

OIE twinning programme for veterinary education

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Summary

Building capacity is synonymous with sustaining development. Both are required to fuel progress and propel efforts towards heightening health and security. The urgency to build capacity has been catalysed by an increasing number of sanitary crises, threats, and disease outbreaks that have spanned countries, regions and continents. Education has often bridged the gaps in learning, but it has also divided the ways in which learning is practised. Differing cultural, religious and political beliefs, together with alternate economic priorities, have meant that countries have been advocating for education to meet their own specific needs, and not necessarily those of the international community.

The varying contents of veterinary curricula around the world do not always demonstrate that the initial education of veterinary students provides them with the necessary skill sets to fulfil their responsibilities as key actors in the private and public sectors of national Veterinary Services. This has resulted in discrepancies in the competencies acquired by veterinarians and their capacities to uphold good veterinary governance and practices.

To address this educational imbalance, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has drafted recommendations and guidelines to assist Veterinary Education Establishments worldwide with improving the breadth and depth of their veterinary curricula in order to strengthen their national Veterinary Services. The OIE has, furthermore, developed a twinning programme for Veterinary Education Establishments, under which learning opportunities for teaching staff and students are created and shared. Twinning has, to date, proved to be an effective and powerful mechanism through which developments in veterinary education through mutual capacity and confidence-building can be sustained.

Keywords

Capacity-building – Sustainability – Twinning – Veterinary education.

Introduction

Biological threats are multiplying in variety and velocity, and becoming more resilient to the traditional approaches used by health services to manage them. The surfacing of new diseases occurs approximately once every eight months (1), with most of these diseases being zoonotic. The proliferation of biological threats has been exacerbated by the rapid and extensive movement of humans, animals and goods, which carry with them the risks of disease and disease transmission.

Recent studies have shown that 75% of emerging infectious diseases in humans are of animal origin (2), highlighting the

need to target interventions at the animal–human interface. Recent emerging and re-emerging zoonotic outbreaks, including novel coronaviruses, Ebola and influenza, are prime examples of the dangers posed by infectious animal diseases. Moreover, such outbreaks have underlined the necessity to build robust capacity in animal and human health systems to mitigate, and eventually prevent, the magnitude of their impact on animal and human health.

In order to control biological threats effectively, modern science must be able to raise sufficient awareness of the rapidly changing threats to animals and humans, and to instigate the appropriate methods to safeguard them from these threats. This need has been recognised in the ‘Biological Threat Reduction Strategy’ of the World Organisation for

Animal Health (OIE), which, by iterating the core values of the OIE, addresses the ways in which global safety and security against the natural, accidental or deliberate release of animal pathogens can be sustained.

As a pillar of the Biological Threat Reduction Strategy of the OIE (2), OIE capacity-building activities are allowing for global efforts to be directed at strengthening health systems and disease control methods. Among the key areas in which the OIE is advocating for capacity to be built, importance has been placed on enhancing veterinary education and its outcomes for future veterinarians.

In various countries, veterinary education is being hampered by a lack of modern veterinary curricula, unsuitable teaching facilities, the pupil–teacher ratio and an inability to provide hands-on learning experience. The content of a veterinary curriculum and the duration in which it is taught in certain countries is furthermore insufficient and does not allow for the necessary competencies to be fully acquired. As a consequence, the inconsistent levels of veterinary education provided by Veterinary Education Establishments worldwide are jeopardising the accuracy with which national Veterinary Services are diagnosing, treating and managing biological threats.

In response to the growing concerns voiced by OIE Member Countries regarding discrepancies in the provision of veterinary education, and to address the minimum competencies required of veterinary students in a sufficiently adapted curriculum, the OIE has developed ‘OIE Recommendations on the Competencies of Graduating Veterinarians (“Day 1 Graduates”) to Assure National Veterinary Services of Quality’ (3) and ‘OIE Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum’ (4) to assist Veterinary Education Establishments with improving the quality of initial veterinary education.

To contribute to the implementation of these recommendations and guidelines, and to capitalise on academic and scientific expertise, the OIE has encouraged the partnering of recognised Veterinary Education Establishments with beneficiary Veterinary Education Establishments, through ‘twinning’, so as build capacity in areas in which education is deficient. As testified by the OIE Laboratory Twinning Programme, twinning aspires to provide a more balanced distribution of advanced expertise, through which more countries can access technical knowledge within their own region and according to their specific needs.

