ROLE OF OIE COLLABORATING CENTRES IN STRENGTHENING OF VETERINARY SERVICES

William Hueston, Scott Wells
Center for Animal Health and Food Safety, University of Minnesota

The OIE Collaborating Centres were created to provide specialist expertise in support of OIE policies and priorities. The terms of reference for Collaborating Centres call for the provision of services to the OIE and also, within the designated specialty, to provide scientific and technical training for OIE Member countries.

The role of OIE Collaborating Centres takes on additional importance in the context of the OIE PVS Pathway. The PVS Pathway begins with an evaluation of the baseline performance of Veterinary Services in terms of core competencies. The baseline PVS evaluation may be followed by a Gap Analysis, a comparison of the evaluated level of advancement with the country’s strategic objectives and the identification of a potential budget for investment to strengthen performance. Capacity-building, international development programs and specific projects follow, targeting the areas of greatest interest and available resources.

Collaborating Centers provide one mechanism for capacity-building and undertaking of specific projects. For example, a Collaborating Center may respond directly to a request from another government for assistance to enhance performance in areas like risk analysis and surveillance. Alternatively, Collaborating Centers may develop and deliver professional development programs with open enrollment of government, industry or academic officials from their country, region or the world. Another option is for the Collaborating Center to be twinned with another institution to support its development. The OIE World Animal Health and Welfare Fund (the OIE World Fund) supports twinning activities according to defined priorities.

In 2013, the OIE announced the launch of veterinary education twinning programs focusing on competencies of graduating veterinarians (‘Day 1 graduates’) to assure National Veterinary Services of quality. Veterinary Colleges in the developed and developing world are twinned for the purpose of improving the quality of veterinary education worldwide. National Veterinary Statutory Bodies may also enter into Twinning programmes under OIE auspices.

The networking of collaborating centers around the world offers an opportunity to leverage the unique strengths of each one for the benefit of the region or world.

Keywords: Veterinary Services – OIE Collaborating Centres – PVS Pathway.