

Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) for

Ricardo Molins, Ana Marisa Cordero, Kevin Walker, Víctor Arrúa



Technical
capability



Human and
financial
capital



Interaction
with the private
sector



Access to
markets

NATIONAL VETERINARY SERVICES

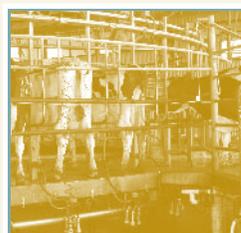
2nd Edition



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) for

Ricardo Molins, Ana Marisa Cordero, Kevin Walker, Víctor Arrúa



Technical
capability



Human and
financial
capital



Interaction
with the
private sector



Market Access

NATIONAL VETERINARY SERVICES

2nd Edition



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

© Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). 2009

IICA encourages the fair use of this document. Proper citation is requested.

This publication is also available in electronic (PDF) format from IICA's Web site at <http://www.iica.int>.

Editorial coordination: Ricardo Molins, Ana Marisa Cordero

Translation: ABRAPALABRA S.A.

Layout: Zona Creativa OGM S.A.

Cover design: Zona Creativa OGM S.A.

Printed: IICA Headquarters

Ricardo Molins.

Performance, vision and strategy (PVS) for national veterinary services /

Ricardo Molins ...[et.al] – 2a ed. --San José, C.R.: IICA, 2008.

52 p.; 15.2 x 22.8 cm.

ISBN13: 978-92-9039-987-2

1. Veterinary services 2. Animal health I. Cordero, Ana Marisa II. Walker,
Kevin III. Arrúa, Víctor IV. IICA V. Title

AGRIS
L70

DEWEY
636.089

San José, Costa Rica
2008

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, the development and growth of many countries depends on the performance of their agricultural economies, and this, in turn, is directly related to the quality of their national veterinary services. Although national veterinary services (VS) should operate on scientifically-based principles and independently of all political pressures from stakeholders, strengthening these services is a shared responsibility that requires investment and participation on the part of both the public and the private sector. In an effort to contribute to the consolidation of national VS, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has prepared a second edition of the *“Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) for National Veterinary Services.”* The PVS tool is designed to help countries gauge their current level of performance, achieve a shared vision with the private sector, establish priorities and carry out strategic planning, to fulfill their obligations and take advantage of new opportunities.

In international trade, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) promotes animal health and the safety of animal products by issuing harmonized sanitary standards for international certification and disease control methods. For its part, IICA helps countries to strengthen their veterinary services and improve their efficiency, so that their products can successfully compete in national and international markets, and also to protect consumers' health. Both organizations share an interest in assisting countries in their efforts to comply with the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the OIE standards, guidelines and recommendations.

Traditionally, the mission of the national veterinary services was to protect domestic livestock. As a result, most of their resources were channeled toward controlling pests and animal diseases that threatened primary production. The VS programs began at the national borders and were focused inward. The credibility of these official services in the eyes of their users, and of other countries, largely depended on the effectiveness of their domestic programs and their response to emergencies arising from the entry of unexpected diseases.

Nowadays, to address the growing international demands, national veterinary services are required to adopt a broader mandate and have a

global vision. Countries will have to provide new services to complement the traditional ones. This will entail stronger alliances and increased cooperation with the various stakeholders and with other ministries and governmental institutions. The SPS Agreement reaffirms the right of WTO member countries to protect animal and human health, but also requires each country to base these measures on scientific principles. This approach provides the basis for the operation of national veterinary services and to ensure that international trade is free of discrimination and unjustified restrictions.

Experience has shown that countries whose national veterinary services are viewed as being more developed and credible in the eyes of their stakeholders, trading partners and other countries, have based their actions on four fundamental components: **1) technical capability** to address current and new issues on the basis on scientific principles; **2) human and financial capital** to attract resources and retain professionals having technical and leadership skills; **3) sustained interaction with the private sector** to stay on course and carry out relevant joint programs and services, and **4) access to markets** through compliance with existing standards and implementation of new disciplines, such as the harmonization of standards, equivalence agreements and regionalization. These four components comprise the basic structure of the PVS tool.

Applying the PVS tool

To establish the current level of performance, develop a shared vision, establish priorities and facilitate strategic planning, a series of critical competencies (six to eight) have been defined for each of the four fundamental components. Qualitative levels of advancement are described for each critical competency. To graphically represent the level of cumulative advancement within each critical competency, a pie graph has been placed next to the written explanation of each level. A higher level of advancement indicates that the national veterinary service is complying with the current level and with preceding levels.

To enrich the process, space has been provided in each critical competency to expand upon or clarify the responses. A hypothetical example for the harmonization variable (one of thirty critical competencies comprising the PVS tool) is presented below.

3. Harmonization

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to actively pursue harmonization processes and to ensure that the national regulations under its mandate are consistent with international standards, guidelines and recommendations.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service has not established a process to inform itself about international standards. National animal health regulations do not take into account international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
- The national veterinary service is aware of the relevant international standards, guidelines and recommendations, but has no established process to identify inconsistencies or non-conformities between national regulations and international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
- The national veterinary service periodically *reviews* national animal health regulations in order to *harmonize* these with international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
- The national veterinary service is active in *examining and discussing* inclusions and reviews of international animal health standards, guidelines and recommendations.
- The national veterinary service *actively and regularly participates at the international level* in the formulation and review of standards, guidelines and recommendations on animal health.

