to comply with minimum international standards. This shortcoming poses a significant risk for many developing countries in the context of growing global demand for animal-source foods and the burgeoning livestock population. Investing in improving the quality of Veterinary Services in both transition and developing countries should be a priority for governments, which must be supported by the international community and donors.

This position paper will: (i) highlight the rationale behind investing in good governance of Veterinary Services; (ii) present successful examples of such investments in Africa, South-East Asia and Central Europe; and (iii) provide guidance to development partners interested in investments to improve the quality and governance of Veterinary Services.

Why invest in good governance of Veterinary Services?

Veterinary Services contribute to public health, economic growth and poverty alleviation

The first globally recognised mandates of efficient Veterinary Services are: (i) the early detection and reporting of animal disease occurrence in any geographical area; and (ii) the rapid control of incursions through implementation of effective biosecurity and biocontainment measures. By fulfilling their role in animal disease control, whether of zoonotic, transboundary or production-limiting diseases, Veterinary Services contribute directly to protecting public health, improving nutrition and productivity, enhancing natural resource management, facilitating economic growth and alleviating poverty and vulnerability.

Efficient Veterinary Services, in close collaboration with Human Health Services, have a key role to play in protecting public health under the ‘One Health’ framework. The recent avian influenza crisis has re-emphasised the need for cost-effective measures to control zoonotic diseases at the animal source in order to protect human health (13, 14, 15). Schilling et al. (9), Zinsstag et al. (21), standard-setting organisations (OIE) and development organisations (the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]) have all demonstrated the human health benefits associated with animal disease control (e.g. for brucellosis [8] and rabies). In many countries, Veterinary Services are also responsible for the safety of food of animal origin from production, through slaughter, food processing and distribution, retail store inspection and foodborne disease surveillance programmes.

National Veterinary Services, in compliance with international standards as defined in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) (18), are critical not only in protecting animal and public health, but also in ensuring safe trade and thereby contributing to economic growth for the whole spectrum of countries. International
trade of animals and their products represents a significant source of foreign currency and economic growth for exporting countries, such as Australia, Brazil or New Zealand. Livestock also plays a key role in the national economy of some of the poorest and most vulnerable countries; in Somalia, the livestock value chain creates about 60% of employment and 40% of the gross domestic product, while the export of livestock and meat generates 80% of foreign currency (3). In any country, the presence of endemic transboundary animal diseases, such as foot and mouth disease (FMD), contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, peste des petits ruminants, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) or classical swine fever (CSF), causes great economic losses and strongly affects its capacity to access international markets. Control of these diseases is in accord with OIE objectives to achieve the most informed and least restrictive disease control measures for the safe trade of animals and animal products, in compliance with the World Trade Organization Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and OIE standards (20).

At the household level, well-managed, transparent and credible Veterinary Services, in both the public and private sector, are essential for improving the overall productivity of livestock production systems by decreasing mortality and abortion, increasing animal growth and fertility rates, and increasing the output of product per unit of livestock (milk, meat, eggs). Efficient Veterinary Services contribute to ensuring sustainable incomes, especially for the more vulnerable producers, and to protecting assets, decreasing poverty and vulnerability, and improving food security.

For all these reasons improving animal health and food safety must be considered a global public good. It fully justifies governments’ and donors’ involvement in supporting the good governance of Veterinary Services.

**Investing in the prevention of animal diseases has impressive socio-economic benefits**

The benefits of supporting Veterinary Services need to be substantiated with socio-economic evidence showing that investing in animal disease prevention has a much higher socio-economic return than does responding to outbreaks and crises and covering the consequential health costs. Animal diseases have direct (e.g. production losses, loss of genetics and biodiversity) and indirect impacts (e.g. trade disruptions, fewer jobs in the agri-food sector, human hospitalisations and income losses) that vary from one disease to another, depending on the severity of the disease, its extension, its zoonotic potential, etc. Veterinary Services need to be able to quantify these impacts and to provide cost-efficiency analyses in order to access adequate and sustainable funding from national budgets and external resources. Several economic studies have recently been carried out with the support of international organisations to provide Veterinary Authorities with analyses that enable them to develop economic arguments to justify investment in effective animal health policies. In-depth studies are undertaken with the aim of designing specific methodologies for developing countries in order to allow them to carry out their own assessment and to develop their own argued analyses.

A detailed desk review in 2007 (15) shows many examples where the benefits accruing from investment in improved prevention and control measures far outweigh the cost of those investments. However, the methodologies and assumptions used require that the data be interpreted with caution. In Latin America it was estimated that an injection over 15 years of an additional US$137 million per year in strengthening animal health systems and controlling contagious diseases would generate a Net Present Value of US$1.9 billion (mainly through the impact on trade); in the Philippines, the estimated benefit–cost ratios for the investment in eradication of FMD ranged from 1.6:1 to 12.1. In Mali, achieving a reduction of only 1% in bovine and 2% in small ruminant mortality rates would generate additional revenue of US$28.9 million per year.

