In what seems like an age ago, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) carried out a pilot project, co-financed by the USDA\(^1\) and the World Bank, aimed at:

(i) evaluating the performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) within 15 countries in three regions and (ii) completing a gap analysis mission in 10 countries.

Now, just three years later, the OIE has received official requests for a PVS evaluation from 101 countries, 91 PVS evaluations missions have been completed, and this has already generated 42 official requests from countries for a PVS Gap Analysis based on the country’s PVS Report.

The PVS Pathway for efficient Veterinary Services was thus born and is now a fully-fledged worldwide project mainly co-financed by the European Union (EU\(^2\)), the World Bank, the USA (USDA and CDC\(^3\)), Switzerland (FVO\(^4\)), Japan, Italy, France, Canada (CIDA\(^5\)) and Australia (AusAID and DAFF\(^6\)).

**What is the OIE PVS Tool?**

The OIE has developed an Evaluation Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE PVS Tool) based on the chapters of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and *Aquatic Animal Health Code* (the OIE Codes) relating to the quality of Veterinary Services and adopted by all OIE Member Countries. The fourth edition of the OIE PVS Tool, issued in August 2009 is currently used. A fifth edition (scheduled for release in 2010) is in preparation and among the new additions it will include critical competencies for:

- a) management systems;
- b) animal welfare; and
- c) evaluation of the performance of Aquatic Animal Health Services (as part of a PVS evaluation of Veterinary Services, or as an independent exercise).

The OIE PVS Tool is designed to assist Veterinary Services and/or Aquatic Animal Health Services (AAHS) to establish their current level of performance, to identify gaps and weaknesses in their ability to comply with OIE international standards, guidelines and recommendations, consistent with the agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), to form a shared vision with stakeholders (including the private sector) and to establish priorities and carry out strategic initiatives, including international or national financial applications for investment. Active participation and investment by both the public and private sector is required in order to facilitate the strengthening of Veterinary Services and their compliance with OIE international standards for quality and evaluation.

In light of growing technical requirements, consumer expectations and opportunities for international trade, Veterinary Services/AAHS should adopt an appropriate mandate and vision and provide services that respond to the needs and expectations of stakeholders. This will entail stronger alliances and closer cooperation with stakeholders, trading partners and other countries, national governmental counterparts and relevant intergovernmental organisations (in particular the OIE, the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the WTO SPS Committee).

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1. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
2. European Commission (through DG SANCO in Africa and AIDCO in Asia)
3. US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
4. Federal Veterinary Office (FVO)
5. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
6. Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAID) and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)
For animal health and zoonoses, the OIE is recognised as the reference organisation for standards, guidelines and recommendations relating to international trade in animals and animal products. The implementation of OIE standards, including standards on quality and evaluation of Veterinary Services/AHHS, is the best way to facilitate safe and fair international trade.

OIE PVS Evaluations and PVS Gap Analyses are carried out by OIE-certified PVS experts.

**Step 1**
The first step of the PVS process is the initial Evaluation of the Performance of Veterinary Services (using the OIE PVS Tool); this is a voluntary process which enables any country to determine its level of advancement and compliance in terms of 40 different critical competencies grouped in four fundamental components. This corresponds to a qualitative PVS evaluation: the diagnosis.

All OIE-certified PVS experts and peer reviewers use the same PVS Manual for Assessors, the same procedures and the same indicators.

All PVS evaluation reports are reviewed by an independent OIE-accredited peer reviewer.

The output of this activity is the Country PVS Evaluation Report. Once accepted by the country and depending on the decision of the country, this PVS report can either:
(i) remain confidential for internal use within the country;
(ii) be made available, with the agreement of the country, to transmission to Donors and Partners;
(iii) be published on the OIE Web site.
Countries are encouraged to share their report with Donors and Partners and to allow its publication on the OIE Web site.
The country PVS reports are written in one of the three OIE official languages (English, French or Spanish).

**Step 2**
The second step of the PVS process is the identification of needs and priorities of the Veterinary Services of the country, based on a dialogue with the country and on the Country PVS Evaluation Report. This process paves the way towards the preparation of a strategic plan to strengthen Veterinary Services’ compliance with OIE quality standards: the prescription.

The output of this activity is a quantitative assessment of the needs of the Veterinary Services of the country: an OIE PVS Gap Analysis document/report. This report includes a five-year indicative budget which is submitted to pre-appraisal reviews.

