VETGOV

STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNANCE OF VETERINARY SERVICES

The *"Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa"* (VETGOV) programme was intended to bring about institution strengthening of veterinary services in Africa towards (i) the establishment of adequate veterinary services at the national level, and (ii) the strengthening of regional institutions to play their roles of coordination, harmonisation, integration and support to countries with the aim to stimulate a more conducive environment for public and private investments in the livestock sector.

The VETGOV programme focused on three main areas:

- creating a conducive and participatory change environment through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge creation

- build institutional and individual capacity in policy analysis, formulation and implementation to undertake institutional strengthening of veterinary services

- encouraging change through supporting initiatives with high leverage effects.

The project started in January 2012 and ended in July 2017

It was implemented by three organisations, each allocated funding through a Contribution Agreement under a single Financing Agreement: AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE. The total budget for the programme amounted to EUR 31.2 million and the total for the OIE component and activities amounted to EUR 3,028,000.

Under the terms of VETGOV, the OIE was responsible for implementing activities related to:

- enhancing capacity of countries to assess compliance with OIE standards (the PVS Pathway),

- building capacities in veterinary legislation, and

- ensuring interoperability between the AU-IBAR *Animal Resources Information System* (ARIS) and the OIE *World Animal Health Information System* (WAHIS).

VETERINARY SERVICES

To help ensure the effective performance of the Veterinary Services of Member Countries, the OIE has dedicated two Chapters of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code *(the Terrestrial Code)* to the Quality of Veterinary Services.

Chapter 3.1. Veterinary Services
Chapter 3.2. Evaluation of Veterinary Services

These OIE international standards and guidelines constitute the basis for independent external country evaluations of the *Performance of Veterinary Services* (PVS) and Aquatic Animal Health Services and have been democratically adopted by all OIE Members.

VETERINARY STATUTORY BODIES

The role of a *Veterinary Statutory Body* (VSB) is to oversee the quality and competence of veterinarians in a country. A competent Veterinary Statutory Body, autonomous from any political or commercial interests, can ensure the excellence of the veterinary profession through appropriately licensing or registering veterinary professionals, and providing minimum standards for (initial and continuing) education and professional conduct. The functional and legislative framework within which a Veterinary Statutory Body exercises its regulatory capacity is defined in Article 3.2.12 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and covers three main tenets :

- The licensing or registration of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals to perform the activities of veterinary medicine/science;
- The minimum standards of education (initial and continuing) required for degrees, diplomas and certificates entitling the holders thereof to be registered or licensed as veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals;
- The standards of professional conduct and competence of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals and ensuring that these standards are met.

VETERINARY EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Since a first milestone meeting of Deans and Principals of Schools and Faculties of Veterinary Medicine or Science in Arusha, in 2009, leaders of *Veterinary Education Establishments* (VEE) in the SADC region have been meeting annually. The countries involved are :

- Angola (Universidade José Eduardo dos Santos),
- Dem. Rep. of Congo (Université de Lubumbashi),
- Madagascar (Université d'Antananarivo),
- Malawi (University of Agriculture and Natural Resources),
- Mozambique (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane),
- Namibia (University of Namibia),
- South Africa (University of Pretoria),
- Tanzania (Sokoine University of Agriculture),
- Zambia (University or Zambia),
- Zimbabwe (University of Zimbabwe).

Since 2013, the group also includes two Faculties in eastern Africa:

- Kenya (University of Nairobi)
- Uganda (Makerere University)

The group is since referred to as the *Southern and Eastern Africa Association of VEE* (SEAAVEE) and was supported by the OIE, through the VETGOV programme.

In north Africa, since 2012, Universities offering veterinary training are part of a mediterranean network referred to as the Network of VEE in the Mediterranean *(Réseau des établissements d'enseignement vétérinaire de la Méditerranée* or REEV-Med), which is also supported by the OIE. The group includes VEE from Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Morocco and Tunisia.

In both networks, but also in general - across Africa, OIE actively promotes the twinning of VEE as a way to strengthen the compliance of these institutions with e.g. the guidelines on day-one-competencies of graduating veterinarians, as developed by the OIE

VETERINARY PARA - PROFESSIONALS

The issue of how *veterinary para-professionals* (VPP) operate is particularly relevant to the African continent, due to its relative shortage of (qualified) veterinary surgeons, the sheer size of the rural areas and nomadic production systems they are faced with, and the consequential lack of oversight or supervision. The existence of *community-based animal health workers* (or CAHWs) is again not exclusive to Africa, but has been widely experimented in Africa, in situations of peacetime, and in areas of conflict.