The national veterinary service has reviewed and harmonized all standards and regulations in the beef sector and is reviewing the standards and regulations in the aquaculture sector.

Using the results

The PVS tool is easy to understand, flexible and simple to use. More than a diagnostic instrument, it is a forward-looking process that may be used either passively or actively, depending on the level of interest and commitment to improve the national service over time.

In its passive mode, the PVS tool helps to raise awareness and improve the understanding of the various sectors and interested parties regarding the fundamental components and critical competencies required by the national veterinary service to function effectively. In this mode, the tool may also be used to develop a shared vision, foster dialogue and adopt a common language for the discussion of ideas.

The active mode exploits the tool's maximum potential and produces the best outcomes, provided that all sectors, public and private, are committed to the process. In this mode, performance is assessed, differences are explored, and priorities are established. Leadership on the part of the public sector is crucial for success. This mode is where strategic actions are defined, investments are made and commitments are implemented. The continuity of this process is assured when a true partnership between the public and the private sectors exists.

For example, the VS Director may use the tool to monitor the progress made in each of the four components. Furthermore, different stakeholders can participate in the analysis and discussion of results to help to define common policies, set priorities, and promote measures.

The outcomes of using the PVS Tool can help to: 1) indicate overall performance in each of the four components; 2) provide a relative performance rating in each of the critical competencies; 3) compare the performance of the national veterinary service with that of other veterinary services in the region or globally, in order to explore areas for cooperation or negotiation; 4) identify differences in the response of various stakeholders, with the goal of achieving a shared viewpoint; 5) foster a common understanding in order to achieve greater levels of advancement; 6) help determine the benefits and costs of investing in national veterinary services and obtaining assistance from financial and technical cooperation agencies; 7) provide a basis for establishing routine monitoring and follow-up mechanisms on the overall level of performance of the VS over time, and 8) help identify and present the objectives and specific needs when applying for financial support (grants).

Basic Components

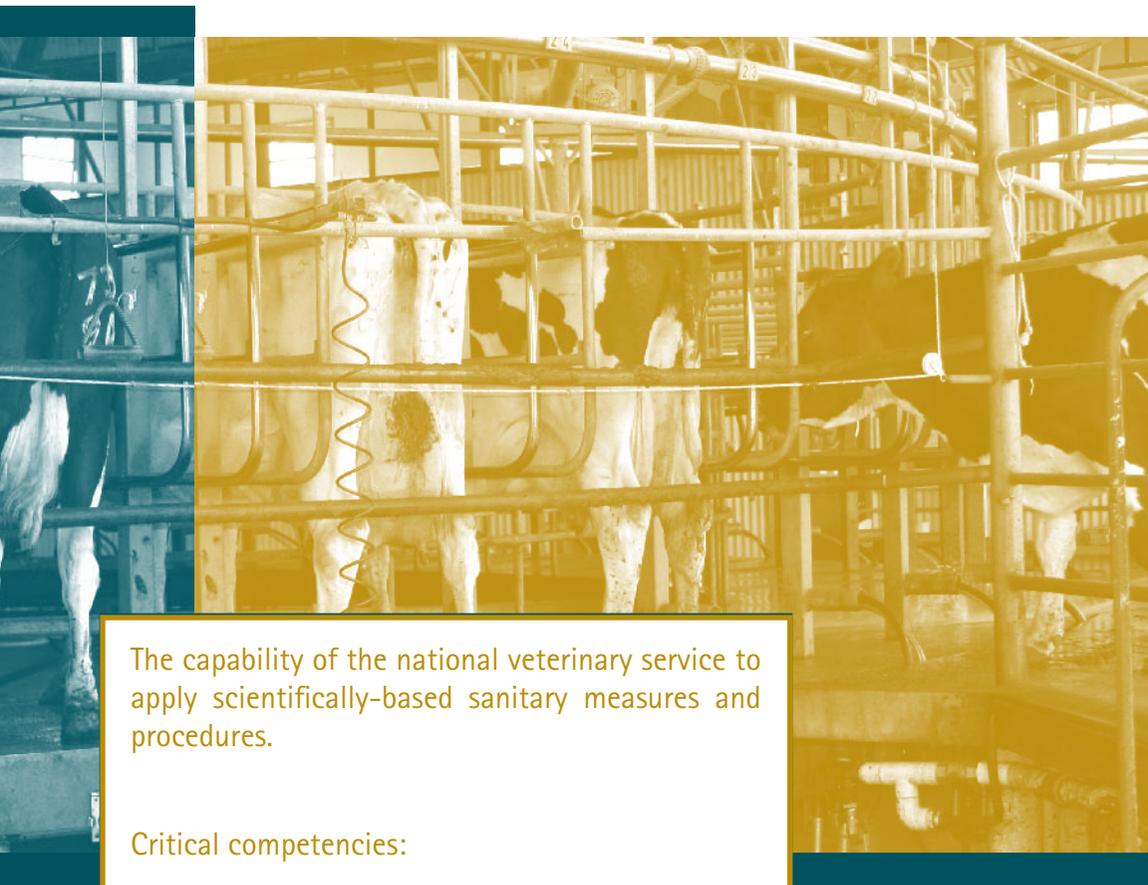
I. TECHNICAL CAPABILITY

II. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL CAPITAL

III. INTERACTION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

IV. MARKET ACCESS

I.TECHNICAL CAPABILITY



The capability of the national veterinary service to apply scientifically-based sanitary measures and procedures.

