

ONE HEALTH BRIEFING PAPER



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NATIONAL ONE HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS IN VIET NAM

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Key Points

1. The Government of Viet Nam has been **progressively adopting a One Health approach** to zoonoses/emerging infectious diseases (EIDs).
2. There is **no single overarching official One Health document** on assignment of responsibilities of ministries and other national stakeholders. A range of **responsibilities related to One Health are included in national legal/policy documents**, particularly in relation to avian influenza and other zoonoses/EIDs.
3. **One Health responsibilities of ministries and national bodies** are outlined in this Briefing Note and the accompanying report, based on official documents.
4. Several **national coordination mechanisms and partnerships** currently bring together national stakeholders on One Health-related issues including avian influenza; human influenza pandemics; smuggling, fake goods and trade fraud; climate change and the environment, anti-microbial resistance (AMR), One Health university networking and curriculum development, etc.
5. Efforts are underway to **consolidate and expand the One Health focus** of key national coordination mechanisms and the partnership.
6. Progressive efforts over time are expected to **continue to expand the application of a One Health approach** to priority zoonoses/EIDs, wildlife health, environmental health and other complex issues spanning multiple disciplines and health domains.

¹This brief and the accompanying detailed report Viet Nam national One Health stakeholders: Report and Briefing Paper on mapping of Government of Viet Nam agencies and other One Health stakeholders at the national level (December 2015) were developed by OHP Secretariat under the USAID-funded project "Strengthening Capacity for the implementation of One Health in Viet Nam".

National Adoption of a One Health approach

Over the past several years, the Government of Viet Nam has been progressively adopting a One Health approach to zoonotic emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) at the human-animal-environment interface and other complex health problems spanning multiple disciplines and health domains.

The application of an integrated national response to avian influenza in Viet Nam since 2004 greatly strengthened collaboration between human health, animal health and other related sectors, as reflected in the *National Integrated Operational Program on Avian and Human Influenza (OPI), 2006-2010* and the launch of the Partnership on Avian and Human Influenza (PAHI) in 2006. Leading up to and following the International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza (IMCAPI) hosted by the Government of Viet Nam in 2010, there has been a clear trend globally and in Viet Nam of moving towards a One Health approach to emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), building on the response to avian influenza and other diseases at the human-animal-environment interface.

Viet Nam's Integrated National Operational Programme on Avian Influenza, Pandemic Preparedness and Emerging Infectious Diseases (AIPED), 2011-2015 provides a clear indication of the Government's intention to progressively adopt a One Health

approach. Three successive National One Health Conferences have been organized by the Partnership on Avian and Human Influenza (PAHI) in 2010, 2013 and 2015. Key steps have been taken to institutionalize the collaboration on avian influenza and to broaden it to other priority zoonotic diseases, as reflected in Circular 16 issued in May 2013 by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) on collaboration between the human health and animal health sectors on zoonotic diseases, and in Viet Nam's role as one of two global lead countries for the Zoonotic Diseases Action Package (ZDAP) under the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSa).

There have also been initial steps to broaden the set of partners involved in One Health. Internal discussions are well advanced on the design of a new national One Health inter-ministerial coordination mechanism, building on the previous successful coordination of national inter-ministerial steering committees on avian influenza and human pandemic influenza chaired by the MARD and MOH Ministers respectively. In early 2016, the OHP Partnership will be re-launched as a One Health Partnership with an expanded focus and membership. Other cross-sectoral health issues such as antimicrobial resistance (AMR), foodborne zoonoses, and environmental health are increasingly being linked to One Health.

Identifying National One Health Stakeholders

As of now, there is no single overarching official policy or legal document in Viet Nam that sets out overall assignment of One Health responsibilities across sectoral ministries and other national stakeholders at the central level. As detailed in the accompanying report, this briefing paper identifies the assignment of One Health responsibilities, including for zoonoses/EIDs and for wider One Health/Ecohealth issues, based on existing official documents including laws, policies, decisions, guidelines, plans and other official documents

issued by the Government of Viet Nam and its constituent bodies.

