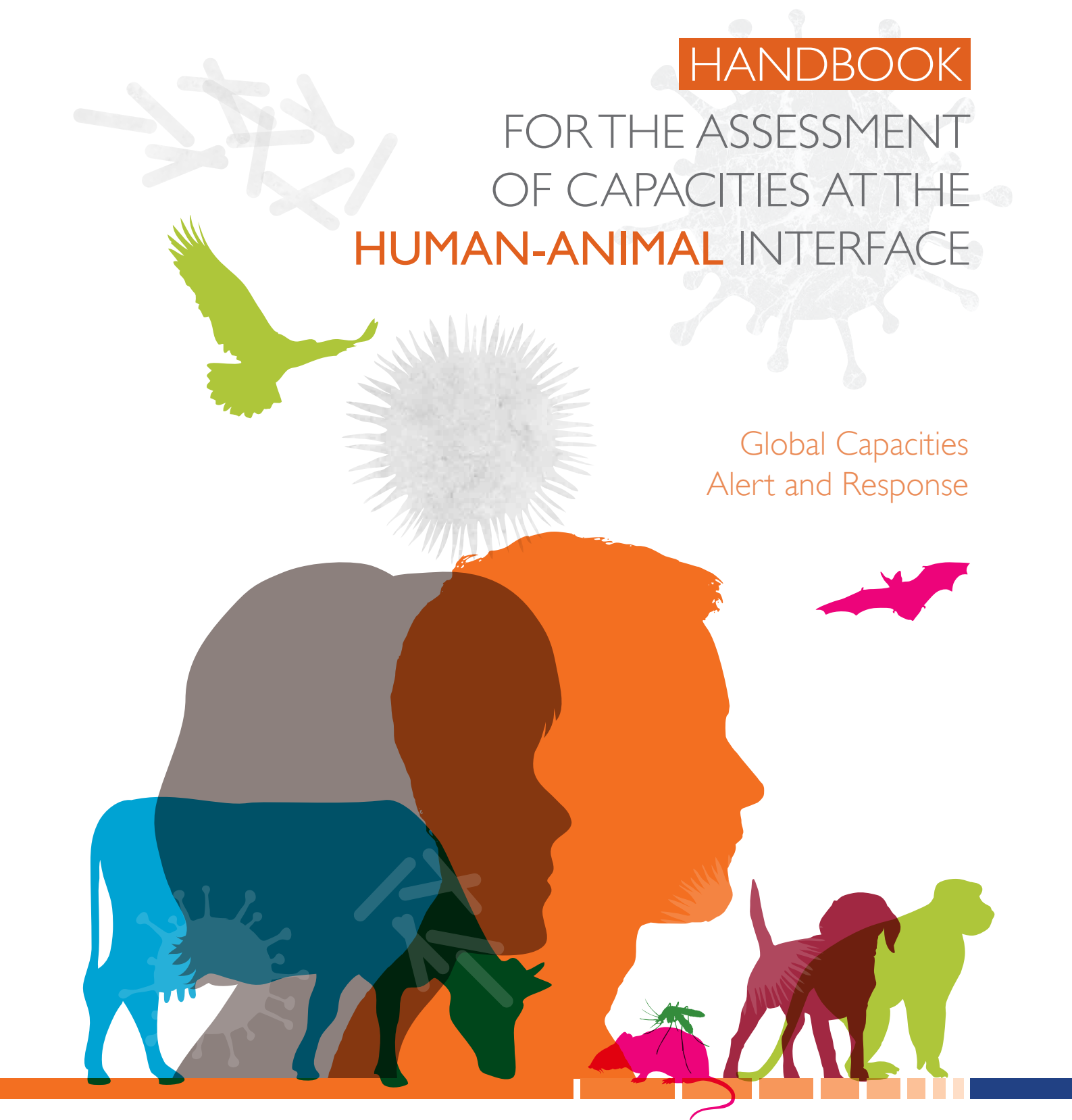


HANDBOOK

FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITIES AT THE HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERFACE

Global Capacities
Alert and Response



HANDBOOK
FOR THE ASSESSMENT
OF CAPACITIES AT THE
HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERFACE

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CONTEXT

With the coming into force of the revised International Health Regulations (IHR (2005)), all States Parties¹ are required to assess the ability of their national structure and resources to meet minimum national core capacities for surveillance and response as specified in Annex I of the IHR (2005)², and to develop a plan of action to ensure that these capacities be present and functioning throughout their territories.

Annex I of the IHR (2005) provides a list of core functions – the capacity to detect, report, assess and respond to Public Health Event(s) of International Concern (PHEIC) – expected at the three levels of implementation in countries – national, intermediate and local community levels. All States Parties have committed to report their level of compliance with IHR Annex I to the World Health Assembly (WHA) on a yearly basis.

In order to assist States Parties in their responsibility to report to the WHA, WHO has developed a data

collection tool which enables each State Party to provide standardized information on progress of its core capacity development in the implementation of the IHR (2005).