Critical competencies:

1. Surveillance
2. Diagnostic capability
3. Risk analysis
4. Emergency response capability
5. Inspection and registration services
6. Quarantine
7. Emerging issues
8. Technical innovation and access to information

1. Surveillance¹

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to determine, monitor, verify and report on the health status of the animal populations under its mandate in the country.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service has no surveillance or monitoring program.
 - The national veterinary service implements a surveillance program based on existing information or on suspicious cases, including samples sent to laboratories.
 - The national veterinary service implements monitoring and surveillance programs for pests and diseases in specific animal populations of economic and zoonotic importance to the country.
 - The national veterinary service implements a surveillance program for pests and diseases of economic and zoonotic importance in animal populations at greater risk, utilizing geo-referencing systems to identify establishments in order to implement an effective surveillance program.
 - The national veterinary service implements a surveillance program in accordance with the health status of neighboring countries and trade flows.
-
-
-

¹ The term "surveillance" is used to describe an active system and implies that some type of action can be taken if the data concerning the prevalence and incidence of a disease are found to be above a specific level or threshold. Surveillance is usually aimed at a specific disease and requires three components: a defined monitoring system, a threshold established for predetermined levels of disease, and predefined actions (interventions). Monitoring describes the continuous and targeted efforts aimed at assessing the health and disease status of a given population. This process can be applied to infectious diseases, production-related diseases, or health in general. Reference: (Book) Salman, M.D., *Animal Disease Surveillance and Survey Systems, Methods and Applications*. 2003, First Edition, Iowa State Press, Ames, Iowa.

2. Diagnostic capability

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to identify and record biological, physical and chemical agents that adversely affect animals and animal products².

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service can clinically identify pests and diseases already present in the country, but laboratory confirmation is not available.
 -  For pests and diseases of *major economic importance*, the national veterinary service can collect samples throughout the country and immediately ship these to designated laboratories for identification and confirmation.
 -  For *diseases and pests not present in the country*, but known to exist in the region or that could enter the country via trade, the national veterinary service has procedures for collecting samples and immediately sending these to designated laboratories for identification and confirmation.
 -  In the case of *emerging diseases and pests*, the national veterinary service has access to a network of national and international reference laboratories for identification and confirmation purposes.
 -  The national veterinary service promotes the official accreditation or approval of private laboratories and audits the quality of their diagnostic procedures and procedures for the collection and shipment of samples. The national network and the private laboratories have quality assurance programs.
-
-
-

² Products and byproducts of animal origin

3. Risk analysis³

The capability of the national veterinary service to take decisions and adopt measures based on scientific principles and evidence, and the capability for risk assessment, management and communication.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not compile data or other types of information for the detection of possible health hazards and for risk analysis⁴. Decisions on animal health are not supported by scientific evidence.
-  The national veterinary service compiles and maintains data or has access to the necessary information only for *detection* of hazards. Decisions may be based on scientific evidence.
-  The national veterinary service systematically *searches for* and maintains relevant data and information for risk assessment⁵ and has personnel assigned to that task. *Risk management* decisions taken by those responsible for animal health are based on scientific principles and evidence.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service systematically conducts scientific risk assessments and bases its animal health policies (risk management) on those risk assessments.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service is consistent in its risk management efforts and in communicating the decisions adopted by the animal health authority or focal point to the World Trade Organization Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, to the OIE, to its trading partners and to stakeholders.

³ Risk analysis: the process composed of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication.

⁴ Risk: the probability of the occurrence and likely magnitude of the consequences of an adverse event to animal or human health caused by the presence of one or more hazards.

⁵ Risk assessment: the process of integrating hazard identification, dose response, exposure assessment, and risk characterization.

4. Emergency response capability⁶

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to detect and rapidly respond to a sanitary emergency, such as an outbreak of pests, diseases and other unexpected situations that endanger the health of animal populations under its mandate.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not have a system to determine whether a sanitary emergency exists or the authority to declare an emergency and respond appropriately.
-  The national veterinary service has a system to determine whether or not a sanitary emergency exists but lacks the necessary legal authority and financial support⁷ to respond appropriately to such emergencies.
-  The national veterinary service has a system that facilitates timely decision-making on whether or not a sanitary emergency exists. The VS has the legal authority and financial support to adopt measures in response to such emergencies.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service has institutional guidelines and mechanisms that enable it to coordinate emergency actions with other relevant government bodies or institutions⁸ and with the private sector.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service has the capacity to notify and communicate emergency situations to the OIE's official notification system.

