

How to introduce disciplines of other domains to improve the skills and effectiveness of veterinarians

Leadership training transforming the National Veterinary Services of Indonesia

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Purpose:

Indonesia, with its decentralised governmental structure, faces challenges coordinating field services. Disease prevention and control is fragmented. Reviews have identified improved skills in leadership as a vital component of capacity building for the government veterinary services. The Indonesian Veterinary Leadership (IVL) course develops the leadership skills of government veterinarians to strengthen abilities to deliver effective disease control systems.

Methods:

The IVL course, developed by the University of Sydney, Bogor Agricultural University and Gadjah Mada University, addresses three core aspects of leadership – personal leadership, leading others and organisational leadership. It consists of modules structured on adult learning principles that involve participants in directed self-study; in residentials focused on group discussions, experiential learning and role plays; in conduct of an applied project within their work place; and in individual reflection on their learning from the project. Relevant concepts are introduced and then applied to the Indonesian animal health context.

In 2014-15 the IVL course was piloted with support from the Australia Indonesia Partnership for Emerging Infectious Diseases. Feedback from participants and from workplace line managers and senior managers was collected in a formal survey process.

Results:

The IVL course is a resounding success with participants, mentors and line managers all describing the course as effective, innovative and life changing. Participants are more confident and competent and ready to take on greater leadership roles. These young managers have already brought major changes to their work contexts through the conduct of a range of workplace projects.

Conclusion and relevance:

The IVL course is contributing to a shift in leadership paradigm of government veterinary services in Indonesia. It has developed next generation veterinary leaders with vision, communication and motivational skills, and the ability to drive change.