The costs of major outbreaks of disease reported in the literature are very high. The impressive figures show the huge economic impact of major animal disease epidemics. For example, the HPAI (H5N1) outbreaks in Asia, which led to the destruction of over 150 million poultry, had an overall impact estimated at US$10 billion (2). Similarly, the financial consequences of CSF outbreaks in the Netherlands in 1997–1998 amounted to US$2.3 billion, and the total cost of the FMD outbreaks in the United Kingdom in 2001 has been estimated at US$9–13 billion, including at least US$4.5 billion in direct costs to the public sector and an additional US$4.5–9 billion in the agricultural and tourism sectors (11, 12). Furthermore, all case studies reveal that the costs of major disease outbreaks far outweigh the investment necessary to develop and maintain effective veterinary governance, infrastructure and surveillance systems (15).

Other studies have demonstrated that options for compensation for livestock losses caused by diseases through insurance mechanisms are very limited in countries where poor governance of Veterinary Services prevails (16). Such mechanisms rely first and foremost on well-planned government disease prevention and control programmes, including the proper registration of farms and identification of animals and compensation payments for animals culled for control purposes. It is evident that private insurance mechanisms are not viable when animal health systems are inadequate. Good governance of Veterinary Services is and will continue to be a prerequisite for the establishment of efficient livestock insurance schemes.
In 2011, in order to illustrate the benefits of endemic disease control, the World Bank commissioned a study (unpublished) to assess the economic impact of zoonotic diseases in four countries in Central Asia and to provide cost–benefit analysis for various control options. The results clearly illustrate the benefits of controlling endemic diseases. For example, for brucellosis, the benefit–cost ratio over a ten-year control programme (expected on-farm revenues for each currency unit spent on control strategies) ranged from 1.8:1 to 4:1; important additional benefits of Disability Adjusted Life Years added to the overall positive impact.

Therefore, despite the relative scarcity of studies on the economic implications of prevention and control of animal diseases, analyses clearly suggest that investing in Veterinary Services to prevent exotic disease outbreaks and to control important endemic diseases brings significant economic rewards, benefiting producers, the agri-food industry and the population as a whole.

**Good governance of Veterinary Services is a key principle of the ‘One Health’ approach**

Between 1940 and 2004, 335 new emerging diseases were detected: 60% were of a zoonotic nature, with 72% of them coming from wildlife. Improving governance and strengthening national Veterinary Services are prerequisites for successful collaboration and coordination with other sectors (public health and environment services and regional and international institutions) to implement the ‘One Health’ approach at all levels. Global, regional and national surveillance systems, including risk-analysis capacity, for animal and foodborne diseases are crucial for anticipating, detecting and responding to the occurrence and spread of pathogens and hazards threatening public health, as shown during several recent high-profile global events (e.g. HPAI, Nipah virus, West Nile virus, Rift Valley fever, milk contamination with melamine). These crises and the subsequent efforts made by countries and the international community towards pandemic preparedness have re-emphasised the need for increased collaboration and coordination between animal health, human health and ecosystem health services under the ‘One Health’ umbrella, supported by a proper communication strategy. However, the evaluation of the performance of Veterinary Services using the OIE PVS Pathway methodology has shown that many developing and transition countries do not comply with the international standards adopted by OIE Member Countries and are failing on some of the basic requirements. The overall weakness in resources, both human and financial, prevents these countries from effectively delivering veterinary services to their citizens and controlling animal and public health threats to them and their neighbouring countries.

**Vertical disease-specific approaches have shown some successes but are not sufficient or cost effective**

Rinderpest was declared eradicated worldwide by the OIE and the FAO in May 2011. This was the first time that an animal disease had been recognised as having been eradicated from the planet. This 40-year battle proved that fighting a specific disease, i.e. taking a ‘vertical approach’, can be very successful when all stakeholders (including countries, international organisations and donors) consistently work together engaging substantial financial resources. Similarly, even though the H5N1 virus has not been eradicated and is still circulating in some countries with sporadic outbreaks reported, the efforts made since 2004 to control the disease and prevent a pandemic have allowed for global management of the disease and containment of its spread.