The inaugural continental conference for *Veterinary Para-Professionals* (VPP) took place in Pretoria, South Africa, from 13 to 15th of October 2015. It was organised by the OIE and the *African Veterinary Technicians Association* (AVTA), with the financial and technical support of the *Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines* (GALVmed) and the South African *Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries* (DAFF) in a bid to improve the quality of the field work conducted in Africa by strengthening the linkages and collaboration between veterinarians and VPP. The meeting benefited from the financial support of the European Commission through the *Strengthening of Veterinary Services in Africa* (VETGOV) project.

The conference brought together some 100 participants, including a selection of African representatives of the national associations / federations of VPP (many countries have several associations, for different VPP such as nurses, meat inspectors, laboratory technicians, field technicians, inseminators, etc.) as well as the representative of the veterinary authority (the Director of Veterinary Services) and the veterinary statutory body (Veterinary Council or Board).

Following three days of intense debates, the Conference participants resolved to support the veterinary para-professionals to establish independent national, regional and/or sector-wide associations, able and competent to represent the profession(s) in the Veterinary Statutory Body or Bodies; to convince National Veterinary Statutory Bodies to include veterinary para-professionals in their decision making bodies, beyond the mere registration or listing of these para-professionals; and to convince them to define conditions and admission criteria for continuing education and post-graduate education for veterinary para-professionals; and to take necessary steps for the enactment and enforcement of required legislation to that effect.

In turn, the OIE is tasked with developing minimum day-one competences for the various categories of para-professionals that exist, in scope and in level of qualification and to developing minimum core training curricula for the various categories of paraprofessionals that exist, in scope and in level of qualification, as well as to courage the participation of representatives of national, regional and continental associations of veterinary para-professionals to participate in the fourth OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education, which was held in Thailand in June 2016.

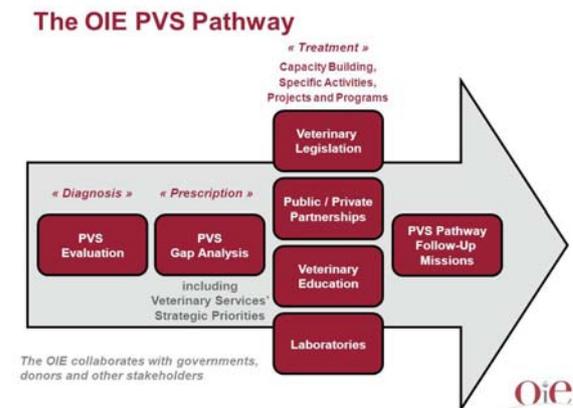## MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF VETERINARY SERVICES

The OIE PVS Pathway is a global programme for the sustainable improvement of a country's Veterinary Services' compliance with OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services. This is an important foundation for improving animal and public health and enhancing compliance with SPS standards, at the national, regional and international level.

A specific methodology has been developed and the OIE has published the *"OIE Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services"* (the OIE PVS Tool) as the basis for evaluating performance against the international standards published in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code. A similar tool is available for the evaluation of Aquatic Animal Health Services.

Only OIE certified PVS experts can carry out independent external PVS Evaluations of country Veterinary Services and PVS Gap Analysis. They have undergone training sessions organised by the OIE and funded by

donors to the OIE World Fund. All experts use standard tools, indicators and Experts' Manuals, prepared and published by the OIE Headquarters, which also include template reports.

The following diagram is the visual representation of the OIE strategy regarding the use of OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services and guidelines on veterinary legislation.

The PVS Pathway is underway in Africa since 2006. VETGOV-funding further supported the PVS Pathway programme since 2012. The VETGOV project supported this Pathway through four mechanisms:

- PVS initial evaluation missions
- PVS gap analysis missions
- PVS evaluation follow-up missions
- PVS specialised missions (veterinary legislation, veterinary laboratories, veterinary public-private partnerships, veterinary policies and strategic plans).

Since 2006, more than 120 countries have been assessed through the PVS methodology, out of which more than 50 in Africa. Several of these OIE PVS reports are available for download (more information).

VETERINARY LEGISLATION SUPPORT

Veterinary legislation is an essential element of the national infrastructure that enables Veterinary Services to efficiently carry out their key functions, including epidemio-surveillance; early detection and reporting of diseases, including zoonoses; rapid response to and prevention and control of sanitary emergencies; animal products food safety; animal welfare and the relevant certification of animals and animal products for export. In the face of increasing global trade, climate change and the emergence and re-emergence of diseases that can rapidly spread across international borders, the Veterinary Services must be supported by effective and modern legislation. This is why the development and efficient implementation of legislation is included among the 46 critical competencies identified in the OIE PVS Tool for the Evaluation of *Performance of Veterinary Services.*

The VETGOV project supported veterinary legislation modernisation and regional harmonisation through three mechanisms:

- Develop capacity for assessing the quality of veterinary legislation as part of the OIE *Veterinary Legislation Support Programme* (VLSP). The OIE conducted a VLSP Training Seminar from 24 - 26 March 2015. The purpose was to train new VLSP experts to carry out veterinary legislation Identification missions and to participate, if requested, in future seminars and workshops on veterinary legislation. The participants of this seminar included lawyers/attorneys and veterinarians.

