

VETERINARY LEGISLATION DONOR'S PERSPECTIVES THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Etienne Bonbon

Unit D1 Animal Health - DG Health and Consumers, European Commission

The general approach to technical cooperation within the European Commission is to elaborate Strategy Papers with the partners, as well as an overall analysis of context and needs, and then to select a response strategy with priority sectors, making it possible to draft projects e.g. to support animal health. Annual Action Plans (AAP) include all projects financed under a country, regional or thematic programme during the same year.

The following examples illustrate the place of legislation in programmes in the area of animal health.

The programme "Support to Avian and Human Influenza Pandemic Preparedness and Response in ACP countries" will improve monitoring, prevention and control of HPAI and other zoonoses: any efficient field action is first a consequence of good legislation.

The programme "Strengthening Food Safety Systems through SPS measures" focuses more on public sector, in partnership with the private sector: "systems" and "measures" are the result of the implementation of a balanced and exhaustive legislation.

The programme to promote "Veterinary Governance in Africa" aims at improving the institutional environment at national and regional level to provide effective and efficient animal health services in Africa: how to achieve that without legislation?

The "regional cooperation programme on highly pathogenic and emerging and re-emerging diseases (HPED)" in Asia will improve public health and veterinary public health competencies: that means at least checking the legislation and organisation of services.

Even the programme "Vaccines for the Control of Neglected Animal Diseases in Africa", whose primary aim is to provide vaccines and improve vaccine production and distribution to reduce impact of ND, CCPP, PPR and CBPP, cannot achieve all its objectives if it is not linked with an adapted legislation on vet medicines and on disease control – prophylaxis, based on the international standards (OIE Code and Manual).

This can actually lead to the adoption of new legislations, as it was the case with the programme on animal welfare in Chile. The formally established technical collaboration, in particular through shared capacity building and training actions, has created a good ground for the work on legislation with successful results.

All specific veterinary cooperation programmes in European Neighbourhood Countries and Candidate Countries insist on the legal part. Even the more ad hoc programmes like the “Better training for safer food” animal health activities include legislative aspects since strengthening institutional capacity for food safety, animal and plant health surveillance is based on the existing and projected legislation, adapted to the local and international needs.

The achievements of this cooperation policy are seen in the higher animal health status of partner countries and the improvement of their national / regional legal frameworks. The remaining challenges are the coordination between various donors and the need for a common international strategy and approach, with a possible harmonised basic standard or reference

Keywords: European cooperation programmes – animal health and welfare – BTSF – veterinary legislation.