"Each State Party shall develop, strengthen and maintain, as soon as possible but no later than five years from the entry into force of these Regulations (...), the capacity to detect, assess, notify and report events in accordance with these Regulations... and ...the capacity to respond promptly and effectively..."

IHR (2005), Articles 5 and 13

The data collection tool is linked with an online questionnaire derived from the *Checklist and indicators for monitoring progress in the development of IHR core capacities in States Parties*³ developed through the IHR Monitoring Framework. This questionnaire is designed primarily for use by National IHR Focal Points (NFPs) in collaboration with public health professionals, managers and other sectors and stakeholders responsible for implementing the IHR. This process aims to capture the contribution of the specific sectoral authorities, in reaching the objectives of the IHR (2005).

National Veterinary Services contribute to the implementation of IHR – and it is therefore necessary for National IHR Focal Points to obtain this information when filling out the IHR Monitoring Framework Questionnaire. Information relating to the Veterinary Services' contribution can be gathered from the outputs of the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway. The OIE PVS Pathway, among others, assesses the performance of national Veterinary Services and their compliance with OIE intergovernmental standards on the quality of Veterinary Services.

The OIE and the PVS Pathway

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for improving animal health worldwide. One of the OIE's key strengths is providing international cooperation and coordination against the spread of animal diseases, in line with its core mandate, "improvement of animal health, veterinary public health and animal welfare world-wide". OIE is recognised as a reference organisation by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in 2015 counted a total of 180 Member Countries.

The OIE provides assistance to its Member Countries to improve the governance of their national Veterinary Services in order that their capacity may be strengthened and better-aligned with OIE international quality standards. For that purpose, since 2006, the OIE has progressively developed a global programme, the PVS (Performance of Veterinary Services) Pathway. The PVS Pathway is a comprehensive, multi-staged continuous process to strengthen Veterinary Services to and help them improve their governance mechanisms by better aligning with the OIE intergovernmental standards that they have democratically adopted. This process focuses on building capacities of horizontal systems, giving national Veterinary Services tools to identify weaknesses and develop strategies to address these gaps.

More information on the PVS Pathway is provided on page 45

All aspects relevant to the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*⁴ and the quality of Veterinary Services, as per the OIE definition⁵, are reviewed using the PVS Tool. During a PVS Evaluation mission, the PVS Expert Team collects and analyses baseline information against 47 Critical Competencies, each of which is described in a specific card (Critical Competency card). More details on the structure of the IHR Monitoring Framework and the PVS Pathway can be found in Annex 4.

1 - Certain States Parties that are not Members States of WHO may become a party to the IHR by notifying acceptance of the Regulations to the Director-General of the World Health Organisation. Currently, 196 States Parties to the IHR (2005) include all WHO Member States (194) as well as the Holy See and Liechtenstein.

2 - Annex I of the IHR (2005) includes 2 sections: A - Core capacity requirements for surveillance and Response, and B - Core capacity requirements for designated airports, ports and ground crossing, available at www.who.int/ihr/9789241596664/en/

3 - Checklist and indicators for monitoring progress in the development of IHR core capacities in States Parties. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2013. Available at www.who.int/ihr/checklist/en

4 - The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code is available at <http://www.oie.int/en/international-standard-setting/terrestrial-code/access-online/>

5 - In this manual, the terms "Veterinary Authorities" and "Veterinary Services" refer to the definitions in the Terrestrial Code

- Veterinary Authority means the Governmental Authority of an OIE Member Country, comprising veterinarians, other professionals and paraprofessionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and welfare measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the Terrestrial Code in the whole territory.

- "Veterinary Services" means the governmental and non-governmental organisations that implement animal health and welfare measures and other standards and recommendations in the Terrestrial Code in a territory. The Veterinary Services are under the overall control and direction of the Veterinary Authority. Private sector organisations, veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals or aquatic animal health professionals are normally accredited or approved by the Veterinary Authority to deliver the delegated functions.

The use of the PVS Evaluation reports can greatly facilitate the work of the IHR NFPs. When the IHR Monitoring Framework questionnaire is completed, the country PVS Evaluation report provides concrete elements on the contribution of a country's Veterinary Services to specific core capacities defined in the IHR (2005). National IHR Focal Points can issue a request for their country's PVS Pathway reports by writing to the National Delegate to the OIE of their country. The OIE website provides up to date list of all national Delegates to the OIE⁶.

The OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and *Aquatic Animal Health Code* sets out intergovernmental standards for the improvement of animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide, including through standards for safe international trade in terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees), aquatic animals and their products.

The measures outlined in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and *Aquatic Animal Health Code* are used by the veterinary authorities (and the Aquatic Animal Health Services) of importing and exporting countries for early detection, reporting and control of pathogenic agents to terrestrial animals and, in the case of zoonoses, to humans, and to prevent the transfer via international trade in animals and animal products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade.

The contribution of Veterinary Services to the implementation of the IHR may be obvious for some specific hazards (zoonosis, food safety), however there are other key areas that are useful for answering other core capacities in the IHR Monitoring Framework Questionnaire. This Handbook has been developed to facilitate this exercise. It contains detailed information on the connection between the two processes and how the data contained in a PVS Evaluation report can assist and aid countries to better answer the IHR Monitoring Framework questionnaire.

