Assessing the Situation in Switzerland: Stakeholder Interviews

Result of the interviews held

The potential for implementing the One Health concept in Switzerland was regarded as interesting and promising. The interviewees expressed a willingness to contribute to further introducing One Health. The talks showed several projects which were interdisciplinary in the sense of One Health, even though the term had not been explicitly used. Unstable governmental and university structures for cross-border cooperation were mentioned as obstacles, as was professionalization in professions (different cultures/resistance to leave familiar grounds). Limited personnel and financial resources and the lack of relevant information about the added value of One Health were cited as barriers. Fear of a possible loss of power seemed to play a significant role in rejecting new ideas. The most important issue however was a lack of common interest and no apparent reason for closer cooperation (‘no problem’). Recommendations for further development focused on the areas of information, communication and trust building. Demonstrating the economic, administrative and technical advantages of cooperation with pragmatic examples based on scientific evidence is crucial for further implementation. So, the word was spread around stakeholders and professionals and an action plan was developed for the canton of Ticino.

Stakeholders:

- Build up on existing traditions
- Bottom-up & Top-down
- ‘umbrella term’ to compass all areas
- Follow-up projects
- ‘spreading the word’ to stakeholders (and public)
- ‘Finding champions’

Case Study Basel-City:

Targeted effect

... was defined as added value to the health of people and animals in Basel, ideally supplemented by resource savings through the use of synergies. The primary focus of the first phase was on information, communication, awareness raising, and networking processes. The existing capacities, competencies, processes, networks, communication channels should be used, optimized and enhanced.

Outcome objectives

- Knowledge development: ‘convincing key players’
- One Health network: ‘formation of an (informal) network’
- Evaluation of actual examples: ‘finding suitable projects’
- Cancer registry / Thesis: ‘feasibility of studies’
- Identification of barriers: ‘finding obstacles’
- Action plan: ‘combing our knowledge for further steps’

Approach

- Focused on holding information events and conducting interviews with key persons. The aim was to make stakeholders aware of their own role within the project, express ideas and suggestions and define a desired state. These personal encounters, stakeholder meetings and dialogues not only offered a large amount of data, they also made stakeholders owners of the process. By involving this long list of participants, a good basis was created for specific projects:

Health and Competence

- Joint education and information campaigns
- More transparent communication
- Basel Health App
- Supporting transdisciplinary research projects

City & Nature

- Become an animal-friendly city
- Urban farming
- Urban gardening
- Opening of farms to public

Dogs & Mobility

- Creating meeting places
- Support for companion animals in homes
- Adaptation of regulations
- “Dogs at work”
- Walking dogs for rent

Surveillance and Research

- Joint Cancer registry for Humans and Dogs
- Joint monitoring of antimicrobial resistance
- Joint monitoring of emerging zoonoses
- Project “Food Waste”

Flow of Process

1. Official mandate = clear responsibility
2. Find all relevant & committed stakeholders and make them owners of the process: Inform!
3. Mutually create and adopt a project description
4. Evaluate existing structures, processes, interfaces and boundaries, collect data and inform again!
5. Transform ideas into fields of activity, analyse and prioritise with stakeholders, inform again!
6. Elaborate action plan and detailed project sheets, implement these projects
7. Inform and communicate, organize follow-up

References

- Schweizerisches Gesundheits- und Konsumentenschutz 2012 / More Sicherheit für Mensch, Tier und Umwelt