⁶ Includes early detection and notification

⁷ Legal authority and financial support: the national animal health service has a legal framework and the necessary financial resources to take immediate action.

⁸ Official institutions responsible for animal health control or surveillance in some part of the animal production chain

5. Inspection⁹ and registration¹⁰ services

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to ensure compliance with animal health regulations throughout the primary production chain.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has national requirements for the registration of establishments that process, manufacture and prepare products of animal origin, but registration is not linked to an inspection process.
-  The national veterinary service has national requirements for the registration of establishments that process, manufacture and prepare products of animal origin, but inspection services are of a reactive type (i.e. they act based on a report or perception of problems).
-  The national veterinary service has national requirements for the registration of establishments that process, manufacture and prepare products of animal origin, and an inspection program capable of carrying out periodic inspections, collecting samples and certifying products for local consumption, ensuring compliance with national standards and supervision. However, inspection is based on sanitary aspects and on the sampling and analysis of end products.
-  Same as the preceding level, but the inspection is based on process and risk and is conducted by properly trained inspectors, in coordination with the private sector, and also provides verifiable results showing that all products and procedures comply with current national animal health standards and regulations. Sampling and analysis of final products is done only for verification purposes.

⁹ Inspection service: its main purpose is to ensure that food products comply with established standards and with the pertinent regulations at every stage of the food chain.

¹⁰ Registration service: Government-regulated authorizations for individual products that will be marketed and for the operation of establishments that process, package, transport, sell, prepare or serve food.

6. Quarantine

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to prevent the entry and spread of pests and diseases in the country.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not have a system for gathering information on the status of animal pests and diseases in the country, and applies basic animal quarantine procedures to neighboring countries or trading partners.
-  The national veterinary service maintains information on the status of pests and animal diseases that affect the country's main commodities and those of neighboring countries and trading partners. This information is taken into consideration when updating or establishing quarantine procedures for trade in some animals and their products as well as for other regulated items that enter the country and may threaten its sanitary status.
-  The national veterinary service maintains an up-to-date information system on the scope and scale of animal pests and diseases within its borders and on those that concern neighboring countries and trading partners. This information is used to establish animal quarantine procedures for animals and animal products entering the country, including those without commercial value (e.g., pets) or even products that are not marketed.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service audits its quarantine procedures at national level and, when necessary, those of its trading partners.

7. Emerging issues¹¹

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to identify in advance emerging sanitary issues under its mandate that could endanger or benefit the country's sanitary status, public health, the environment or the trade in animals and animal products.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not have mechanisms for the early detection of emerging issues that could threaten, harm or benefit the country's sanitary status or the trade in animals or animal products.
-  The national veterinary service compiles and evaluates information on emerging issues at national or international level that could positively or negatively affect the country's sanitary status or the trade in animals or animal products.
-  The national veterinary service assesses the risks, costs or opportunities relating to identified emerging issues.
-  Based on scientific risk analysis, the national VS, in coordination with other competent institutions and/or stakeholders, implements prevention or control measures to deal with new threats or to take advantage of opportunities linked to new or emerging issues.
-  Based on scientific risk analysis, the national veterinary service coordinates and implements measures with other countries to foresee emerging issues, including audits of the services of countries that export animals or animal products into its country, and participates in international emergency networks.

¹¹ *Emerging issue* refers to the emergence of new situations that affect competitiveness, market access, the protection of public health, agricultural health and the environment. Emerging issues may imply opportunities or threats. Animal welfare, changes in regulations and animal feed supplements, are examples of possible emerging issues.

8. Technical innovation and access to information:

The capability of the national veterinary service to modernize and update its services in line with the latest scientific advances and based on the standards and guidelines of the OIE, Codex Alimentarius and WTO/SPS.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has only *informal access* to technical innovations, through personal contacts or external media sources¹².
-  The national veterinary service maintains a database on technical innovations and international standards, through subscriptions to scientific journals and electronic media¹³.
-  The national veterinary service has specific programs to identify technical innovations that may improve its operations and procedures.
-  The national veterinary service incorporates technical innovations into selected tasks and procedures and trains staff in their application, using specific resources, and with the collaboration or contribution of stakeholders.
-  The national veterinary service has a special budget and the collaboration of stakeholders to systematically implements technical innovations in all aspects of the national VS. The national veterinary service may also receive external cooperation and technical assistance funds for innovation purposes.

¹² External media sources: information sources to which the national veterinary service can subscribe, such as scientific publications and journals.

¹³ This includes consulting publications and news on the web sites of international reference organizations (Codex, World Organization for Animal Health and World Trade Organization) as well as periodic participation in international forums, Codex committees, etc.

II. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL CAPITAL



Institutional and financial sustainability measured by the professional qualifications of human resources and the financial resources available.

Critical competencies:

1. Human talent
2. Training and updating
3. Funding sources
4. Stability of policies and programs
5. Professionalization of the service
6. Contingency funding
7. Technical independence
8. Capability to invest and improve

1. Human talent

The capability of the national veterinary service to efficiently perform its professional and technical tasks. The VS assesses the professional personnel in two ways: by their academic qualifications¹⁴ and by their level of training and competence¹⁵.