- Implement a joint AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE capacity-building programme on the harmonisation of veterinary legislation at regional economic community (REC) levels. RECs earmarked for these seminars

are [COMESA](#) (2017), EAC (2016), [ECCAS](#) (2014), [ECOWAS](#) (2016), [IGAD](#) (2014), [SADC](#) (2015) and [UMA](#) (2015).

- As a follow up to an evaluation of the *Performance of Veterinary Services* (PVS) using the OIE PVS Tool, and at the request of Members, the OIE conducts missions to help governments that wish to modernise the national veterinary legislation and thereby help the veterinary services to meet the OIE standards.

Within the framework of the VETGOV programme (since 2012), initial identification missions were conducted in:

Angola
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Chad
Comoros
Cote d'Ivoire
Djibouti
Ethiopia
Gabon
Gambia
Kenya
Lesotho
Malawi
Mozambique
Niger
Rwanda
Senegal
Seychelles
Sudan
Tanzania
Tunisia
Zimbabwe

as well as one regional assessment for the *[West African Economic and Monetary Union](#)* (WAEMU).

After an initial 'identification' mission the country may request a longer term collaboration with the OIE, under a formal agreement, with the objective of modernising the national veterinary legislation.

Through such an agreement, the country then provides the means required (as assessed by the mission) to draft new legislation and the OIE provides an expert to advise the country. The advice is mainly provided by correspondence and the expert would normally undertake one or two missions to the country over a 12 month period. The OIE may also

obtain input from other experts during the course of the agreement.

As per July 31, 2017 such agreements were being implemented in the following countries:

Burkina Faso
Côte d'Ivoire
Gabon
Mauritius
Senegal
Tunisia
Uganda (concluded)

CAPACITY BUILDING (FOCAL POINTS)

The capacity-building efforts of the OIE focus on enhancing the understanding of international standards, guidelines and related concepts on animal heath, veterinary public health, animal welfare and trade, as well as on enhancing the participation of member states in the standard-setting processes.

Capacity building is conducted in all areas of the OIE's mandates and targets OIE Delegates as well as 8 categories of national subject matter focal points :

- Animal diseases notification (WAHIS)
- Animal production food safety
- Animal welfare
- Aquatic animal health
- Laboratory diagnosis
- Veterinary products (drugs and vaccines)
- Veterinary communication
- Wildlife (surveillance)

Capacity-building seminars are organised on a regional basis (continental or sub-regional level, by language) and tailored to the specificities of the respective regions. Within the framework of the VETGOV project, capacity-building supported the following national focal points:

- Veterinary products (drugs and vaccines) 2015
- Veterinary communication (2016 – 2017)

INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN ANIMAL DISEASES REPORTING SYSTEMS

Availability of up-to-date and relevant sanitary information seriously hampers the capacity of countries to timely respond to outbreaks and more generally to prevent and control animal diseases.

At present, there are several information management systems at national, regional, continental and world level. About a decade ago, AU-IBAR started developing an animal health and production information system (ARIS: *Animal Resources Information System)* whose latest version is about to be updated and made conversant and inter-operable with the most important information systems used in Africa.

WAHIS *(World Animal Health Information System)* is the global reference information system, developed and managed by the OIE. Some Regional information systems are already interconnected with WAHIS. It is important that ARIS II and the RECs' Information systems which may still be developed use a harmonised terminology in line with WAHIS and its used definitions extracted from the OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes

---

CONTACTS OIE
Dr. Patrick Bastiaensen (Nairobi)
Dr. Alain Dehove (Paris)

CONTACTS FAO
Dr. Yilma Makonnen (Nairobi)

CONTACTS AU-IBAR
Dr. Baboucarr Jaw (Nairobi)

The VETGOV programme was co-funded by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund of the European Commission

LINKS

- AU
- AU-IBAR
- AU-IBAR : VETGOV
- FAO
- FAO-ECTAD Nairobi
- FAO-ECTAD Nairobi : VETGOV
- OIE
- OIE Africa

REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

- COMESA
- EAC
- ECCAS
- ECOWAS
- IGAD
- SADC
- UMA