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7. Article 3(b) of Annex A to the SPS Agreement
8. Chapters 3.1. and 3.2. of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code provide the legal base for OIE quality requirements for Veterinary Services and for PVS evaluation and follow up activities.
9. Chapter 3.1. of the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code provides a legal base for OIE quality requirements for AAHS.
11. www.oie.int/eng/oie/organisation/en_oie_pvs_eval_reports.htm?e1d2
12. Only in very exceptional circumstances do the final PVS Gap Analysis documents not include a five-year indicative budget.
Some prerequisites

- In many cases, compliance with standards of quality, as diagnosed by the PVS evaluation, can only be implemented in a sustainable manner after modernisation of the country's veterinary legislation.
- As the PVS Gap Analysis is partly based on the Country PVS Report, a PVS Gap Analysis can only be performed when the final version of the Country PVS Report is available (after peer review and acceptance by the country).
- Similarly, as a general diagnosis of the Performance of Veterinary Services is necessary, technical assistance from OIE experts to improve the animal health legislation of the country will only be made available, and missions regarding the modernisation of veterinary legislation will only be organised, if the final version of the Country PVS Report is available.
- However, there is no sine qua non condition between missions on the modernisation of veterinary legislation and a PVS Gap Analysis.
- Similarly, there is no sine qua non condition between PVS follow-up evaluation missions and a PVS Gap Analysis (a country may use the PVS Evaluation Tool for self-evaluation purposes or may wish to monitor progress without requesting a PVS Gap Analysis).

The Prescription: the PVS Gap Analysis

Sustainably improving a country's Veterinary Services' compliance with OIE standards is essential for improving animal health and public health, at both the national and the international level.

It should be borne in mind that Veterinary Services are a global public good and consequently eligible for appropriate national or international public funding and support.

For developed countries, ways to strengthen their compliance in a sustainable manner may well be obvious in light of the findings and general recommendations of a PVS evaluation. However, for many in-transition or developing countries, which face budgetary constraints and have many different major national priorities, the procedures for sustainably strengthening compliance often require specific independent expert assistance, based on the methodological framework developed by the OIE.

The key objective of an OIE PVS Gap Analysis mission is to define a five-year programme for the sustainable strengthening of a country's Veterinary Services'
compliance with OIE quality standards, suitably adapted to national constraints and priorities. The specific objectives of the expert mission are therefore:

– to help the Veterinary Services define, in accordance with national priorities and constraints, the expected result (level of advancement as defined in the OIE PVS Tool) for each relevant critical competency in the OIE PVS Tool at the end of the five-year period;

– to determine in a participatory manner the activities to be carried out to achieve the expected results potentially for the maximum number of critical competencies among the current 40 PVS critical competencies;

– to determine, with the help of information, data and interviews, including with the private sector, the tasks and means (human, physical and financial resources) needed to implement these activities to enable the Veterinary Services to function appropriately and sustainably.

The aim of the five-year programme is to prompt the government and funding agencies to support the capacity building of the Veterinary Services. The programme must therefore be established with the full participation and approval of the Veterinary Services. It serves as the basis for discussion with:

– the Ministries responsible for the Veterinary Services and the Ministry in charge of the Budget, and in some cases with the national Parliament, to justify the resources needed to meet the priority objectives defined by the country;

– international funding agencies, when requesting their support for all or some of the priority activities or investments defined in the programme.

The programme must prioritise structural and sustainable strengthening of Veterinary Services’ compliance with OIE standards, while taking into account the country’s policy priorities and all the constraints arising from the country’s current context and any foreseeable developments.

The indicators and expected levels of competence are set out in the OIE PVS Tool and are therefore totally transparent for potential Donors and Partners. They provide the means of evaluating the sustainability of the results of the strategic plan rather than being simply indicators that the activities have been implemented. They also support the conduct of regular follow-up evaluations using the OIE PVS Tool. The OIE will propose to play a key role in the subsequent evaluation of the implementation of the programme (via further OIE PVS follow-up evaluations in the country, with which Donors and Partners can be associated).

**PVS Gap Analysis missions**

A Country PVS Gap Analysis cannot be done by desk work alone based on the final country PVS Report. It should include work in the country and meeting(s) with the relevant authorities and representatives of the private sector in the country, to reach a consensus on the priorities and levels to be achieved.

