Twinning between the veterinary schools of Peradeniya and Massey Universities

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The twinning partners
Why Sri Lanka and New Zealand?

- Island nations, with dependence upon primary and agricultural industries
- Historical links of trade, investment and aid between the two countries
- Inter-governmental cooperation and initiative
Twinning partners

University of Peradeniya – ‘beneficiary’ institution
  • Home of the only veterinary school in Sri Lanka
  • Veterinary programme established in 1947
  • Initiated twinning with Massey University in 2013, under the OIE’s twinning programme

Massey University – ‘parent’ institution
  • Only veterinary school in NZ
  • Accredited to AVBC, RVC and AVMA standards
  • Expertise in capacity building
Partners and other authorities:-

i) Funding and governance
The project itself
Background to the twinning

- OIE reports on Sri Lanka’s Veterinary Service:
  - PVS (2008)
  - Gap analysis (2011)
- Policies of the Government of Sri Lanka
  - Policy for animal production and health
  - Policy on poverty alleviation

Highlighted the need for development of Veterinary Education
Key outcomes of the twinning programme

- Development of a new veterinary undergraduate curriculum
- Adoption of current international best practice for the teaching of veterinary science
- Taking the expertise of the Faculty to animal owners through an enhanced extension programme
- Improvement of the quality of veterinary services
- Internationalisation of the UP degree
- Alleviation of poverty
Partners and other authorities:
ii) Gathering stakeholders’ views

- Faculty considerations
- Outside expertise
- Students’ and graduates’ views
- Accreditation standards
- Stakeholders’ opinions

OIE
Australasian Veterinary Boards Council
Stakeholders

- Animal owners (livestock and pets)
- Education system (Ministry of Higher Education, University Grants Commission, Other Universities)
- Sri Lankan Veterinary Council
- Veterinary service
  - (Department of Animal Production and Health, Ministry of Health, National Livestock Development Board, Department of Wildlife, private veterinary practices, veterinarians within private livestock production businesses)
- Academic staff of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science
- Undergraduate veterinary students
iii) What *actually* is twinning?

- There appears to be no single definition of twinning
- It could be as simple as collegial activities between two vet schools
- Or as complex as a major change project
Curriculum development
Curriculum changes at a glance

- Length: 4 years (Traditional) vs. 5 years (Problem-based Integration, Prof. skills)
- Content: Teacher-centred vs. Student-centred Delivery
- Departments Management
- Variable coverage: OIE D1 skills
- Clinical rosters
- Animal practical: Starts on day 1
- Part of Y4 only
- Lecture-free final year
- OIE D1 skills: Fully covered
Key curricular developments

- Introduction of a lecture-free final year of clinical rosters;
- Horizontal and vertical integration of courses between and within curriculum years;
- Early introduction of courses in animal handling and farm production;
- Introduction of case-based, experiential-learning courses through each year of the programme;
- Development of a new programme stream in core professional ‘soft’ skills.
Partners and other authorities:

iv) This curriculum needs inputs and resources from beyond the University.
Stakeholders as curriculum providers

Familiarity with animal handling

Understanding of livestock husbandry

Clinical training opportunities
Stakeholders as curriculum providers

Commercial and government large-scale dairy farms
Community-based dairy-farming extension

Poultry industry

State veterinary services

Private companion-animal practices
Stakeholders and curriculum appraisal

- Honest feedback to improve the veterinary teaching programme
- Identify regulatory concerns ahead of implementing change to the curriculum
- Provide early signals on possible changes required eg government policy
- Identify curriculum areas which need further development
Partners and other authorities:

v) The role of regulatory authorities and government
The role of other authorities

- Some of the stakeholders are also regulatory bodies.
- Some have roles in the veterinary services and others have roles in the education system.
- Therefore engagement at the level of government ministers is needed to ensure policy and resourcing issues are adequately addressed.

- SL Qualifications framework
- SL University funding authority
- Veterinary Council of Sri Lanka
- SL Ministries of Agriculture and Education
Conclusions

- Twinning requires the involvement of both partners with the stakeholders of the ‘beneficiary’ university
- Twinning requires engagement with veterinary and government regulatory authorities
- Curriculum review can require significant investment in faculty capability and university infrastructure
- Twinning is a major undertaking, which requires substantial resources from the ‘parent’ university
- Twinning provides a unique opportunity for curriculum review and refreshment
- Twinning is a great idea!!!!
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Thank you

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