These include the Law on Communicable Diseases (2007), the Veterinary Law (2015) and the Law on Environmental Protection (2014) issued by the National Assembly; official decisions/decrees on the assignment of functions, tasks, powers and organizational structures issued by the Government (for ministry-level agencies and general administrative departments) and by ministries and general administrative departments (for

their constituent departments, institutes and other bodies); joint circulars and agreements issued by more than one official body; strategies, five-year and annual plans and programmes, including the Integrated National Operational Program on Avian Influenza, Pandemic Preparedness and EIDs (AIPED),

2011-2015, the MOH-MARD Joint Circular No. 16 on zoonoses (2013); and official decisions to establish national coordinating mechanisms such as national inter-ministerial steering committees. A detailed list of these documents is provided in the accompanying report.

Zoonoses/EIDs responsibilities of Ministries and their constituent bodies

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) is responsible for state management of the veterinary system, animal disease prevention and control, livestock production (including breeding, rearing, slaughtering, trade and food safety regarding animals and animal products), and wildlife conservation, farming and trade.

- **The Department of Animal Health (DAH)** is responsible for state management of the veterinary system, for prevention, detection, diagnosis and control of diseases in animals (including livestock, wildlife and other animal species), for animal quarantine, for managing veterinary medicines, and for veterinary public health including zoonoses in animals, veterinary hygiene inspection and controls on animal slaughtering and the quality and safety of food of animal origin. DAH oversees the **National Centre for Veterinary Diagnosis (NCVD)** and seven **Regional Animal Health Offices (RAHOs)** throughout the country. DAH also cooperates with the **Veterinary Faculty of the Viet Nam University of Agriculture (VNUA)** to implement Applied Veterinary Epidemiology Training (AVET) courses.
- **The Department of Livestock Production (DLP)** is responsible for state management of animal husbandry/production, including developing, guiding and assessing the implementation of animal production plans, testing and certifying animal feeds, and developing regulations and guidelines for good animal production practices and biosafety in animal production for livestock and wildlife.
- **The Viet Nam Administration of Forestry (VNFOREST)** has overall responsibility

for state management in relation to rare and endangered wildlife species, including export, import, re-export and transit, on breeding, rearing, hunting and trade in rare and endangered wildlife species, in accordance with the law. **The Forest Protection Department (FPD)** under VNFOREST is responsible for wildlife conservation and management and for management of forest planning and development (which in principle includes management of forests in relation to aspects that could create new conditions for cross-species spill over and amplification of diseases in wildlife). **The CITES Management Authority** under VNFOREST represents the Government of Viet Nam in related to Viet Nam's rights and duties as a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), including identifying rare and endangered species; issuing permits and inspecting import, export and transit; guiding the handling of specimens confiscated under Vietnamese law and CITES; and providing training and professional guidance under the provisions of CITES and Vietnamese law.

- **The International Cooperation Department (ICD-MARD)** advises and assists the MARD Minister on international cooperation and integration, including in relation to Official Development Assistance (ODA) and foreign investment, international conferences and missions, and international committees, treaties, regional inter-governmental organizations, bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. ICD-MARD hosts the **Secretariat Office for the Viet Nam One Health Partnership for Zoonoses (OHP)**.

- **The National Institute for Veterinary Research (NIVR)** conducts research, technology transfer, postgraduate education, international cooperation and inputs into national policies, plans and standards on animal health. Research fields include animal disease epidemiology, immunology, molecular biology, pathology, diagnostic techniques, veterinary hygiene, food safety and environmental protection, vaccines, and developing processes and solutions to prevent and treat disease.
- **The National Institute for Animal Husbandry (NIAH)** conducts scientific research, technology transfer, maintenance of breeds, information, postgraduate education, international cooperation, consultancy and services on animal husbandry/livestock production, including research on physiology, biochemistry, reproduction and habits of animals, measures to protect the health of animals, the impact of livestock production on the environment and climate change, and breeding and rearing facilities and regulations for bio-safety and food safety and hygiene of animal products.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) is responsible for state management of health, including preventive medicine, medical examination and treatment, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, and food safety and hygiene. MOH has responsibility for surveillance, detection, prevention and control of, for medical examination and treatment, for medical equipment and pharmaceuticals including national reserves and emergency stockpiles, for training of health personnel, for scientific and technological research, and for international cooperation in the health sector.