On the other hand, these experiences have also shown that adopting such a vertical approach only has limited impacts in improving the overall quality of Veterinary Services and their governance in developing countries. Moreover, it does not allow them to be sufficiently prepared to respond to emerging threats of a different nature or to eliminate endemic diseases affecting productivity or threatening public health. However, these vertical approaches have served as entry points to start working on surveillance system enhancement (e.g. through the Pan-African Programme for the Control of Epizootics [PACE]). The international community has become increasingly convinced that they should provide support for system-strengthening approaches as well as disease-specific approaches to improving the quality of Veterinary Services. This was officially recognised for the first time in the Hanoi Declaration (4). The international community acknowledged the need to combine this vertical, disease-based approach with the need for ‘… building stronger and more responsive human and veterinary health systems and better aligning those sectoral policies in ways that encourage socio-economic development’. Investing in strengthening systems, including the governance of Veterinary Services, under a ‘horizontal’ approach therefore becomes a priority and must be conducted in parallel, and in close coordination, with any strategy targeting one or several specific diseases. The OIE/FAO Global Foot and Mouth Disease Control Strategy (2012–2016) (19) should be seen as a further step in this direction, as it (i) facilitates access to animal health services for smallholders, and (ii) promotes the strengthening of animal health systems through the improved control of major diseases. In most countries, expected outcomes are not only related to FMD control but also to improved animal health surveillance and control systems. Similarly, the South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease Programme provides a good model for horizontal and vertical approaches to regional animal disease management including zoonoses.
Foreign assistance to Veterinary Services remains limited despite indisputable benefits

Despite the importance of the livestock sector for the economies of many developing countries and its impact on poverty alleviation, the livestock sector has long been the ‘forgotten child’ of development aid, partly because the sector is rarely clearly identified as a country development priority. An unpublished study conducted in 2007 under the African Livestock Partnership (ALive) highlighted that out of 34 African countries’ Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, ten did not mention the livestock sector at all, 12 briefly discussed it, and only three included a budgeted strategy for it. Most of them did not even mention the Veterinary Services. In 2006, a global survey of OIE delegates (5) pointed out that around 25% of African and 50% of Middle-Eastern countries do not maintain programmes or projects to control animal diseases. Among the programmes that effectively targeted animal health, only 10% were aimed at improving overall animal health systems; most just focused on controlling one or more specific diseases.

Several factors contribute to this situation. First, the benefits of capacity building and institutional reform investments are not immediately visible and are often only felt many years later. For instance, in many developing countries, one of the key concerns for Veterinary Services is the retirement of the group of veterinarians who were trained during the colonial period, or immediately after during the communist era, who are not being replaced in those countries that do not have a national curriculum for veterinarians (e.g. Mali, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia). If, on the basis of a needs assessment, governments, followed by donors, start supporting the education of new veterinarians the benefits will not be felt for about ten years: five years for the new veterinarians to graduate, plus five years for them to gain the professional experience that will enable them to add real value. Second, as mentioned above, the lack of methodology and tools to perform cost–benefit analyses of investing in strengthening animal health systems has a direct impact on the capacity of decision-makers, such as the Ministry of Finance, to prioritise this sector. Third, the greatest challenge of operating under the ‘One Health’ framework is posed by the need to work across sectors within countries and among donor agencies.

Good practices and lessons learned

The above-described constraints to donors’ support to improving the quality and governance of Veterinary Services have not prevented the emergence of interesting and promising examples of investments in strengthening Veterinary Systems on which to capitalise. Three successful or promising operations (two at regional level and one at national level) are presented below.

The Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa (VET GOV) project, supported by the European Union

Background

The European Union (EU) has played a key role in the control and eradication of rinderpest. Over a 40-year period it contributed close to €340 million. In Africa, the EU assistance in controlling HPAI built upon the structures developed for the eradication of rinderpest. It is worth noting that the PACE programme demonstrated that institutional reform of Veterinary Services at the national level was a prerequisite for the eradication of rinderpest. The EU, in addition to being a leading force in this challenge, has also capitalised on the lessons learned from the eradication of rinderpest to build a solid policy of long-term capacity building of animal health and livestock services (7). These programmes have also confirmed the trade-related impact of transboundary animal diseases. By undertaking a number of PVS missions, financed by the EU as part of the Better Training for Safer Food programme, the OIE is making an increasing contribution to the design of EU-financed interventions to mitigate the impact of these transboundary animal diseases.

A new operation: description

In 2011, as a follow-up to those experiences, the EU agreed to support a regional programme valued at €30 million for reinforcing veterinary governance in Africa. This programme, which started in 2012 and will last five years, aims to improve the institutional environment so as to provide effective and efficient animal health services in Africa. This is with a view to improving the contribution of livestock to food security and safety, economic growth and wealth creation, and poverty reduction. With this objective, the VETGOV programme directly focuses on enhancing knowledge and awareness for institutional change; increasing institutional capacity for livestock policy formulation, strategies and legislation; and enhancing institutional capacity for the implementation of policies and enforcement of regulations.

