RISKSUR Symposium: Roundtable discussions

Question 3

Facilitator: Simon More
Rapporteur: Fernanda Dórea

Question: We present a surveillance design framework that support detailed design and careful documentation. How can this framework best support surveillance redesign to improve surveillance effectiveness? What do we need to make sure that the tool incorporates? Do you believe the tools presented are suitable for all diseases, or which aspects should be differentiated depending on the disease itself?

Feedback

Important points to consider about building a surveillance design framework

- The framework should have the goal of make explicit the assumptions that are usually implicit when people design surveillance.
- Make sure that the terminology used is in agreement with available standards and thoroughly documented.
- Focus should be given not only to surveillance methods, but also to surveillance results.
    - What is the purpose of surveillance?
    - How will the results be used?
    - Who will use them and to make what sort of decisions?
    - The social-economic context should also be developed.
- Users will often design multi-objective surveillance, and they need to understand if/how the tool can cope with that.
- The framework should be easily applicable to different diseases. The problem will be with the applicability to different species (for instance aquatic animals and wildlife) and for the design of multiple hazards in the same system.

General comments about the tool

- The framework is long, which cannot be avoided, but people should be able to navigate only to the steps that are more relevant to them. Consider for instance having a list of the most relevant steps to document when reporting EU regulated diseases.
- The framework needs to be validated with as wide a target audience as possible and using a number of different diseases and scenarios. On this note, participants are not sure whether it would work for aquatic diseases.
- The tool needs to be flexible – users must be able to adjust the framework to their particular needs and reality.
- Before investing time in learning the tool, users need to know if there is a plan to maintain it after the RISKSUR project is over. In this regard, the participants highly encouraged the WIKI format as well as a discussion forum.

- Please consider the language barrier – translations may be needed for a wide use of the tool.
- For EU regulated diseases, template should be made available so that surveillance designers can download the framework "pre-filled" for those diseases, changing only particular details related to their country. This would also help understand how to use the tool.
- Promote the tool with training. The tool needs not only to be useful, but also to be used.
- Some people may be scared of using a webtool, due to privacy considerations. On the other hand, others may not only want to use the tool, but also make their designs public, either to advertise their surveillance or to get feedback from other designers. In the webtool, participants should be given different options such as: keep this information private; add this to the statistics of the website, but keeping the country anonymous; or make the design open to other users.
- There is a need to find the right balance between simple and informative. It should be easy to navigate, skipping automatically non relevant sections.
- There should be a manual for the tool. Maybe some of the content and advice of the current tool could be removed if there was a manual specific for the tool use.

Comments about the "re-design" feature of the framework

- Besides showing all steps that are relevant for redesign, it should be considered whether it is possible to have a ranking of the most important points, or at least classify each point qualitatively regarding their impact on sensitivity (for instance as low, medium and high).