PVS Gap Analysis missions are necessary for the preparation of programmes with national Veterinary Services after desk work on PVS Gap Analysis based on OIE PVS Reports (standardised and with justified findings).
This is important for:

(i) dialogue with the country;
(ii) country appropriation;
(iii) validation of choices and priorities with the country;
(iv) possibility of consulting the different ministries and stakeholders involved.

A PVS Gap Analysis is only carried out at the request of, and with the agreement and active participation of, the country concerned.

Each PVS Gap Analysis mission will involve a minimum of two experts, at least one of whom is an OIE-certified PVS expert and preferably, wherever possible, a member of the team that carried out the initial PVS evaluation of the country. Other experts, for instance from the EU, the World Bank, FAO and other appropriate Partners, may be involved when necessary.

In accordance with the OIE procedure, the country concerned is invited to finance/provide in kind the cost of local transportation for the PVS Gap Analysis team, as well as translation/interpretation costs where necessary. This is also part of the appropriation of the process by the country (i.e. partial cost sharing). Furthermore, the country’s Delegate to the OIE is expected to designate a national focal point funded by the beneficiary country to facilitate the preparation of the mission and accompany the team.

### A PVS Gap Analysis mission has three main phases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1 – Before the mission:</th>
<th>Phase 2 – During the mission (there are 6 distinct steps):</th>
<th>Phase 3 – After the mission:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– organisation of the mission (selection of the team of experts, choice of dates, logistics, validation with the country);</td>
<td>– opening meeting, preferably including high level national authorities, to identify the country’s priorities, canvass views and obtain details of actions undertaken since the PVS evaluation mission;</td>
<td>– drafting the final report;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– collection of existing data (Country PVS Evaluation Report, etc.) to prepare the mission;</td>
<td>– identification of the expected results and the main activities to be developed;</td>
<td>– validation of the report with and by the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– information requests are sent to the designated national focal point.</td>
<td>– definition of the necessary tasks and necessary means;</td>
<td>– where appropriate, and with the country’s agreement, the report may subsequently be distributed to interested organisations/Donors and Partners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The benefits and outcomes of following the PVS Pathway

The benefits and outcomes of using the OIE PVS Tool include:

- providing the basis for carrying out a process of verifying compliance with the OIE standards and assessments of Veterinary Services/AAHS by external and independent bodies under the guidelines and auspices of the OIE;
- an indication of the overall performance for each of the four core components and a relative performance rating within each of the critical competencies;
– a basis for comparing the performance of the Veterinary Services/AAHS with that of other relevant government services in the region or globally, in order to explore areas for cooperation or negotiation;
– obtaining an indication of the specific actions needed to modernise the veterinary legislation in compliance with OIE recommendations by carrying out an OIE Legislation Mission;
– a specific follow up (i.e. an OIE PVS Gap Analysis) helps countries to identify priorities and present justifications when applying for national and/or international financial support (loans and/or grants) from national governments or international donors;
– providing a basis for establishing routine monitoring and a follow up mechanism on the overall level of performance of the Veterinary Services/AAHS over time;
– providing a basis for import/export trade negotiations (e.g. confidence in the quality of certification);
– helping to determine the benefits and costs of investing in Veterinary Services/AAHS and, through the conduct of specific follow up activities, identifying the actions and securing the investments that are needed to help improve compliance with the OIE standards for good governance.

**Country Strategic Plan**

The Country Strategic Plan can be updated and completed on the basis of the PVS Gap Analysis, which includes a five-year budget and takes into account the Country PVS Evaluation Report and the country’s priorities.

This has already been requested by several countries, and the World Bank is clearly encouraging countries to do so in some regions. The PVS Gap Analysis and the Country Strategic Plan can become the foundations for a five-year rolling programme for the sustainable strengthening of a country’s Veterinary Services’ compliance with OIE quality standards, suitably adapted to national constraints and priorities.

At a country’s request, the OIE will provide experts to help it to upgrade its Country Strategic Plan. Ideally, one of the experts who participated in the PVS Gap Analysis mission to the country concerned should participate in this work.

**Round tables with Donors and Partners**

In partnership with Donors, Regional Economic Communities, and International Organisations, round tables with Donors and Stakeholders may be organised by the country to present the outcome of the PVS Gap Analysis (and the revised Strategic Plan, where relevant).