VETGOV has been designed on the principles of subsidiarity, and its implementation modalities are based on the mandates and relationships of the different institutions involved:
a) The PACE programme has demonstrated the added value of working at the continental level on veterinary issues with the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR). VETGOV will assist AU-IBAR in harnessing the information and knowledge required for policy analysis, and support countries as they implement recommendations from the PVS and Gap Analysis missions; it will also be in charge of the overall coordination and monitoring of the programme.

b) In accordance with the AU policy, AU-IBAR will support the Regional Economic Communities (REC) to play an increased role in the sector in line with their mandates. The REC will organise an important part of the support to individual countries, and ensure harmonisation at the regional level. Most of the resources will be channelled to the countries on the basis of the findings of OIE PVS missions.

c) FAO will (i) sustain the regional animal health networks that are playing a key role in harmonising national approaches and regional integration and (ii) be widely mobilised to assist in policy analysis.

d) OIE will be responsible for implementing activities related to enhancing the capacity of countries to assess their compliance with OIE standards, including standards on veterinary legislation and the interoperability between regional animal health information systems and the OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS).

Expected benefits

By consistently focusing on long-term capacity building, broad institutional reinforcement, multi-sectoral and comprehensive approaches and on the sub-regional and regional convergence of standards, the EU has been a driving force in achieving an international common foundation in livestock disease control. VETGOV support for key actors in the field of veterinary science will lead to long-term and sustainable impacts, and will strengthen the processes of regional integration, especially with regards to livestock trade. However, VETGOV can only highlight the value of making the investments necessary to fill the gaps – deciding to go ahead and finance the improvements remains a national responsibility. The definitive impact of VETGOV will be ensuring that national budgetary contributions finance concrete measures of sufficient scale to help countries meet OIE international quality standards on veterinary governance. As per the principles of subsidiarity, regionally consolidated national PVS analysis should identify the regional capacity-building programmes that could benefit from regional funds. The EU has developed interesting mechanisms for mobilising regional funds to complement national efforts (e.g. the European Veterinary Facility).

A sub-regional approach to improving governance: Australian support for Veterinary Services in South-East Asian nations

Background

Following an agreement in 2010 between the Department of Livestock Development of the Royal Government of Thailand and the OIE, an OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia (SRR-SEA) was formally established. This new arrangement reflected the success of OIE programmes managed out of Bangkok and an interest by funding organisations and countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to continue and expand animal health work, particularly in the area of capacity building. Current SRR-SEA activities have in large part been informed by previous work of the OIE Bangkok Office, which was often pioneering in nature, and in particular by the AusAID-funded Project to Strengthen Veterinary Services to Combat Avian Influenza and Other Priority Diseases in South-East Asia (PSVS), which ran from 2007 to 2010.

The PSVS is the subject of this case study. It was established to facilitate sub-regional coordination to support the long-term and sustainable strengthening of Veterinary Services and to contribute to overall global OIE policies and strategies in this area. It had two major components – generic Veterinary Services’ strengthening and specialist development activities.

The PSVS, in the context of the PVS Pathway, facilitated in-country assessments, strategic planning, resourcing and implementation of Veterinary Services systems. The Project took the results of individual OIE PVS Evaluation and Gap Analysis missions and integrated them into a staged approach providing targeted support to those ASEAN countries engaged in the PVS process. It was encouraging and rewarding to see that country requests for PVS missions increased over the period of the project, in part due to PSVS activities.

Description

One of the PSVS initiatives was to select two candidates for modelling the PVS Pathway in South-East Asia. Vietnam and the Philippines agreed to participate in this activity, which was facilitated by the OIE Bangkok Representation and selected experts. After consultations and workshops, Vietnam has developed a Veterinary Services Strategic Plan known as the ‘Roadmap’, which will be considered by the Vietnamese Government, including at the Prime Ministerial level. The Philippines is developing its Strategic Plan using similar PVS and PSVS inputs. Both countries will, on the basis of these plans, advocate for resourcing and implementation, firstly with their governments and, as appropriate, with donors. Such country-owned budgeted
plans based on OIE international standards provide a powerful and legitimate basis for arguing for resources.

The PSVS supported four priority areas for development activities: communication, legislation and governance, emergency preparedness and response, and HPAI laboratory diagnosis. With the exception of the laboratory diagnostic component, the approach taken was to hold annual workshops attended by national representatives, experts and OIE staff over a three-year period. Efforts were made to have the same representatives attend their selected workshops over the three years to ensure continuity, common understandings, and the assembly of ideas and knowledge so that participants could contribute strongly to developments in these areas for their national Veterinary Services. Some of the key outcomes from these activities included: the completion of an agreed South-East Asian Animal Health Communication Strategy; improved awareness of legislative requirements and capacity building on the regulation of the veterinary profession to support efforts towards the creation of veterinary statutory bodies; and an enhanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary and generic approaches to emergency planning. Importantly, workshop outcomes led to common understandings of OIE strategies, national issues, and problems encountered in countries in trying to implement improved governance arrangements. A number of the ideas from the workshops were put forward to the OIE for consideration (e.g. the development of legislative guidelines). The laboratory component was managed by the Australian Animal Health Laboratory. The core activity was to conduct national laboratory diagnostic needs assessments as a basis for the consideration of laboratory enhancements.