A. Levels of advancement (academic qualifications):

-  It is estimated that less than 10% of the professional personnel of the national veterinary service hold a relevant university degree¹⁶ recognized by the State and appropriate for the position.
-  It is estimated that more than 10% but less than one-quarter of the professional personnel of the national veterinary service hold a relevant university degree recognized by the State and appropriate for the position.
-  It is estimated that more than one-quarter but less than half of the professional personnel of the national veterinary service hold a relevant university degree recognized by the State and appropriate for the position. In addition, more than one-quarter of those who occupy management posts have a postgraduate degree.
-  It is estimated that half, but less than three-quarters, of the professional personnel of the national veterinary service hold a relevant university degree recognized by the State and appropriate for the position. In addition, more than half of those who occupy management posts have a postgraduate degree.

¹⁴ Not all professional positions require a university degree. However, the percentage of university degrees serves as an indicator of professional excellence within the national veterinary service.

¹⁵ Not all the national veterinary services have sufficient professionals for the tasks required; therefore, the percentage of qualified and trained professionals is an indicator of the excellence of the service.

¹⁶ Relevant university degree: an appropriate degree for the position occupied.

- It is estimated that three-quarters or more of the professional personnel of the national veterinary service hold a relevant university degree recognized by the State and appropriate for the position. In addition, nearly all those who occupy management posts have a postgraduate degree.
-
-
-
-

B. Levels of advancement (qualifications of professional staff):

- It is estimated that less than 10% of the national veterinary service personnel are qualified and trained to perform the tasks associated with their position.
 - It is estimated that more than 10% of the national veterinary service personnel are qualified and trained to perform the tasks associated with their position.
 - It is estimated that one-quarter but less than half of the national veterinary service personnel are qualified and trained to perform the tasks associated with their position.
 - It is estimated that half but less than three-quarters of the national veterinary service personnel are qualified and trained to perform the tasks associated with their position.
 - It is estimated that three-quarters or more of the national veterinary service personnel are qualified and trained to perform the tasks associated with their position.
-
-
-
-

2. Training and updating

The capability of the national veterinary service to maintain and improve the competence of its personnel in terms of relevant information and knowledge, measured by the implementation of an annual staff training plan based on needs and on access to scientific and technical information.

Levels of advancement (training):

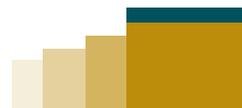
- The national veterinary service has no staff training plans.
- The national veterinary service has an annual staff training plan but this is not updated or funded.
- The national veterinary service has an updated and funded staff training plan, but it is only partially implemented.
- The national veterinary service has an annual staff training plan that is updated and funded and is widely implemented.
- The national veterinary service has an annual staff training plan that is updated and fully implemented.

3. Funding sources

The capability of the national veterinary service to access financial resources for its continued and sustainable operation, independent of political or stakeholder pressures.

Levels of advancement:

- Funding for the national veterinary service is not available or is not clearly defined. The service's budget competes with those of other state institutions and is totally dependent on Treasury or Finance Ministry resources.
- The national veterinary service is funded with a specific allocation from the national budget.
- The national veterinary service is funded with a specific allocation from the national budget and with user fees related to the provision of specific services (e.g. quarantine, certification services).
- Same as the preceding level, but the national veterinary service also receives additional funds from stakeholders to implement specific programs; cooperation funds are managed and administered appropriately.



4. Stability of policies and programs

The capability of the national veterinary service to implement sustainable policies and programs that systematically improve services and address new demands, independently of political changes. This capability is measured in two ways: the frequency of the service's reorganization and the level of coordination between State institutions.

Levels of advancement:

A. Levels of advancement (reorganization of the national veterinary service):

- The national veterinary service is frequently reorganized at all levels.
- The national veterinary service is frequently reorganized at certain levels. Staff rotation¹⁷ levels are high, involving more than half the personnel during periods of two years or less.
- The national veterinary service is reorganized only at the political level, whenever political changes occur. Staff rotation involves less than half the personnel during periods of two years or less.
- The national veterinary service is stable at the technical level. Staff changes are due to professional merit.

¹⁷ Staff rotation is not contemplated by the institution's professional or administrative career structure

5. Professionalization of the service

The capability of the national veterinary service to systematically develop an administrative and technical structure.

A. Levels of advancement:

- No terms of reference or manuals of procedures are available that describe how technical and administrative positions will be filled.
- For some technical positions, the national veterinary service has prepared terms of reference or manuals of procedures that describe how vacancies will be filled.
- Terms of reference are available for most technical positions and some administrative and management positions in the national VS, but these are not always considered when selecting staff members. There are some procedures that describe how vacancies will be filled.
- The national veterinary service has terms of reference for all technical, administrative and management positions. In some cases these terms of reference are not considered when selecting personnel.
- The national veterinary service has terms of reference for all technical, administrative and management positions, and these are always considered when selecting personnel. There are specific procedures that describe how vacancies will be filled.

6. Contingency funding

The capability of the national veterinary service to access extraordinary financial resources to respond to emergency situations or emerging issues; it is measured by the ease of the process through which contingency resources can be obtained.