The aim of this paper is to provide further insight into the twinning mechanism employed by the OIE through the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Programme in order to modernise veterinary education and its impact

on supporting the public and private sectors of national Veterinary Services with carrying out good governance practices. More specifically, this paper will illustrate the importance of targeting best educational practices to local needs, sharing the effects of twinning between Veterinary Education Establishments, building a network of scientific excellence, and ensuring the sustainability of the progress made in veterinary education.

The OIE twinning approach to improving veterinary education

Background on ‘twinning’

The OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway is a continuous and voluntary process, through which the compliance of national Veterinary Services with the intergovernmental standards of the OIE and their sustainability are assessed. Since its inception in 2006, assessment missions and capacity-building initiatives, divided under the ‘diagnosis’, ‘prescription’, and ‘treatment’ stages of the PVS Pathway, have enabled OIE Member Countries to further develop their animal health systems by targeting assistance to areas in which their governance mechanisms can be strengthened.

The assistance and knowledge harnessed through the PVS Pathway not only enhance the capabilities of national Veterinary Services to deliver the expertise required of them to uphold the veterinary profession as a global public good, but also modernises approaches to risk analysis and disease management in accordance with the intergovernmental standards of the OIE. As such, the PVS Pathway has been recognised by donors to and partners of the OIE as a tool for measuring and evaluating progress and compliance with the intergovernmental standards of the OIE. As of July 2016, more than 130 initial external OIE PVS Evaluation missions had been conducted in the 180 Member Countries of the OIE.

Under the PVS Pathway, the concept of twinning has been adopted by the OIE to build capacity, notably in both developing and in-transition countries.

Since the late 1990s, ‘twinning’ has been employed by the European Commission as an instrument to assist beneficiary countries with preparing their accession to the European Union (EU) (5), by strengthening their administrative and legal capacity to meet the standards required for entry into the EU. Numerous twinning projects have been completed to date, and have demonstrated the effective delivery of assistance through the sharing of experiences and best practices.

Twinning was first introduced as a 'treatment activity' of the OIE PVS Pathway in 2006 through the OIE Laboratory Twinning Programme, which provides the opportunity for an OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre to twin with a Beneficiary Laboratory. The objectives of the programme are to develop the diagnostic capacities of the Beneficiary Laboratory, and its role in enhancing global biological security at the country, and, potentially, regional levels.

With over 30 OIE Laboratory Twinning Projects completed under this programme, and more than 30 projects under way as of July 2016, the OIE Laboratory Twinning Programme exemplifies the ways in which compliance with the intergovernmental standards of the OIE can promote responsible science through good laboratory practices and developing scientific expertise in priority countries.

Performance of Veterinary Services findings on veterinary education

The findings of numerous OIE PVS Pathway missions have underlined concerns over the quality and content of the initial veterinary education provided at Veterinary Education Establishments, notably in developing and in-transition countries.

Without a solid educational foundation, veterinarians are not sufficiently prepared to face the global challenges provoked by animal diseases and zoonoses or to contribute to trade in animals and animal products. Nor do they have the required capacity to innovate new practices to prevent and control these diseases. Other factors such as veterinary medical establishments showing a lack of commitment to train veterinary students for veterinary careers other than private clinical practice (1), and the narrowness of veterinary curricula founded on traditional practices, are further hindering the delivery of a comprehensive education to veterinary students.

If the hypothesis is that veterinary graduates are shaped by the education that they have received, education must be redefined to ensure that these graduates are equipped with minimum competencies in all spectrums of animal health so as to face the challenges posed by the biological threats of today.

OIE recommendations and guidelines on veterinary education

Health crises have too often underlined weaknesses in detection and preparedness. Many studies concur that in order to remain relevant to shifting new societal needs, veterinary medical education must prepare veterinarians for what might come in the future, not just for what is happening now (1).

Recognising the importance of veterinary medical education, the OIE has developed recommendations and guidelines as foundational tools to support Veterinary Education Establishments in delivering high-quality education.

