

Surveillance of vector-borne diseases

A European workshop in the frame of One Health Day

7 November 2023 in Brussels

Conclusions

Introduction:

A Workshop on “Surveillance of vector-borne diseases” was held in Brussels, Belgium, last 7th November 2023. It was organised under the Spanish Presidency of EU, with the collaboration of Fédération Européenne pour la Santé Animale et la Sécurité Sanitaire (FESASS), and in the framework of “One Health” concept, as many of vector-borne diseases are zoonotic.

The workshop was structured in two parts to address each of these issues:

- The possible synergies between vectors’ surveillance for human and for animal health,
- The interest in and tools for the surveillance of vector borne diseases and their clinical impacts, especially in the context of emerging diseases.

After initial presentations by experts in both topics, two round tables took place with the participation of CVOs, a vector expert and representatives of the Public Health Sector, DG SANTE, FESASS and UECBV.

This session was an excellent opportunity to share an animal health point of view in relation to diseases of greatest concern with the human health sector, and to discuss the options and protocols for surveillance/monitoring of the vectors. It was also possible to share expertise in surveillance for this type of diseases, to enable their early detection and to gain a better understanding of the clinical impact of emerging diseases. In particular, the discussion was focused on the situation of the Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) in Mediterranean countries, its impact and the measures adopted for its control.

Conclusions:

As results of the discussion, the following conclusions were achieved in each of the two round tables:

Round table 1: “The possible synergies between human and animal health for the vectors’ surveillance”

- The “One Health” approach is very relevant for reducing risks and disease burden. Need for an Integrated Action Plan.
- There is a need of coordination in preparedness and response activities for health crises and emergencies in line with the One-Health concept.

- The entomological surveillance carried out by the Public Health, Animal Health and Environment Units should be coordinated, optimizing resources and taking advantage of the synergies.
- Interest of targeted surveillance in “at risk” areas (like the vicinity of airports and harbours or wetlands favourable to the proliferation of vectors) for early detection of emergent vector borne diseases.
- Multidisciplinary and active collaboration among all stakeholders (private and government) is necessary to address the different aspects of monitoring and control. Training and education are important. However, financing remains a challenge.

Round table 2: "*The interest and tools for the surveillance of vector borne diseases and their clinical impacts*".

- The number and incidence of vector-borne diseases has increased during current century.
- Risk of introduction of other pathogens or new serotypes/ lineages/ subtypes of vector-borne diseases into Europe is already a reality.
- The incursion into the EU of new vector-borne diseases as Lumpy Skin Disease or Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease indicates that we need to change our thinking and not only focus on “classical” diseases and be prepared for new scenarios.
- In many cases control strategies are limited (no commercial vaccines are available) and/or effectiveness is unclear.
- There is a need for greater adaptability of regulations (e.g. making animal movements more flexible) to each context and scenario.
- Need for immediate surveys to collect data, in particular on farm, in the event of an emerging disease to assess its clinical impacts and to create a more efficient monitoring system.

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