OBJECTIVE OF THE HANDBOOK

The objective of the Handbook is to facilitate the assessment of existing capacities for areas in which Veterinary Services contribute to the implementation of the IHR (2005). More particularly, **it aims at facilitating the annual report on country compliance with IHR (2005) requirements by using the results of the PVS Pathway missions.** Through this process, it also endeavours to **increase the visibility of Veterinary Services and their contribution to the implementation of IHR (2005).**

CONTENT OF THE HANDBOOK

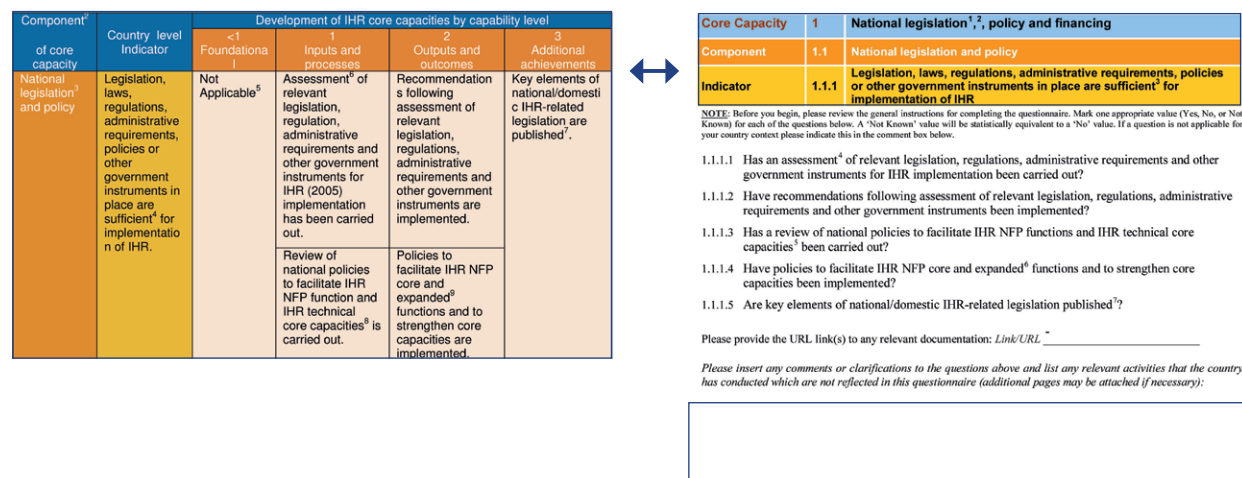
In order to achieve the above-specified objectives, parallels between the IHR Monitoring Framework questionnaire and the PVS Tool have been established. The questions from the questionnaire for which a contribution of the Veterinary Services can be identified have been matched with the relevant Critical Competency(ies) in the PVS Tool.

The IHR Monitoring Framework questionnaire is derived from the IHR *Checklist and indicators for monitoring progress in the development of IHR core capacities in States Parties*. Figure I illustrates the translation from the Checklist to the online questionnaire, using the first indicator of core capacity I: National legislation, policy and financing as an example.

⁶ - Available at: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/our-members/delegates-new/>

Figure 1: IHR Monitoring Framework tools: Translation of the attributes from the checklist to the questions in the online questionnaire

The indicator is the following: “Legislation, laws, regulations, administrative requirements, policies or other government instruments in place are sufficient for implementation of IHR”



The Indicators are specified by several attributes reflecting a ‘one of four capability levels’, (Foundational Level: prerequisites; Level 1: inputs and processes; Level 2: outputs and outcomes; Level 3: additional).

Attributes are reflected in “Yes, No, or Not Known” answers in the online IHR questionnaire. If a question is not applicable for the country context, this is indicated in the comment box.

When filling out the online IHR questionnaire, this Handbook will help users take into consideration the contribution made by the country’s Veterinary Services in implementing the IHR (2005) and guide them in locating this information from the relevant PVS Critical Competency card(s) in the country’s PVS Evaluation or PVS Evaluation Follow-Up report.

Figure 2: Correspondence between a question in the online IHR questionnaire and the relevant PVS Critical Competency cards in the PVS Evaluation report

QUESTIONS IN THE IHR QUESTIONNAIRE	PVS CRITICAL COMPETENCY
1.1.1.1. Has an assessment of relevant legislation, regulations, administrative requirements and other government instruments for IHR implementation been carried out?	IV-1. Preparation of legislation and regulations
	II-7. Disease prevention, control and eradication
	II-6. Emergency response

STRUCTURE OF THE HANDBOOK

The online IHR questionnaire follows the same structure as that of the IHR Checklist and indicators for monitoring progress in the development of IHR core capacities in States Parties: the questions are organized along the eight IHR core capacities, plus Point-of-Entry (PoE), and four sections on specific hazards: zoonoses; food safety; chemical

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