In 2012, the OIE drafted 'Recommendations on the competencies of Graduating Veterinarians ("Day 1 Graduates") to assure National Veterinary Services of Quality'. The recommendations detail minimum Day 1 'specific' and 'advanced' competencies that a veterinary graduate should possess at entry level in the public and private sectors of national Veterinary Services.

A number of these specific competencies, such as epidemiology, transboundary animal diseases, zoonoses, emerging and re-emerging diseases, and disease prevention and control programmes are particularly relevant to understanding biological threats, and the ways in which they can be reduced. Furthermore, advanced competencies in the management of contagious diseases, the application of risk analysis and research are necessary in order to control biological threats and their propagation. The competencies outlined in these recommendations serve as a basis on which veterinary graduates can hone their expertise through the undertaking of professional experiences or continual education.

To complement these recommendations and assist Veterinary Education Establishments with integrating the Day 1 Competencies of the OIE into their veterinary curriculum, the OIE offers its 'Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum'. These guidelines ensure that students are being educated to the level of competency expected of them, and that they are meeting the necessary competencies, including an awareness of biological threats and knowledge of their mitigation, to preserve animal health and welfare.

Published in 2013, the purpose of these guidelines is to support the development and implementation of a modern veterinary curriculum, using the Model Core Veterinary Curriculum proposed by the OIE, which describes various course contents recommended by the OIE to improve the delivery of high-quality veterinary education and the acquisition of Day 1 Competencies.

OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Programme

The OIE acknowledges that the quality of veterinary education in many of its Member Countries is insufficient to develop the aptitude and proficiency of veterinary graduates to work across the multiple disciplines of the profession, including the management of biological threats.

To support Veterinary Education Establishments in identifying and remedying the weaknesses in their veterinary curriculum, the OIE has adapted its concept

of twinning to contribute to the educational capacity for Veterinary Education Establishments worldwide.

Initiated in 2013, the programme responds to the growing need to improve veterinary education, particularly in developing and in-transition countries, by strengthening existing partnerships, and enhance its impact on global health security. As of July 2016, nine OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Projects were under way, five project proposals were under development, while, more recently, two expressions of interest have been received by the OIE. The overall objective of the programme is to foster a better understanding of the threshold of initial veterinary education so that assistance can be directed towards increasing the capacities of Veterinary Education Establishments falling below this threshold. Among the intended outcomes of twinning, the programme foresees a greater awareness of biological threats and the measures to reduce their intensification, in addition to engaging students in a culture of responsible and ethical veterinary science. The scope and processes involved in the preparation of a twinning project are detailed in *A Guide to Veterinary Education Twinning Projects*, revised by the OIE in 2016 (6).

Each twinning project under the programme is a partnership between a recognised (and preferably accredited) Veterinary Education Establishment, known as a 'Parent' and a 'Beneficiary' Veterinary Education Establishment. These terms simply denote the different roles that each partner will play during the twinning project, while striving towards the common objective of improving the quality of veterinary education. The specific objectives of a twinning project are mutually agreed by the OIE and the directors/deans of the Parent and Beneficiary, and must be endorsed by the national delegates to the OIE of the countries concerned, prior to the commencement of the project.

Whilst the Parent and Beneficiary are jointly responsible for implementing activities under the project, the Parent, with its extensive expertise, is the 'twin lead', due to its capacity to assist the Beneficiary with enhancing the delivery of high-quality education. The OIE has observed that a tried-and-tested bilateral relationship has a stronger chance of making a twinning project sustainable and successful. Twinning between Veterinary Education Establishments that have already established a good relationship is therefore encouraged by the OIE.

In order to meet the objectives of the project, a series of twinning activities, approved by the OIE, are conducted by the Parent and Beneficiary. Such activities include the possible assessment of the veterinary curriculum of the Beneficiary by the Parent to understand the educational practices currently implemented. They also include curriculum mapping exercises to determine the ways in which curriculum alignment with the Day 1 Competencies and Model Core Veterinary Curriculum of the OIE can be

undertaken. Other project activities have to date included faculty and student exchanges, training workshops, assessments of teaching and practical training, the conduct of research projects, and the development of online learning modules.