Lessons learned and benefits of success

Among the key lessons learned was that, by using the PVS Pathway and high-level, evidence-based strategic planning approaches, the PSVS Project helped empower national Veterinary Services to set their own agendas based on OIE internationally agreed standards. Another lesson learned was that improvements to the governance of Veterinary Services and sustained implementation require long-term political and national commitment and involve cultural re-adjustment.

The successful PSVS approach has been continued under a new AusAID Project funded until 2016. The programme, entitled ‘Stop Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses’, includes three components: strengthening Veterinary Services, the South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease Programme, and ‘One Health’. It encompasses horizontal and vertical approaches to improving animal health systems and disease management, key socio-economic elements and enhanced collaboration and cooperation with countries and partners.

From a disease-specific to a system approach: an example of a World Bank-funded project in Kyrgyzstan

Background

The involvement of the World Bank in support of the Kyrgyz Veterinary Services started with the Avian Influenza (AI) Control and Human Pandemic Preparedness and Response project, which became effective in July 2006 and closed in December 2011. This project was designed according to GPAI guidelines (the Bank’s Global Program for AI Control and Human Pandemic Preparedness and Response) that aimed at addressing both short- and long-term needs to ensure the sustainability of activities and capacities of the institutions to cope with other critical diseases. This required, in addition to the usual technical components (staff and laboratory equipment, infrastructure, ad hoc training), a step-wise systemic approach to strengthen the governance of Veterinary Services.

From PVS Gap Analysis to a long-term strategic plan to strengthen Veterinary Services

The concurrent development of the OIE PVS Pathway provided a unique opportunity to support this project objective. First, the Bank supported and endorsed the Government’s request to the OIE to conduct an independent evaluation of Veterinary Services using the PVS Tool (it was conducted in January 2007 and followed by a PVS Gap Analysis mission in November 2008). Second, the Bank prompted the Government to request an additional OIE mission to develop a five-year strategic plan for Veterinary Services. This prepared the groundwork for more long-term interventions to be conducted in parallel and anticipated follow-on projects.

Lessons learned

The long-term vision adopted by the project not only opened up opportunities for progressive improvements and the establishment of sustainable systems, but also helped to start a dialogue with other donors and to use existing programmes to support these project objectives. It was evidenced by the additional operations and financing that the Bank and the EU (through the Food Security Programme), as well as the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, contributed to further the goals of this project. For example, the main project objectives and activities to strengthen Veterinary Services of the AI project were integrated into a new Bank-funded project (the Agricultural Investment and Services Project) approved in April 2008 and running through to June 2013. One important input into this new project, in addition to the PVS and Gap Analysis reports that will continue to serve as guides and benchmarks to regularly measure progress of Veterinary Services, is the development of draft
legal texts. Since 2008 various ‘legislation missions’ have been conducted, using OIE and other international and local experts, to support the development of a modern legal framework in accordance with international standards and to initiate reforms, namely those related to the privatisation of veterinary practice, including the creation of a Veterinary Statutory Body, payment for delegated activities, and the introduction of compensation principles. Additionally, disease control strategies have been developed, initially targeting brucellosis, and piloted in a few provinces. The positive impacts of this programme have been extremely rapid and have surpassed expectations: a reduction in animal abortions by 75%, a decline in the number of human cases of brucellosis, and a resurgence of interest in, and respect for, the veterinary profession are among the most noteworthy. All these have contributed to heightening the profile of the Veterinary Services and highlighting their crucial role in the rural economy and for public health. The Kyrgyz Government has therefore been extremely supportive to the Bank-supported One Health regional project in Central Asia and has expressed its deep interest in pursuing all those initiated activities to control zoonoses. This case strongly suggests that developing good governance through sound policies, modern legal frameworks and efficient human resources is a lengthy process but a necessary one. Without good governance it is difficult to develop a common vision, to leverage other donors’ and partners’ support and funding, or to move Veterinary Services progressively towards an optimal level of performance.

Where to invest to support good governance in Veterinary Services?

Sound governance in the delivery of Veterinary Services relies on building strong institutions and implementing the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (6), which was formulated around five principles: Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Results, and Mutual Accountability. Applying these principles at the level of sectors is critical to maximising the impact of aid and achieving development objectives. In the aftermath of the 2008 food crisis, special efforts are being made in agriculture and rural development, areas that offer the greatest opportunity to overcome hunger and poverty. Donor support for good governance in Veterinary Services will contribute to improving both the management of public funds in developing countries and the quality of aid and its impact on development. In addition, these investments have elements of global public goods and contribute to mitigating negative externalities generated by livestock development and globalisation.