Levels of advancement:

- No contingency fund exists and any extraordinary financial resources required by the VS must be approved by law or presidential decree.
- A contingency fund has been established with *limited* resources, but these additional resources must be approved by law or presidential decree.
- A contingency fund has been established with *limited* resources, but these additional resources for the VS must be approved by the competent Ministry.
- A contingency fund has been established with *substantial* resources, but additional resources must be approved by the competent Ministry.
- A contingency fund with substantial resources has been established and is available to the national veterinary service whenever necessary; it also includes additional resources derived from user fees.

7. Technical independence

The capability of the national veterinary service to carry out its duties with autonomy and free from any interference that may affect its technical and scientific decisions. Two aspects are measured: political appointments¹⁸ and the technical backing for decisions.

A. Level of advancement (political appointments):

- The Director and all holders of senior management positions in the national veterinary service are political appointees.
- The Director and senior management or high-level positions in the national veterinary service are political appointments.
- The Service's Director is the only political appointee.
- The appointment of officers in senior management positions is based on merit. There are no political appointees in the national VS. All positions are filled on the basis of the candidates merits.

¹⁸ Political appointments: appointments made by the Government party, at the discretion of the President or Minister, and subject to immediate dismissal.

III. INTERACTION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR



The capability of the national veterinary service to collaborate with and actively involve the private sector in the implementation of programs and activities.

Critical competencies:

1. Information
2. Communication
3. Official representation
4. Accreditation (official authorization)
5. Capability to respond to stakeholders' needs
6. Implementation of joint programs

1. Information

The capability of the national veterinary service to keep stakeholders informed, in an effective and timely manner, of its activities, programs and events of interest in the area of animal health.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has no mechanism in place to inform stakeholders about its activities, programs and events of interest in animal health.
 -  The national veterinary service has mechanisms for official communications that stakeholders can consult regarding standards, regulations and notifications.
 -  The national veterinary service routinely¹⁹ publishes the results of its activities and programs, as well as information on developments of interest in animal health.
 -  The national veterinary service provides the public with up-to-date information, accessible via the Internet, on its programs, current activities and developments of interest in animal health, and actively seeks the input of the private sector.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service implements education and training programs for producers and for its own staff, in cooperation with the private sector.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service has extension programs to inform and instruct the public on good animal husbandry practices.
-
-
-

¹⁹ Every six months or less.

2. Communications

The capability of the national veterinary service to maintain fluid communications with the public sector and with organized stakeholders.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has no communication mechanism to facilitate dialogue with the relevant State institutions or with the private sector.
 -  The national veterinary service maintains *informal* channels of communication with the relevant State institutions or with the private sector.
 -  The national veterinary service promotes and engages in official dialogue with the various stakeholders regarding *proposed and current regulations*.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service organizes forums and meetings with the various stakeholders to establish or improve *programs and services*.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service actively promotes dialogue and requests comments from the various stakeholders regarding regulations, norms and other relevant national issues, and regarding official representation at the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the OIE.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service regularly issues information about sanitary and phytosanitary measures, to the national authorities or focal point on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, about changes in national norms or regulations, in order to duly notify the WTO and its trading partners, as required by the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.
-
-

3. Official representation

The capability of the national veterinary service to regularly and actively participate in, coordinate and provide continuous follow-up on relevant meetings of international organizations such as the OIE.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service does not participate in or follow up on relevant meetings of the WTO/SPS and the OIE.
- The national veterinary service participates sporadically or passively²⁰ in relevant meetings of the WTO/SPS and the OIE.
- The national veterinary service consults with stakeholders and takes into consideration their opinions and participates regularly and actively²¹ in relevant meetings of the WTO/SPS and the OIE.
- The national veterinary service consults with stakeholders to ensure that strategic issues are defined, to provide leadership and ensure coordination among national delegations, and to promote these issues on the agendas of relevant meetings of the WTO/SPS and the OIE.

²⁰ Passive participation means being present at meetings but with little intervention and participation.

²¹ Active participation refers to preparation prior to meetings, interventions, search for common solutions and preparation of proposals to be discussed during and after meetings.

4. Accreditation (Official authorization)

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to accredit or authorize third parties (individuals, corporations, laboratories, etc.) or to delegate responsibility for providing specific services.

Levels of advancement:



The national veterinary service has neither the authority nor the capability to accredit or authorize third parties to carry out specific activities or provide specific services.



The national veterinary service has the authority to accredit and authorize third parties to carry out a *specific activity* but not to provide a *specific service*.



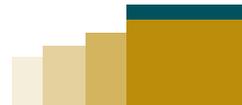
The national veterinary service has programs to accredit or authorize third parties to offer *specific services*.



The national veterinary service can develop and implement accreditation or authorization programs for *new services*.



The national veterinary service conducts external quality assurance audits of its official accreditation or authorization programs to guarantee their quality and maintain the trust of stakeholders and trading partners.