Strengths of twinning as a capacity-building tool for Veterinary Education Establishments

Responding to the necessity outlined by OIE Member Countries to harmonise the provision of veterinary education has required the use of a tailored approach that takes into account the contextual, legislative and practical differences between countries, and adapts development to local specificities and sensitivities. It is important that this approach is effective in building a strong network of expertise worldwide and in enabling sustainable effects that lead to maintaining and further developing veterinary and educational expertise nationally and regionally. Twinning, as a mechanism, offers these very qualities, which are, furthermore, relevant to strengthening global biosecurity.

Twinning between Veterinary Education Establishments: a tailored approach

In order to be effective, capacity-building activities must take into account the local context, based on the definition of the major issues and the priorities of the Beneficiary (7). There is a need for 'cultural relativism', that is, the recognition that one size does not fit all and that institutional development is very different from one country to the next (8). Education, and specifically curriculum and training material development, aligned with OIE recommendations and guidelines on veterinary education, must take into account local needs and priorities, which is all the more true when training programmes participate in a coherent biosecurity framework (9).

In a twinning project, the Parent and Beneficiary jointly evaluate the needs of the Beneficiary and the capacity of the Parent to provide the necessary expertise. The resulting knowledge, emanating from an understanding of each partner, is vital to the development of a fruitful partnership that will respond to the expectations of both Beneficiary and Parent and that will ensure that the responsibilities and benefits of the project are shared.

This preliminary step, designed to probe into how each potential partner matches the other, has proven to be a

valuable asset in understanding mutual contexts, and design-relevant and effective activities in the course of the project. It leads to the joint development of a tailored work plan where activities such as curriculum mapping also allow for the verification of whether such items are aligned coherently with local specificities and sensitivities. As both the Parent and Beneficiary are involved in the design of the work plan and regular progress evaluations, twinning offers the possibility of enhanced adaptivity throughout the project to respond to arising needs or outstanding issues, an advantage in terms of contextual adjustment considered increasingly valuable (10).

Developing effective and mutual benefits for Veterinary Education Establishments

One of the major advantages of twinning as a capacity-building method stems from the fact that the Parent has active experience in the field of work of the Beneficiary, more so than in the field of technical assistance itself (11). If somewhat obvious, this specificity is particularly value-added as it allows for the exchange of operative knowledge rather than theoretical concepts offered by external consultants. The Parent may provide counsel using its own experience, such as expertise from its teaching staff or feedback received from its own students, to anticipate potential issues in the project. Owing to the specificity of the expertise required to develop veterinary training materials or curricula, there are limited opportunities to acquire such assistance other than from another recognised Veterinary Education Establishment; twinning thus provides the possibility of accessing assistance, which would have been otherwise unavailable (12).

Owing to the similarity between Parent and Beneficiary, twinning offers multiple opportunities to develop the skills of the Beneficiary through training. It can take place at the Parent's premises, enabling the staff of the Beneficiary to become acquainted with different processes, and potentially to be included in the staff training programme of the Parent. However, twinning also allows for the development of in-house training at the Beneficiary, which is an effective method as it is, by nature, free from practical transfer and implementation issues (13). This practical aspect is particularly important to the success of the training; most theories of learning processes highlight that learning is incomplete without direct experience (14). Twinning thus allows for 'experiential learning', where trainees take ownership of their own development and weave their unique experience through the learning process, making it all the more effective (15).

Although capacity-building at the Beneficiary remains a core objective of twinning projects, the nature of the relationship offers opportunities for shared learning that also benefit the Parent. The evaluation of the teaching practices at the Beneficiary not only serves as the basis

for improvement, but also enables the Parent to reflect on its own work methods and veterinary curriculum. The comparison between work processes, made possible by the similarity of functions between the two Veterinary Education Establishments, is beneficial for both twinning partners, and is further translated in practical terms by the direct experience of those dissimilarities through study visits and on-site training. Twinning thus offers a unique possibility for both partners to benefit directly from the project.

