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Thematic portfolio

Public-Private Partnerships and perspectives in the veterinary domain



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Animal health services can struggle to meet the growing demands placed upon them. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) seeks to achieve maximum development impact through sustainable public–private partnerships (PPPs) and enterprise-led growth, enabling transformative change in the delivery of animal health services in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The OIE PPP Handbook [1] provides an excellent resource, grounded in the realities of the field, to achieve effective PPPs.

Substantial livestock-sector growth in LMICs drives the demand for animal health services, placing public services under pressure and creating opportunities for the private sector.

Those involved in both the public and private animal health sectors are looking for mechanisms to foster collaboration and partnership, and modify policy and other aspects of the enabling environment to improve the efficiency and efficacy of service delivery.

The burden of livestock disease has severe negative impacts on the livelihoods, health and nutrition of millions of poor households. In many LMICs it is the *delivery* of effective disease prevention and control inputs, not the inputs themselves, that is proving most elusive. Challenges include limited public-sector resources, large livestock populations spread over vast territories, rapidly expanding commercial production systems, and sub-optimal policy frameworks. Limited use is made of PPPs in LMICs, in contrast to their widespread application in higher-income countries.

Public–private partnerships have proven highly effective for the delivery of animal health services but remain underused in most low- and middle-income countries

USAID pursues an enterprise-driven development strategy, led by the private sector, while also recognising the vital role played by the public sector in facilitating sustainable, equitable growth. USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy [2] asks these guiding questions:

- is a market-based approach viable?
- what motivations does the private sector have?
- what is holding the private sector back?

USAID supports animal health PPPs by facilitating collaboration among key stakeholders, piloting approaches and evaluating outcomes, and helping to shape policy and service delivery systems.

PPP examples include:

- strengthened service delivery models (by sub-contracting private animal health providers to deliver public goods [sanitary mandate] and integrating veterinary para-professionals [VPPs] into extensive livestock production systems [3])
- improved vaccine development and delivery (including 'payment for results' approaches [4])
- animal health support for smallholder poultry expansion in Ethiopia [5].

The OIE PPP Handbook represents a useful capacity-development tool, assisting stakeholders in identifying and selecting partnership options. It is based on experience and best practices, and aims to accelerate learning and provide a suite of options for decision-makers. It constitutes a significant resource for strengthening animal health service

capacity.

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Private veterinarian in his pharmacy, Ethiopia. © Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)

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Strengthening animal health services through public–private partnerships

A sustainable, resource-smart, development approach

KEYWORDS

#animal health, #OIE PPP Handbook, #public–private partnership, #service delivery, #United States Agency for International Development (USAID), #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

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