

# PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES (POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE) CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VETERINARY LEGISLATION IN GUINEA

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Since the founding of the Second Republic in Guinea on 3 April 1984, national efforts have focused on building the legal structures of a constitutional state.

Livestock production is a promising growth sector that employs nearly 283 000 producers and their families and provides income to 30% of the rural population. In 2008, its share of Guinea's gross domestic product (GDP) was 4.3%, and that of agricultural gross domestic product (AGDP) was 20.8%, with an annual growth rate of 3.9%. For this reason, livestock production has been made a priority sector for Guinea's development. Once the country had embarked on a market economy, the problems of privatisation in the sector needed to be addressed, together with their legal basis.

However, veterinary legislation has its own characteristics and constraints, as does any legislation geared to a specific field. Veterinary legislation is linked to the development of livestock production insofar as it is a prerequisite for development. Nevertheless, as its purpose is safety, it is very important to ensure that official veterinary services remain independent from purely economic considerations.

Livestock producers acknowledge the usefulness of veterinary interventions as, not only do they guarantee animal health but animal health in turn improves animal production and hence producers' incomes. This is why it is crucially important not to legislate in the abstract, without taking into account real-life constraints or levels of training.

At the other end of the chain, veterinary legislation has a fundamental impact on guaranteeing public health.

In September 1984, this concern for public health prompted the Guinean government to rule on the concept of medicinal products in general and on their authorised sale by pharmacists without exclusive sales rights, in particular.

Two study trips to Cameroun, Senegal, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire and three international expert missions were organised between 1987 and 1993. These consultations enabled Guinea to draw up a code on livestock and animal products, a code of professional conduct for veterinarians, a pastoral code and

30 or so implementing orders.

Despite these efforts and the will of the government and its development partners, there is still a long way to go, especially with the widespread dissemination of legislation and with monitoring and evaluating its enforcement.

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