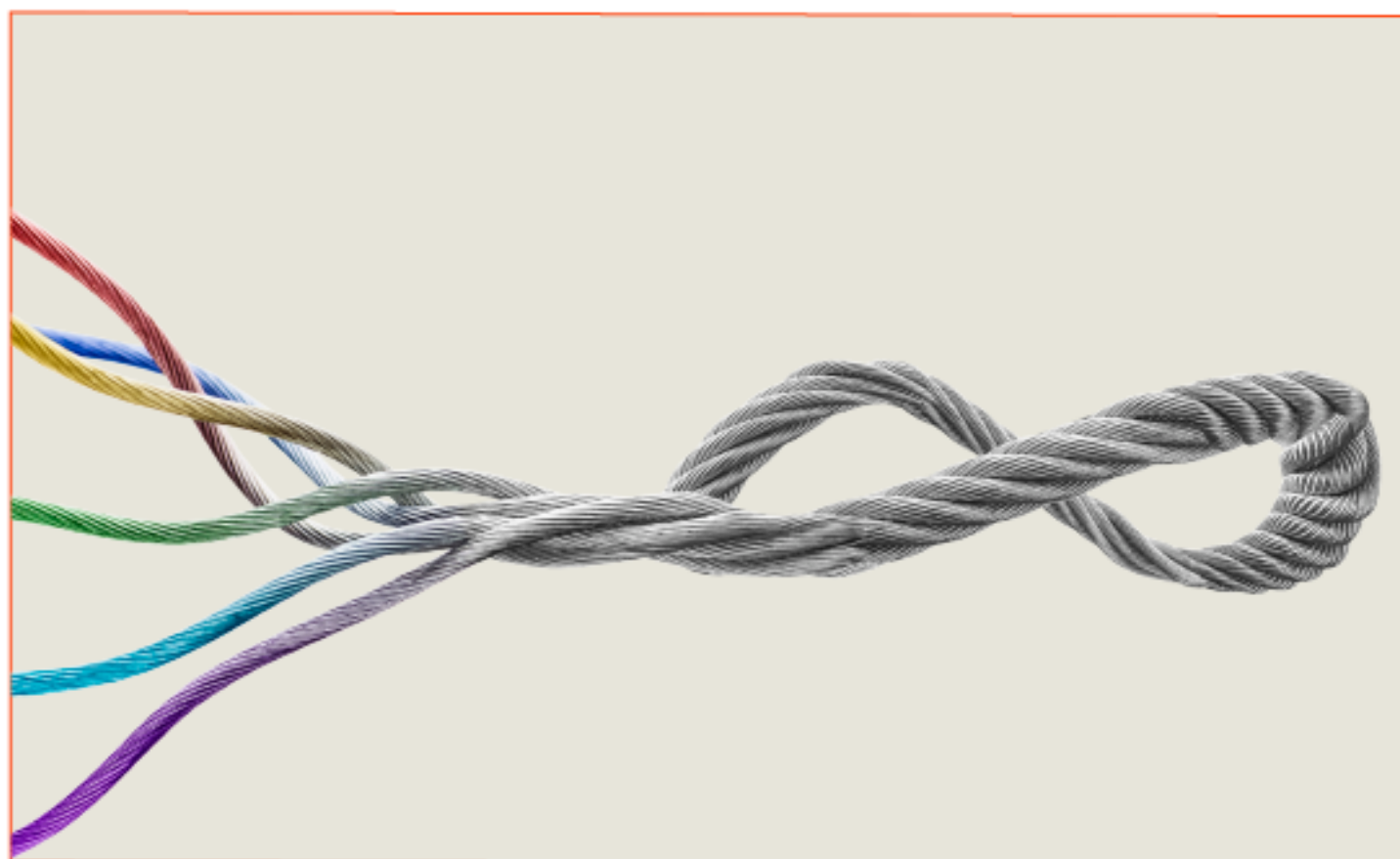


# Panorama

Bulletin 2023-1

Editorial  
Perspectives  
Dossier  
Around the World  
Resources



## Building Leadership in Veterinary Services



World Organisation  
for Animal Health  
Founded as OIE

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*While capacity-building efforts may have improved bench-top capacity for some diseases in many laboratories, World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE) data suggest that such capacity is not always sustainable. It is too often under-used, unleveraged and inefficient, leading to waste [1]. These disheartening conclusions warrant much reflection on traditional capacity-building approaches, coordination and methods.*

