

# Participatory surveillance

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Participatory disease surveillance (PDS) is one of the main branches of participatory epidemiology (PE), an evolving methodology which relies heavily on indigenous knowledge and terminology. Participatory approach within the animal-health realm has been long known; the launching of international projects to address epizootic diseases in developing countries, encountering limitations of conventional epidemiological methods, led to the need of upgrading PE as integral part of official disease surveillance systems. PDS was recognised by the OIE for the search for evidence of clinical rinderpest and historical disease patterns, becoming instrumental in its eradication in Africa and Asia. It has also been used for other epizootic diseases. This paper reviews past, recent and prospective applications of PDS, the need to incorporate the method, so far restricted to developing countries, into national surveillance networks elsewhere – particularly concerning animal health in small farms and backyard holdings, and to consider its introduction into university curricula.