As a result of this reciprocal learning, the effectiveness of developing the competencies at the Beneficiary is enhanced, a fact widely recognised across multiple fields and topics (10, 13, 16). Under the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Programme, Beneficiaries have to date developed new curricula and training materials aligned with OIE recommendations and guidelines on veterinary education, while Parents also benefit from this mutual learning, which has stimulated them to reflect on weaknesses in their own curriculum and potential improvements. For example, the University of Minnesota in the United States of America (USA), twinned with Chiang Mai University in Thailand, identified gaps in its own curriculum through a mapping exercise. Both universities benefited from the joint curriculum development workshops that resulted in recommendations to address gaps and strengthen their curricula.

Tool for confidence-building

As described previously, twinning relationships are based on a concept of similarity; that is, that the Parent and Beneficiary have similar functions and responsibilities, thereby allowing the Parent to better understand the stakes and difficulties faced by the Beneficiary (17). Beyond enhancing the effectiveness of capacity-building, this similarity is also the basis of stronger trust between partners. The practical experience already acquired by the Parent adds to its credibility, allowing for a more dynamic bilateral relationship than in most other capacity-building activities (12). This is due in major part to the fact that the individuals participating in the twinning project interact with peers on a level playing-field in professional terms, creating an atmosphere of collegial trust between staff (16). This results in the enhanced empowerment of Beneficiaries and a greater involvement of both the Parent and Beneficiary, as demonstrated by the in-kind financial contributions, leveraged by certain projects, which are enabling complementary activities to take place that are otherwise non-eligible under the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Programme. The University of Minnesota and Chiang Mai University, for example, both provide complementary funding to the project. This is enabling the conduct of three new joint research projects, including the

'Epidemiology of bovine tuberculosis in Chiang Mai and Chiang Mai provinces (Thailand)' project.

Twinning has, moreover, proven an excellent approach to forging deeper connections between Parents and Beneficiaries, which is notably relevant in the context of biological threat reduction. Communities of trust and their connection across the globe are instrumental to the development of and compliance with biosecurity frameworks at regional and international levels (18). Aside from the confidence-building measures under the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, any process aiming to increase transparency, understanding and ultimately trust between two or more parties is an act of confidence-building. These processes may take multiple forms, from the exchange of information and best practices to training and cooperative implementation (9). Twinning projects are thus an excellent example of confidence-building across the world, as the relationships built are based on transparency between partners, the sharing of strengths and weaknesses and the building of a bond of trust. The experience garnered by the OIE with twinning in its Laboratory Twinning Programme has shown that the development of professional ties is one of the most valuable outputs of twinning projects, an impact which can only also be expected from the newer Veterinary Education Twinning Programme (19).

Furthermore, the development of an international network is not solely limited to the partners of a specific project. In certain cases, more than one Beneficiary organisation may participate in the project in order to widen its scope. For example, under the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Project between *Ecole Nationale Vétérinaire* (National Veterinary School) of Toulouse (ENVT) in France, and the Kazakh National Agrarian University (KazNAU) in Kazakhstan, a consortium of six other Kazakh universities has been set up to review and discuss the progress made on curriculum development, and to share the impact of the project with Veterinary Education Establishments in Kazakhstan. Beneficiaries may also benefit from an enhanced regional visibility, and spread the impact of the twinning project to neighbouring Veterinary Education Establishments. This 'snowball effect' is visible in the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Project between the University of Queensland in Australia and Nong Lam University in Vietnam, which plans to sponsor a meeting with deans from Veterinary Education Establishments across Vietnam so as to share the outputs of the project. Twinning thus enables confidence-building at national, regional and international levels, for a stronger global partnership to develop education on animal health and its impact on biosecurity.

Building sustainable results

In order to effectively address deficiencies in veterinary education, efforts must be directed not only towards

reaching short-term outputs but also towards providing lasting outcomes. An improved veterinary curriculum should benefit not only a cohort of students during the lifetime of the twinning project but also other and future students. Twinning projects are particularly effective in the long term as they aim to compare, reflect on and improve ways of working, which signifies that the focus is not limited to a single operational element, but to its context and how it relates to other activities. This process approach allows for managerial and organisational issues surrounding the technical focus, such as planning, internal communication or human resources and process management, to also be addressed, and ensures that an enabling environment is created to sustain change (16). Although the scope of twinning projects may be narrowed down to a specific theme, the actual partnership occurs at an institutional level: the opportunities for learning are not limited to a single area of work, but may impact the Veterinary Education Establishments as a whole, and empower them to take ownership of the change process (13). Capitalising on this opportunity, the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Project between Kansas State University in the USA and Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania even foresees the enrolment of Tanzanian faculty staff in a master's degree in business administration at Kansas State University so as to develop managerial capacities.

