How participatory approaches could enhance the evaluation of animal health surveillance systems?

Work Package 5: Evaluation of epidemiological and economic effectiveness of surveillance systems

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**INTRODUCTION**

Regular and relevant evaluations of surveillance systems are critical in order to improve their performance and efficiency. Multiple attributes are required to assess their performance and many different types of methods & tools are available to evaluate them. In order to identify the potential use of participatory approaches to improve these evaluations, it is necessary to identify and analyse evaluation attributes, as well as the existing methods & tools.

**PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES**

Range of methods/tools which enable stakeholders to play an active role in the definition and in the analysis of the problems they may encounter, and in their solution. These approaches could bring an added value to the evaluation by allowing better understanding of the system and of stakeholders’ expectations.

**Potential use of participatory approaches**

Three circumstances where participatory methods & tools could be used (Figure 1):

- To undertake the complete assessment of attributes for which there is no existing method (or tool), or when the method is not standardized enough (e.g. semi-structured interviews) or not completely addressing all aspects of the attribute;
- To contribute to the collection of data required for existing methods and tools (e.g. scenario trees);
- To better understand some of the outputs, leading to better recommendations and better communication.

**Development of participatory approaches**

Proposed methodology on how to implement participatory approaches (with an example in Figure 2):

1. Understand the definition of each attribute for which a complete assessment is required.
2. Identify each system components which contribute to the assessment of these attributes (sub-indicators of the attribute).
3. Associate suitable participatory methods/tools to each of these identified elements with no existing assessment methods and/or
4. Associate suitable participatory methods/tools to existing methods to facilitate data collection.

**CONCLUSION**

Surveillance attributes and assessment methods & tools were identified through this study. The next steps of this work will be to identify a list of relevant indicators for the implementation of participatory approaches, and to test these approaches in the field. Outputs from evaluation performed using existing “classical” methods and participatory approaches will be compared to conclude on the added value of the participatory methods & tools, and on their advantages and limitations for the evaluation of surveillance systems.