A well-established pre-operational tool: the OIE PVS Pathway

Since 1996, the OIE’s Terrestrial Code (17) has included standards for the quality of Veterinary Services, including guidelines for their good governance. Faced with the needs and difficulties of guiding investments aimed at bringing the Veterinary Services into compliance with these standards, the OIE developed the now well-established PVS Tool to assist its 179 Member Countries in measuring the strengths and weaknesses of their Veterinary Services against international standards. The OIE has also subsequently developed the PVS Gap Analysis Tool to define Veterinary Services’ strategic priorities based on the diagnosis made by the PVS Evaluation.

Together with selected proposed ‘treatments’ through special assessments and capacity building in specific sub-sectors of the Veterinary Services (e.g. legislation, education, leadership competencies, laboratories), these tools are branded under the name of the OIE PVS Pathway (13). The Pathway has been supported since the beginning by donors through the World Animal Health and Welfare Fund (WAHWF). The comparative advantage of such a Fund is to guarantee, on one hand, the alignment and coordination of aid behind a predefined agenda and national programmes, and, on the other, the compliance of any analysis, recommendations and plans with the OIE international standards for the governance of Veterinary Services.

As of June 2012, 111 PVS missions have been completed and 81 reports have already been made available to partners, 60 countries have received PVS Gap Analysis missions, and 39 are in the process of reviewing their veterinary legislation with the support of the OIE. This OIE PVS Pathway constitutes an excellent pre-operational tool that should guide governments and donors when investing in strengthening Veterinary Services and their governance. However, the results of the PVS Gap Analysis and investment programmes to aid Veterinary Services to comply with OIE standards must be integrated into the national, sector-wide approach for the social and economic development of the country concerned. It is particularly important to integrate these results into any programmes encompassing the agricultural, trade and public health sectors. This will allow donors to become more engaged with, and committed to, capacity building in the Veterinary Services at the national level.

Priority areas for investment

Analysis of the available PVS and Gap Analysis reports demonstrates that the Veterinary Services of many countries do not meet the basic quality requirements. In particular, their governance must urgently be reinforced
and this requires investments in specific activities organised in three ‘pillars’, as listed below.

**Pillar 1: Enhancing political accountability**

a) Building strong and transparent institutions: this implies investing in strengthening human resources and the skills and capacities of personnel, assisting Veterinary Services in establishing better planning, accountability and fiduciary systems, as well as the open and timely management of complaints from consumers.

b) Improving the legislative framework: most developing countries’ legislation and rules are obsolete and outdated. They need to be reviewed and updated to comply with international standards and to respond to the needs of a globalised world. Models of collaboration have been established between countries, the OIE and a donor to assist a country in enhancing its veterinary legislative framework, such as the one described above for Kyrgyzstan, which can be replicated.

c) Promoting the technical independence of Veterinary Services and strengthening the chain of command.

d) Continuing to invest in regional (e.g. AU-IBAR and ASEAN) and international institutions (e.g. OIE and FAO) to promote the global improvement of the governance of Veterinary Services, for instance through the WAHWF, which helps to coordinate, target and align aid for enhanced effectiveness.

**Pillar 2: Improving capacity**

a) Strengthening human capacity within the public Veterinary Services, many of which, particularly in the developing countries, need additional staff and improvement of their individual skills. This means in particular:

   – Investing in veterinary education: this can be done in one of two ways (i) supporting the national veterinary education system and schools (updating curricula, training teachers, renovating buildings, providing equipment and consumables); or (ii) adopting a sub-regional approach for small countries that do not necessarily need their own institution. In this respect, the example of the World Bank-funded ‘Fostering Agriculture Productivity Project’ in Mali, which finances the scholarships and living costs of 30 students from Mali who are studying for five years in the Interstate School of Veterinary Sciences and Medicine of Dakar, Senegal, can be considered a good practice to scale up.

   – Investing in continuous training: this involves assisting the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the Veterinary Services in developing a ‘Continuous Training Plan’ for their staff, with a monitoring system to follow its progress and the closing of gaps. This plan can be implemented and funded through the Ministry’s budget and the financial gaps covered by donors and partners according to their own competitive advantages.

b) Providing financial resources and covering the gaps in operating and logistical costs of Veterinary Services: this is often done on an activity basis during animal health crises or emergency contexts, and funds are delivered according to specific objectives and following a results framework for which follow-up indicators must be designed and target data reached. However, it could ultimately be done through direct budget support, which would need an acceptable level of trust in national institutions from donors.

c) Improving relations between Veterinary Services, public health and environmental services: as described previously, the operationalisation of the ‘One Health’ approach implies enhanced ‘inter-sectoral governance’. This should be done through facilitating collaboration and communication between sectors and departments, organising joint training programmes, and promoting joint interventions and cross-sectoral budget support for activities of common interest.