In the [PVS Pathway Sustainable Laboratories Missions](#), PVS Experts help WOAH Members to evaluate their need for laboratory services, the costs of delivering those services, and any problems with their sustainability. The task of the PVS Experts is then to propose suitable recommendations for action. Through its [Sustainable Laboratories Initiative](#), and thanks to support from [Global Affairs Canada](#), WOAH is using these data to highlight areas where more investment is required.

The data show that, for laboratory networks to provide relevant, accurate and timely results to the health system, countries must understand their overall laboratory capacity, their ability to respond to their health system's needs, and the real costs of such a response, as well as having a sustainable business model in place [1].

## Overall Laboratory Capacity

Countries are using only a fraction of their potential capacity: laboratories in the cohort are currently using between 30% and 51% of their potential annual testing capacity based on [equipment](#) and human resources.

## Responding to clients' needs

Public laboratories view their main clients as the government (44%) and private veterinarians and smallholder farmers (19%), but fall short of meeting the needs of the private sector (21%).

## The real costs of laboratory analysis

On average, it costs 59% more to provide laboratory services within a country than to send samples to international reference laboratories. Moreover the quality of services provided within each country may vary considerably.

## Sustainable business model

Among the cohort, 38% of laboratories charged fees for testing to private-sector clients, and 21% to the public sector, but only 13% of laboratories can use their revenue directly. Moreover, given that only 40% of laboratories have cost-accounting systems, the fees charged are seldom based on real costs.

## The way forward

Without a change in approach, laboratory networks will not be able to fulfil their role in national health systems or improve health security.

Interventions should balance technical assistance with management, business and strategy interventions, in order to build a culture based on quality, sustainability and good business practice. Laboratories must link infrastructure to

demand and insist on accountability beyond a five-year landscape.

WOAH is focusing its capacity-building approach for animal health laboratories on sharing insights with its stakeholders to inform their decision-making. It is also conducting an impact review of the [Laboratory Twinning Programme](#), to better understand its benefits.

The Laboratory Twinning Programme enables WOAH to use its [network of Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres](#) to assist institutes who wish to improve their capacity and scientific expertise. **The aim is to strengthen national and regional laboratory capabilities for the benefit of countries and their region.**

The [National Veterinary Research Institute](#) of Vom, in Central Nigeria, is a prominent facility that conducts pioneering research into the diagnosis, treatment and control of economically important diseases in its country. Nigeria has requested a Sustainable Laboratories Mission. Dr Maryam Muhammad, the Institute's Director, believes that sustainability is a major factor contributing to gender equality in science-related environments [2]. 'Investing in sustainable laboratories will improve the lives of women,' she says, by granting women in the biological threats reduction field a safe space where they will be empowered to pursue their careers and make a significant contribution to their communities.

<https://doi.org/10.20506/bull.2023.1.3376>

## PERSPECTIVES

### ▶ WOAH ACTIONS

# From Laboratory Missions to Twinning Projects

## A way forward for sustainable laboratory networks

### SUMMARY

When it comes to capacity building for animal health laboratories, WOAH is focusing its approach on sharing insights with its stakeholders to inform their decision-making. In addition, it is conducting an impact review of the Laboratory Twinning Programme to understand the outcomes and benefits of twinning.

### KEYWORDS

#capacity building, #data management, #gender equality, #laboratory, #laboratory twinning, #public good, #sustainability, #veterinary workforce, #WOAH PVS Pathway, #World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

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**WOAH (founded as OIE) is a global organisation, working to ensure the health of animals across the world. Since 1924, we have focused on the complexities of animal health. We disseminate information on animal diseases and use science-based strategies to limit their potentially negative impact on society.**

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