

# PANORAMA

Thematic portfolio



Strengthening preparedness  
and resilience to emergencies



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# PERSPECTIVES

# DOSSIER

# AROUND THE WORLD

## EDITORIAL

### 01-1 Responding to emergencies through preparedness and resilience

#### KEYWORDS

#COVID-19, #editorial, #emergency preparedness, #One Health, #resilience, #Tripartite (FAO/OIE/WHO), #United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), #Veterinary Services, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



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*The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted almost all walks of life and it has required a multisectoral and interdisciplinary approach to respond to this global emergency.*

### **Resilience is the ability to adapt to adverse situations**

Around the world, Veterinary Services are continuing to play their essential role in society, protecting animal health and welfare and public health, while also responding to the challenges posed by the pandemic. We have seen that Veterinary Services can play an important role by providing direct support to the public health pandemic response, through:

- testing of human specimens for SARS-CoV-2
- engaging in scientific research at the human-animal interface
- donating essential equipment
- contributing epidemiological expertise to public health services.

Veterinary Services are also:

- working to manage animal health implications of COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 infections of companion animals and outbreaks in farmed fur animals
- conducting research to understand the susceptibility of different animal species to SARS-CoV-2;

- using risk communication to avoid inappropriate actions being taken against animals, including wildlife;
- undertaking risk management to avoid the establishment of new reservoirs in susceptible species.

In addition, Veterinary Services need to work to ensure business continuity, and particularly to ensure food safety and food security through the continuation of the safe trade of animals and animal products.

In these challenging times, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has demonstrated that, with the support of information technology platforms, it can maintain business continuity, at Headquarters, in the Regional and Sub-Regional Representations, and with its global community of Members. The OIE is continuing to share expertise and foster solidarity between Members and experts, host scientific discussions, take decisions and optimise collaboration with partners.

## **Resilience also includes learning from an event to be able to prepare for the next emergency**

To strengthen preparedness against all hazards (including 'One Health' emergencies like COVID-19), the OIE is developing and sharing scientific- and experience-based guidance with its Members to inform the development of risk-based emergency plans and procedures. As well as having sufficient trained personnel, equipment and resources, to be fit-for-purpose, plans should be tested regularly through simulation exercises.

With the strong support of its Members, the OIE is well placed to play its role in strengthening global governance mechanisms and structures to respond effectively to future emergencies and avoid disasters. We have seen first-hand the strong commitment from the highest levels, including from the G20 Agriculture Ministerial Meeting in April 2020 that called for the strengthening of the One Health approach to preparedness and response to zoonotic diseases.

| Today's challenges highlight the need to incorporate wildlife in One Health strategies

Balanced ecosystems are a key component of resilience, and disease threats (including the risk of disease emergence) can be reduced by ensuring healthy balanced ecosystems. Today's challenges also highlight the need to incorporate wildlife in One Health strategies. The OIE is engaging its Members, its wildlife experts and key partners in developing a long-term strategy to ensure that wildlife health is fully integrated into the OIE's One Health and animal health strategies.

That is why the OIE supports the Franco-German initiative to set up a One Health High-Level Expert Council aiming to assist the Tripartite (FAO-OIE-WHO), with which the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will be associated, in their respective responsibilities to address future crises.

| Together we must take a multilateral, interdisciplinary and multisectoral approach

The OIE stands ready to play an active role in global dialogue and engage with the international community to ensure comprehensive resilience. Together we must take a multilateral, interdisciplinary and multisectoral approach to prepare and respond to all hazards and emergencies facing Veterinary Services in a holistic and sustainable fashion.

This edition of *Panorama* provides you with information on some of the projects, initiatives and programmes of the OIE and its partners that support the emergency preparedness and resilience of OIE Members. I wish to thank the authors for their contributions and hope you find this issue useful and informative.

**Monique Éloit**  
**Director General**  
**World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)**

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**The OIE** is an international organisation created in 1924 with a mandate from its 182 Members to improve animal health and welfare. Its activities are permanently supported by 323 centres of scientific expertise and 13 regional offices with a presence on every continent.



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*Protecting animals, preserving our future*

12, rue de Prony - 75017 Paris, France  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 15 18 88 - Fax: +33 (0)1 42 67 09 87 - [oie@oie.int](mailto:oie@oie.int)