**Pillar 3: Strengthening the demand for good governance**

Achieving this goal at the global, regional and national levels requires efforts from both development partners (donors and international institutions) and governments. This should include efforts to:

a) Strengthen coordination between and among governments from developing countries and development partners. In this regard, at the global level, the OIE WAHWF is an interesting tool for encouraging donors’ aid alignment behind a commonly agreed programme. The governance of this Fund (it is governed by a Management Committee and an Advisory Committee and donors are involved in both) is a good model of good governance at a global level. Similarly, at the national level, investment programmes developed on the basis of OIE PVS Pathway missions and fully owned by the countries could allow donors to invest in the same objectives, but according to their specific competitive advantages. This would necessitate full ownership of these programmes by the recipient countries and their inclusion in the national strategic plans for poverty alleviation and economic growth.

b) Enhance communication. The international community and governments must promulgate a joint message that is well articulated and well argued through strong economic analysis. The message should be targeted, explaining the importance of good governance of Veterinary Services and the need to increase investments to strengthen animal
health and food safety surveillance systems, both because it creates a ‘win-win’ situation and because well-governed Veterinary Services are a public good. Providing line ministries (Agriculture and Livestock) and national Veterinary Services with clear messages and communication tools would also assist in their engagement and in convincing national decision-makers, including ministries of finance and planning.

c) Support socio-economic analysis. Equipping countries with the capacity to demonstrate the importance of efficient, well-managed and transparent Veterinary Services and to establish their own priorities would influence decision-makers and bring this sector higher on priority lists.

d) Develop an incentive framework for countries to increase their efforts to improve the governance of Veterinary Services. One idea would be to establish regional or global contingency funds that countries could access in case of emergency (outbreaks of transboundary animal disease) only on condition that they are able to demonstrate a tangible commitment to improving their national animal health systems, including the governance of Veterinary Services.

c) Strengthen the ability of rural people to demand better livestock services and hold service providers accountable. Institutional support, such as investing in farmers’ organisations and enhancing the representation of smallholders, women and landless farmers in local institutions, is an effective way to increase the ‘voice’ of rural people.

Finally, good governance of Veterinary Services is a necessary condition for providing sustainable animal health services to livestock keepers. It includes the need for improving the relations and links between the public and private sectors of Veterinary Services and the establishment of public–private partnerships between them. Effective alliances with private-sector stakeholders, including private veterinarians, producers, processors, distributors and their organisations, are a way to deliver better services, in a more cost-effective manner. Most developing countries do not have the financial resources to ensure full coverage of their territory through public-sector veterinarians. A possible option to overcome this constraint is to promote the establishment of private veterinarians in rural areas through incentives such as the model of the ‘sanitary mandate’ whereby animal health tasks of a public good nature are sub-contracted to private veterinarians. A Veterinary Statutory Body, as defined by the OIE Terrestrial Code, is an ‘autonomous authority regulating veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals’. As such, this body is vital to ensure the good governance of such a system and to maintain good relations and confidence between public and private veterinary sectors. Investments aiming at enhancing the governance of Veterinary Services should also support the establishment and consolidation of independent Veterinary Statutory Bodies at the national level. A well-organised private sector will also be a source of demand for improved governance of Veterinary Services. Their confidence in the system is essential for effective collaboration in livestock development and related business.

Conclusion

Veterinary Services of high quality are the most effective means of protecting national livestock populations against animal diseases and protecting people against zoonotic and foodborne diseases. Therefore, bringing the Veterinary Services into compliance with international standards, which includes establishing good governance to increase their efficiency, should be considered a priority for governments supported by their development partners, including donors. Well-developed Veterinary Services are able to protect countries from animal health threats such as the introduction of animal and zoonotic diseases, therefore playing a key role in safeguarding animal and public health, reducing poverty and food insecurity, and strengthening economic growth. In this regard, good governance of Veterinary Services qualifies as a global public good and justifies international community involvement, including involvement of donors, following solidarity principles.

Building good governance in Veterinary Services helps a country to detect disease events, whether natural or intentional, earlier than would otherwise be the case and to respond more rapidly and efficiently. It has been demonstrated that prevention is more efficacious and cost effective than response to a crisis and that tackling zoonotic diseases at their animal source remains the best way to prevent human epidemics and achieve global security objectives. These are the mandates of Veterinary Services.

More than anything, establishing good governance will require strong awareness, initiative and commitment from developing countries where Veterinary Services are not recognised as compliant with international standards. Tools to help them establish this issue as a priority should be developed, national investment programmes to improve governance of Veterinary Services must be fully reflected in national strategies, and policies for economic growth and poverty alleviation, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, should be developed. As part of the Aid Efficiency Agenda set out in the Paris Declaration, donors can be expected to mobilise resources more easily for countries able to demonstrate ownership of the programme.
Good governance of Veterinary Services is a key factor in building trust among producers, processors, distributors and consumers, thereby building an enabling environment for livestock development, economic prosperity and protection of public health. This requires long-term commitment, as well as concerted financial support from donors, in line with the Paris Declaration, and good cooperation and solidarity among countries. Finally, it is important to adopt integrated and harmonised approaches, and the use of international guidelines and standards, backed up by technical and scientific expertise.