5. Capacity to respond to stakeholders' needs

The capacity of the national veterinary service to cooperate with stakeholders in the design of new programs and services, in order to respond to changing priorities and opportunities.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service does not actively involve stakeholders in the analysis of changes in priorities and opportunities.
- The national veterinary service maintains an *informal dialogue* with stakeholders in line with its existing capacity and with changes in priorities and opportunities.
- The national veterinary service organizes *meetings and forums* with stakeholders to define changes in priorities and opportunities.
- The national veterinary service and stakeholders *jointly* define the resources, tasks and responsibilities of potential programs and services in response to changing priorities and opportunities.
- The national veterinary service periodically implements new programs and services, with the active involvement and input of stakeholders.

IV. ACCESS TO MARKETS



The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to provide support for accessing and retaining markets.

Critical competencies:

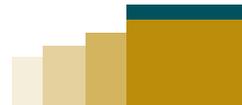
1. Establishment of animal health regulations
2. Compliance with animal health regulations
3. Harmonization
4. Certification
5. Equivalence agreements
6. Traceability
7. Transparency
8. Regionalization, compartmentalization and zoning

1. Establishment of animal health regulations

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to formulate and recommend for approval national animal health legislation and to establish regulations for processes and products under its mandate, as well as the scope of such regulations .

Levels of advancement (participation in the preparation of national legislation and regulations related to animal health):

- The national veterinary service does not have the authority to propose national legislation or regulations on animal health.
- The national veterinary service has the *technical capability* to prepare national legislation and animal health regulations.
- Based on national legislation, the national veterinary service has the flexibility and the *necessary legal framework* to draft legislation and establish regulations on animal health.
- Based on national legislation, the national veterinary service prepares and submits bills of law for approval and drafts animal health regulations, applying procedures that take into account the opinions of stakeholders and international standards, guidelines and recommendations.



2. Compliance with animal health regulations

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to ensure that stakeholders are in compliance with the relevant animal health regulations.

Levels of advancement (compliance with regulations):

- The national veterinary service has no inspection or verification programs to ensure stakeholder compliance with relevant regulations.
- The national veterinary service implements inspection or verification programs to ensure compliance with relevant regulations relating to *selected* products and/or processes *but only reports* on cases of non-compliance.
- The national veterinary service implements supervision programs consisting of inspection and verification of compliance with relevant regulations relating to *selected* products and processes, and, if necessary, *imposes penalties* for non-compliance.
- The national veterinary service implements supervision programs consisting of inspection and verification of compliance with relevant regulations relating to *all* products and processes under its mandate and, if necessary, *imposes penalties* for non-compliance.
- The national veterinary service carries out audits of its inspection or verification programs to ensure compliance with relevant regulations.

3. Harmonization

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to actively²³ pursue harmonization processes and to ensure that the national regulations under its mandate are consistent with international standards, guidelines and recommendations.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has not established a process to inform itself about international standards. National animal health regulations do not take into account international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
 -  The national veterinary service is aware of the relevant international standards, guidelines and recommendations, but has no established process to identify inconsistencies or non-conformities between national regulations and international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
 -  The national veterinary service periodically *reviews* national animal health regulations in order to *harmonize* these with international standards, guidelines and recommendations.
 -  The national veterinary service is active in *examining and discussing* inclusions and reviews of international animal health standards, guidelines and recommendations.
 -  The national veterinary service *actively and regularly participates at the international level* in the formulation and review of standards, guidelines and recommendations on animal health.
-
-
-

²³ A country may be active in setting international standards without actively pursuing changes in national regulations. The importance of this element is to promote national change.

4. Certification

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to certify the services, products and processes under its mandate²⁴ in accordance with national animal health regulations and with international standards, guidelines and recommendations.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service has neither the authority nor the capability to certify services, products or processes.
- The national veterinary service has the authority to certify specific products, services or processes.
- The national veterinary service implements a certification program for specific products, services or processes.
- The national veterinary service can develop and implement certification programs for new products or processes.
- The national veterinary service has the necessary certification programs for all relevant products, and audits its certification programs to guarantee their quality and maintain confidence in the system.

²⁴ In implementing certification programs, national veterinary services must always be free from all political interference or from influences or pressures from the private sector.

5. Equivalence²⁵ agreements and other types of agreements related to animal health

The authority and capability of the national veterinary service to negotiate, implement and maintain equivalence agreements and other types of agreements related to animal health with other countries, in accordance with the regulations, standards and processes under their mandate.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service has neither the authority nor the capability to *negotiate and approve* equivalence agreements and other types of sanitary agreements with other countries.
-  The national veterinary service has the authority to *negotiate and approve* equivalence agreements and other types of sanitary agreements with other countries.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service evaluates and proposes equivalence agreements and other types of sanitary agreements with other countries for selected products and processes.
-  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service promotes the drafting of equivalence agreements and other types of sanitary agreements with other countries for new products and processes.

²⁵ Equivalence refers to the sanitary measures proposed by the exporting country to the importing country, which offer the same level of protection than those of the importing country.

6. Traceability

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to trace the history, location and distribution of animals and animal products under its mandate.

Levels of advancement:

- The national veterinary service does not have a program for tracing animals or animal products.
- The national veterinary service or its delegates can trace some animals or their products at *specific points* of the agrifood chain.
- The national veterinary service has procedures in place to identify and trace some animal species or their *selected* products along the corresponding agrifood chain.
- The national veterinary service, together with other state institutions and the stakeholders, has established traceability procedures and is able to trace throughout the agrifood chain all animals and their respective products.
- The national veterinary service, in cooperation with other state institutions and stakeholders, carries out audits of its traceability procedures.