There are already cases where several donors have joined forces to co finance necessary investments. Two such examples are as follows:

*In the case of the Kyrgyz Republic*, the World Bank indicated that on the basis of the Country PVS Report (available for Donors and Partners) it had quantified the country’s needs at USD 42m while preparing the country Strategic Plan on animal health services. When the PVS Gap Analysis documents became available, the Plan was revised to USD 25m, and was used for advocacy talks at Ministerial level, with the Prime Minister.

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Minister’s Office, the President’s Administration and with parliamentary committees. Parliamentary discussions on a New Veterinary Law were initiated in December 2007. In May 2009, new Donor support for the Kyrgyz Republic’s animal health services was announced (mainly by the EU, the World Bank, USAID and Switzerland) and already totals more than USD 25m. Canada has also announced a major project.

In the case of Mali\(^{14}\), the World Bank indicated during the last quarter of 2009 that a significant project would be earmarked on the basis of the outcome of the PVS Gap Analysis.

Now that more than 90 PVS evaluations have been completed worldwide, there are more and more initiatives to analyse country PVS reports available for a particular region (when reports are available for Donors and Partners), in order to identify gaps and investment priorities at regional or continental level (e.g. WAEMU/UEMOA\(^{15}\); AU-IBAR\(^{16}\), the World Bank, etc.).

**Support for the preparation of investment programmes/pre-appraisal of projects**

Countries may wish to use PVS Reports and PVS Gap Analyses for discussion with Ministries of Finance, Financial Commissions of National Parliaments or with Parliaments themselves. Countries may also wish to prepare national investment programmes based on PVS Evaluation Reports and PVS Gap Analysis outputs. It is also possible to conduct surveys to prepare the terms of reference for calls for tender, e.g. for laboratory equipment.

In an international context, PVS Evaluation Reports and PVS Gap Analyses may be used by Donors and International Organisations for their pre-appraisal reviews and for the preparation of specific investment programmes and projects.

**PVS follow-up evaluation missions**

The concept of ‘PVS follow-up evaluations’ was developed right from the outset as a means of ensuring a continuous monitoring and improvement process. These PVS follow-up evaluation missions should be conducted by OIE-certified experts at the request of the country in question, in order to monitor implementation of the steps taken by the country to progressively improve compliance with international standards on quality.

This may also lead to a country’s self-evaluation of the performance of its Veterinary Services at the national or sub-national level.

Let us now hope that governments, private stakeholders, donors and other international partners will pursue their efforts and investments to support the capacity building of the Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services, thereby enabling them to improve animal health and deal effectively and rapidly with emerging and re-emerging diseases, including those that are transmissible to humans.

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14- Initial PVS Evaluation completed in December 2007; PVS Gap Analysis completed in April 2009
15- West African Economic and Monetary Union/Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
16- African Union – Inter-african Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
### OIE PVS Global Programme

*State of Play – as of 20 January 2010*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIE Regions</th>
<th>OIE Members</th>
<th>Requested received</th>
<th>PVS missions done</th>
<th>Reports available for restricted distribution to Donors and Partners</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
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<td>44</td>
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<td>Americas</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>91</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### OIE-PVS missions

**Africa (44)**

**Americas (17)**
- Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.

**Asia-Pacific (15)**

**Europe (11)**
- Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

**Middle East (13)**
- Afghanistan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestinian N.A. National Authority (not an OIE Member), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

In red:
- completed missions
## PVS - Gap Analysis

**State of Play – as of 20 January 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIE Regions</th>
<th>OIE Members</th>
<th>PVS Gap Missions - Request received</th>
<th>PVS Gap Missions done</th>
<th>PVS Gap Analysis document available</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>

This table does not include the missions to Botswana and South Africa nor the first mission carried out in Zambia since the project was in pilot phase.

### Gap Analysis missions


- **Americas** Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama.

- **Asia-Pacific (8)** Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Dem. People’s Rep. of Korea, Mongolia, Philippines, Sri Lanka

- **Europe (3)** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan.

- **Middle East (3)** Kuwait, Lebanon, Turkey.

### Legislation missions

**State of Play – as of 20 January 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIE Regions</th>
<th>OIE Members</th>
<th>Legislation Missions requested received</th>
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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table does not include the missions to Botswana and South Africa nor the first mission carried out in Zambia since the project was in pilot phase.

### Legislation missions


- **Asia-Pacific (3)** Bhutan, Cambodia, Vietnam.

- **Europe (2)** Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan.

- **Middle East (4)** Afghanistan, Kuwait, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates.

In red: completed missions