**Document d’orientation : l’amélioration de la gouvernance pour des Services vétérinaires plus efficaces dans les pays en développement, une priorité pour les bailleurs de fonds**

S. Forman, C. Planté, G. Murray, B. Rey, D. Belton, B. Evans & P. Steinmetz

**Résumé**

L’élevage participe de manière importante à l’économie mondiale. Néanmoins, les maladies animales et les problèmes de sécurité sanitaire des aliments continuent de nuire à la productivité des élevages, à la croissance économique, à la sécurité alimentaire et aux objectifs de réduction de la pauvreté. La mise en place d’une gouvernance efficace et rationnelle des Services vétérinaires dans le monde est une condition déterminante pour faire face aux menaces planétaires qui pèsent sur la santé animale et, par conséquent, sur la santé publique. Les travaux réalisés ces dernières années par l’Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE) à travers l’Outil pour l’évaluation des performances des Services vétérinaires (outil PVS) et l’Outil d’analyse des écarts (c’est-à-dire les deux volets du « Processus PVS ») ont révélé qu’une proportion significative de Services vétérinaires nationaux dans le monde ne remplit pas les conditions essentielles définissant une bonne gouvernance. Ce défaut constitue un risque important pour de nombreux pays en développement ainsi que pour leurs partenaires commerciaux, surtout dans le contexte actuel d’intensification des échanges de denrées alimentaires d’origine animale et d’augmentation des effectifs des animaux d’élevage dans le monde. L’existence de Services vétérinaires bien gérés, transparents et fiables, opérant aussi bien dans le secteur public que privé est une condition fondamentale pour atténuer les risques de maladies animales et pour assurer un revenu durable aux éleveurs les plus vulnérables. Ces Services jouent également un rôle essentiel pour limiter les risques de santé publique associés aux maladies zoonotiques. Les auteurs soulignent l’impact de la gouvernance sur la prestation de services vétérinaires dans une perspective de développement, ainsi que les bénéfices associés à l’amélioration de la gouvernance vétérinaire. Ils relèvent les aspects pouvant être définis comme un « bien public mondial » dans la bonne gouvernance des Services vétérinaires, et proposent une éventuelle feuille de route pour l’investissement dans des opérations de développement, basées sur le processus PVS de l’OIE, ainsi que des solutions de financement innovantes qui préconisent l’engagement des États, avec le soutien de programmes de donateurs.

**Mots-clés**

Documento de posición. La mejora de la gobernanza para contar con Servicios Veterinarios eficaces en los países en desarrollo, una prioridad para los donantes de fondos

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Resumen
La ganadería contribuye sustancialmente a la economía mundial. Sin embargo, las enfermedades de los animales y la cuestión de la inocuidad de los alimentos siguen siendo importantes obstáculos para la productividad del sector ganadero, el crecimiento económico, la lucha contra la pobreza y la seguridad alimentaria. La práctica de una gobernanza eficiente y eficaz de los Servicios Veterinarios en todo el planeta es un requisito fundamental para afrontar las amenazas zoosanitarias y otros peligros conexos de salud pública de dimensión mundial. De la labor que últimamente viene realizando la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) con la aplicación de la herramienta para evaluar la eficacia de los Servicios Veterinarios (Herramienta PVS) y del procedimiento conexo de ‘análisis de brechas’ (integrados ambos en el ‘procedimiento PVS’ de la OIE) se desprende que, a escala mundial, una importante proporción de los Servicios Veterinarios nacionales incumple los requisitos básicos del buen gobierno. Tal deficiencia, considerada en el contexto del creciente comercio de alimentos de origen animal y del aumento de la cabaña ganadera mundial, entraña un riesgo importante para muchos países en desarrollo y sus socios comerciales. Para aminorar el riesgo de enfermedades animales y garantizar ingresos sostenibles a los productores más expuestos, es esencial contar con Servicios Veterinarios transparentes y fiables, tanto públicos como privados. Tales servicios son indispensables asimismo para contener los riesgos de salud pública que plantean las enfermedades zoonóticas. Los autores destacan la repercusión de la gobernanza en la prestación de servicios veterinarios en un contexto de desarrollo, así como los beneficios que se derivan de una mejor gobernanza veterinaria. También señalan que un buen gobierno de los Servicios Veterinarios trae aparejados ciertos elementos de ‘interés público mundial’. Este artículo podría además sentar las bases de una hoja de ruta operativa de inversiones en pro del desarrollo, fundamentada en el procedimiento PVS de la OIE, y apuntar a una serie de opciones novedosas de financiación basadas en el compromiso de los gobiernos con el respaldo de programas de los donantes.

Palabras clave
References