7. Transparency

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to notify the national health authority, the designated focal point or, in its absence, directly notify the WTO, the OIE and trading partners, of national regulations and all emergencies with actual or potential international importance, in accordance with established procedures.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not comply with the obligation to notify, directly or indirectly, the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Committee or the OIE of changes in its regulations, and to notify the OIE of its sanitary status.
 -  The national veterinary service *partially* notifies the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the OIE, directly or indirectly, of relevant changes in its regulations, and notifies the OIE of its sanitary status.
 -  The national veterinary service notifies the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the OIE, directly or indirectly, of relevant changes in its regulations, and notifies the OIE of its sanitary status, in full compliance with the notification procedures established by those bodies.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service informs stakeholders about changes in national regulations and of the country's sanitary status, and of changes in regulations and sanitary status of other countries, and makes them aware of the importance of maintaining a policy of transparency.
 -  Same as the preceding level, but in addition the national veterinary service, together with other competent state institutions, conducts external audits of their transparency procedures.
-
-
-

8. Regionalization, compartmentalization and zoning²⁶

The capability and authority of the national veterinary service to establish and maintain regions, zones or compartments that are disease-free or with a low prevalence of animal diseases, in accordance with the criteria established by the OIE.

Levels of advancement:

-  The national veterinary service does not have regionalization, compartmentalization or zoning procedures.
-  The national veterinary service has established procedures for *defining* areas suitable for regionalization, zoning or compartmentalization and for determining the health status of *selected* animals or animal products.
-  The national veterinary service has implemented measures and controls that enable it to *establish* disease-free regions, zones or compartments for *selected* animals or animal products.
-  The national veterinary service cooperates with stakeholders and other state institutions in defining responsibilities, implementing actions and *maintaining animal* disease-free regions, zones or compartments.

²⁶ **Zone/region** means a clearly defined part of a territory or country containing an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade. **Free zone** means a zone in which the absence of the disease under consideration has been demonstrated by compliance with all the requirements specified in the Terrestrial Code for the recognition of disease-free zones. Within the zone and at its borders, appropriate official veterinary controls are effectively applied for animals and animal products, and their transportation. **Compartment**: means an animal subpopulation contained in one or more establishments under a common biosecurity management system with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease or specific diseases for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade. **Free compartment** means a compartment in which the absence of the animal pathogen causing the disease under consideration has been demonstrated by compliance with all the requirements specified in the Terrestrial Code for the recognition of free status (OIE, Terrestrial Animal Health Code).

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TERMS

Audits: a systematic and functionally independent examination for the purpose of determining whether certain activities and their subsequent results conform to planned objectives.

Diseases and pests: the clinical and/or pathological manifestation of an infection.

Zoonoses: diseases transmitted from animals or products of animal origin to humans.

Sanitary status: the status of a country or area regarding a disease or pest, based on the criteria established in the OIE's Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

Laboratory: a properly equipped institution staffed by technically competent personnel in veterinary diagnostic methods, authorized by the national veterinary service, which conducts diagnostic tests.

WTO/SPS: Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization.

International standards, guidelines and recommendations: in relation to animal health and zoonoses, those established by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE); in relation to food safety, those established by the Codex Alimentarius.

Users of the national veterinary services: includes the private sector, academic institutions and public-private associations.

CHECKLIST

I. Technical capability

- Surveillance
- Diagnostic capability
- Risk analysis
- Emergency response capability
- Inspection and registration services
- Quarantine
- Emerging issues
- Technical innovation and access to information

II. Human and financial capital

- Human talent
- Training and Updating
- Funding sources
- Stability of policies and programs
- Professionalization of the service
- Contingency funds
- Technical independence
- Capability to invest and improve

III. Interaction with the private sector

- Information
- Communication
- Official representation
- Accreditation (official authorization)
- Capability to respond to stakeholders' needs
- Implementation of joint programs

IV. Market Access

- Establishment of animal health regulations
- Compliance with animal health regulations
- Harmonization
- Certification
- Equivalence agreements
- Traceability
- Transparency
- Regionalization, compartmentalization and zoning

Checklist

I. Technical capability

- Surveillance
- Diagnostic capability
- Risk analysis
- Emergency response capability
- Inspection and registration services
- Quarantine
- Emerging issues
- Technical innovation and access to information

II. Human and financial capital

- Human talent
- Training and updating
- Funding sources
- Stability of policies and programs
- Professionalization of the service
- Contingency funds
- Technical independence
- Capability to invest and improve

III. Interaction with the private sector

- Information
- Communication
- Official representation
- Accreditation (official authorization)
- Capability to respond to stakeholders' needs
- Implementation of joint programs

IV. Access to markets

- Establishment of animal health regulations
- Compliance with animal health regulations
- Harmonization
- Certification
- Equivalence agreements
- Traceability
- Transparency
- Regionalization, compartmentalization and zoning