In order to optimise OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Projects, planning for sustainability is key. The flexibility of the work plan of a project ensures that a progressive shift of responsibilities can be made from the Parent to the Beneficiary to ensure that the latter has full ownership of the changes and includes them in its own processes (15). 'Train the trainer' approaches are highly beneficial and regularly practised in twinning projects, allowing Veterinary Education Establishments to practise new teaching methods garnered from the twinning project and to transfer the knowledge acquired to other relevant teaching staff.

The capacity of the twinning approach to reach and sustain long-term outcomes has been acknowledged in many fields and shown enormous leverage effects. The rise in private-sector funding directed at institutions having participated in twinings or the increase in regional development projects following a twinning project are evidence of this recognition (10). Although most twinning projects are limited to a few years in length, it is hoped that the partnership created through the project will outlive the project itself, offering further opportunities for learning and development. The OIE Laboratory Twinning Programme is proof that the majority of partners have sustained their relationship through time, expanding the impact of the initial projects (19), and that this aim is similarly applied to the OIE Veterinary Education Twinning Programme.

Future OIE activities on education: building capacity for veterinary paraprofessionals

The reliance on veterinary paraprofessionals for the performance of routine clinical surveillance, vaccination campaigns, and laboratory duties, particularly in precarious rural communities and developing countries, is strong. Veterinary paraprofessionals are key to supporting veterinarians and their role in delivering effective veterinary services, and contribute to the global web of prevention of biological threats.

To strengthen the training currently offered to veterinary paraprofessionals, the OIE, in collaboration with relevant partners, will be analysing existing veterinary paraprofessional categories and their related curricular requirements for improving animal health. This analysis could feed the possible development of OIE minimum Day 1 Competencies and/or a Core Curriculum for certain categories of veterinary paraprofessionals.

Both the Day 1 Competencies and Core Curriculum for veterinary paraprofessionals would be intended to ensure that skills and abilities to address viral, parasitic, bacterial toxic and other disease subjects are delivered in countries that do not have existing paraprofessional certifications.

Conclusion

Biosecurity relies on a global approach that not only aims to achieve worldwide involvement by building capacity around the globe, but that also focuses – beyond today – on paving the way for a secure tomorrow. The focus on education is therefore all the more important, as raising the awareness of veterinary students on the issues surrounding biological threat is the best way to ensure that improved biosecurity is sustained around the world. The importance of making sustainable progress has been echoed down to

the capacity-building methods themselves and is one of their most difficult challenges. Failing to make an impact in the long term is a shortcoming that recent programmes have tried to overcome; and, amongst them, the twinning approach has shown some of the best results.

Twinning offers a unique opportunity to deliver tailored assistance and to build effective results for both Parents and Beneficiaries. Modernised teaching methods, through twinning, have been shown to stimulate learning and greater levels of student participation. The alignment of curricula and training content with OIE guidelines and recommendations on veterinary education ensures that education is developed to provide equal knowledge and opportunities to veterinary students in order to counter biological threats in their future capacity as veterinary professionals. The global network created through twinning partnerships also directly participates in strengthening global biosecurity by building trust and confidence. Parents and Beneficiaries demonstrate strong ownership of projects, and engage government and relevant stakeholders in the development of education, to sustain and further enhance the impact of twinning projects.

The benefits resulting from this programme will not only contribute to improving the performance of national Veterinary Services to correctly implement the standards required for protecting animal health and welfare, but will also strengthen their capacities in surveillance, early detection and rapid response to biological threats. The results observed by the OIE from twinning in education favour further engagement in both veterinary and veterinary paraprofessional education as a prerequisite for strengthened Veterinary Services and a necessary component of an effective and sustainable web of prevention of biological threats.



Programme de jumelages de l'OIE dans le domaine de l'enseignement de la médecine vétérinaire

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Résumé

Le renforcement des capacités est synonyme de développement durable. L'un comme l'autre sont indispensables pour alimenter le progrès et canaliser les efforts vers un niveau optimal de santé et de sécurité. Le renforcement des capacités est devenu une nécessité urgente du fait du nombre croissant de crises

sanitaires, de menaces et de foyers de maladies qui se propagent dans différents pays, régions et continents.

L'offre éducative permet souvent de remédier à des savoirs lacunaires mais elle peut aussi créer des fractures quant aux manières d'apprendre. Les différentes croyances culturelles, religieuses et politiques mais aussi les priorités économiques successives ont souvent induit des politiques éducatives qui visent à répondre aux besoins spécifiques d'un pays plutôt qu'à satisfaire ceux de la communauté internationale.

Les variations de contenu des programmes d'enseignement de la médecine vétérinaire dans le monde ne permettent pas toujours de garantir que la formation initiale des jeunes diplômés les dote des compétences requises pour exercer pleinement leurs responsabilités en tant qu'acteurs essentiels des composantes tant privées que publiques des Services vétérinaires. Cela se traduit par un écart entre les compétences acquises par les vétérinaires et les capacités requises pour soutenir une bonne gouvernance et des bonnes pratiques vétérinaires.

Afin de remédier à cette disparité des contenus d'enseignement, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE) a préparé des projets de recommandations et de lignes directrices visant à aider les établissements d'enseignement de la médecine vétérinaire dans le monde à dispenser une formation plus étendue et approfondie, dans le but de renforcer les Services vétérinaires nationaux. En outre, le programme de jumelages entre établissements d'enseignement de la médecine vétérinaire mis en place par l'OIE offre de nouvelles perspectives pédagogiques, tant aux enseignants qu'aux étudiants. Le jumelage s'est révélé jusqu'à présent un mécanisme efficace et performant : par le renforcement mutuel des capacités et de la confiance qu'il induit, il pérennise dans les pays participants les effets de la modernisation de l'enseignement vétérinaire.

Mots-clés

Développement durable – Enseignement de la médecine vétérinaire – Jumelage – Renforcement des capacités.



Programa de hermanamiento de la OIE en enseñanza de la veterinaria

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Resumen

Refuerzo de capacidades es sinónimo de desarrollo sostenible. Ambos elementos son necesarios para alimentar el progreso e impulsar una labor que permita mejorar los niveles de salud y seguridad. El creciente número de crisis o amenazas sanitarias y de brotes infecciosos que se han extendido por países, regiones y continentes ha puesto de manifiesto que urge dotarse de más sólidos medios de acción.

La enseñanza ha servido a menudo para aportar al alumno conocimientos que le faltaban, pero a la vez ha consagrado diferentes maneras de aprender. El distinto bagaje cultural, religioso y político y las dispares prioridades económicas de los países han llevado a una situación en que cada país apuesta por un tipo de enseñanza adaptado a sus propias necesidades específicas, y no necesariamente a las de la comunidad internacional.

Los heterogéneos programas de estudios veterinarios que se siguen en el mundo no siempre sirven para que el estudiante de veterinaria salga de la facultad provisto del conjunto de aptitudes necesarias para cumplir la función que le incumbe como pieza básica de los Servicios Veterinarios nacionales, ya sea desde el sector privado o desde el público. Ello da lugar a una gran disparidad en cuanto a las competencias que adquieren los veterinarios y a su capacidad para secundar las buenas prácticas y el buen gobierno veterinarios.

Con el objetivo de resolver estas discordancias en la enseñanza, la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) ha elaborado recomendaciones y directrices que ayudan a establecimientos de formación veterinaria de todo el mundo a conferir más amplitud y profundidad a sus programas de estudios y, con ello, a fortalecer los Servicios Veterinarios de su país. La OIE, además, tiene formulado un programa de hermanamiento dirigido a dichos establecimientos, que ofrecen así a profesores y alumnos la posibilidad de formarse o de hacer intercambios. Por lo observado hasta la fecha, el hermanamiento constituye un potente y eficaz mecanismo con el que respaldar el desarrollo de la formación veterinaria, gracias a la creación de lazos de confianza y al refuerzo recíproco de capacidades.

Palabras clave

Enseñanza de la veterinaria – Hermanamiento – Refuerzo de capacidades – Sostenibilidad.



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