- **The General Department of Preventive Medicine (GDPM)** is responsible for state management functions regarding the prevention and control of EIDs, including zoonoses and diseases of unknown cause. Specific responsibilities include prevention and control (including early detection, testing and announcement of epidemic outbreaks/cessation, and directing and organizing prevention and control measures), school health activities, quarantine and border gates, and public

communications. GDPM oversees the **Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)** and **Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)**.

- **The Medical Services Administration (MSA)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to medical examination and treatment of zoonoses/EIDs, including treatment standards and guidelines, evaluation of new treatment methods, use of pharmaceuticals, safety and effectiveness of treatment, and pricing of medical services.
- **The Department of Planning and Finance (DPF-MOH)** is responsible for state management functions on logistical aspects of zoonoses/EIDs, including national reserves and stockpiles, and is health sector focal point for ODA and NGO assistance.
- **The Department of Emulation and Communications (DEC-MOH)** is responsible for communications and health education aspects of the health sector response to zoonoses/EIDs, including working with the press and publishers.
- **The Viet Nam Health Environment Management Agency (VIHEMA)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to environmental health and hygiene and environmental protection in medical activities.
- **The Viet Nam Food Administration (VFA)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to food safety within the responsibility of MOH.
- **The International Cooperation Department (MOH-ICD)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to international cooperation and international relations aspects of MOH's response to zoonoses/EIDs.
- **The Drug Administration of Viet Nam (DAV)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to the pharmaceutical sector, including pharmaceuticals, vaccines, medical biologicals and medicinal materials used in the response to zoonoses/EIDs.
- **The Department of Science and Training (DST-MOH)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to

scientific research, technology development and training of human resources in the field of health care in the country.

- **The National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE)** carries out research on epidemiology, medical microbiology, immunology and molecular biology; human vaccines and biomedical products; directing some national health programs; advice and recommendations on strategic and preventive medicine measures for common, dangerous and emerging diseases; directing specialized activities, postgraduate education; and building a preventive medicine network throughout the country. NIHE is one of four regional institutes of hygiene and epidemiology in Viet Nam, and has specific responsibilities related to twenty-seven provinces in the northern half of Viet Nam.
- **The Centre for Health Education and Communications (CHEC)** carries out health education and communications, scientific and applied research, development of health promotion materials, training and mentoring, and international cooperation related to the field of health education and communications for zoonoses/EIDs.
- **The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE)** is responsible for state management functions regarding land, water resources, minerals and geology, the environment, hydrometeorology, climate change, survey and cartography, and integrated and unified management of sea areas and islands. MONRE is responsible for prevention and control of environmental pollution, for biodiversity and for the health of the environment.
- **The Viet Nam Environment Administration (VEA)** is responsible for state management functions regarding the environment, including: prevention and control of pollution and environmental degradation; waste management including hazardous wastes; environmental rehabilitation, biodiversity, environmental health; soil, water and air quality; handling and disposal of chemical residues, waste and chemical containers; and environmental protection of watersheds, seas, coastal areas and islands. The Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA) provides advice and assistance to the VEA

Director-General on state management and enforcement functions on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity natural resources. The Department of Waste Management & Environmental Amelioration (DWMEA) provides advice and assistance to the VEA Director-General on state management functions on waste management, environmental enhancement, environmental protection of river basins and coastal zones and handling establishments causing environmental pollution.

- **The Department of Meteorology, Hydrology and Climate Change (DMHCC)** is responsible for state management functions in relation to meteorology, climate change and policies for protecting the ozone layer.
- **The Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT)** is responsible for state management functions related to market management and food safety.
- **The Market Surveillance Agency (MSA-MOIT)** advises and assists the Minister of MOIT on state management and enforcement tasks for inspecting and controlling markets and combating violations of the law, including detection and confiscation of smuggled animal products posing a risk of contributing to the spread of zoonoses/EIDs.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is responsible for state management functions related to the education system at all levels, including the approval of disciplines, curricula and assessment requirements (including for education and training to build an effective One Health workforce), and is responsible for education and awareness raising initiatives aimed at students, teachers and other staff, for example in response to specific zoonoses/EID threats or other related issues.

The Ministry of Information and Communications (MOIC) is responsible to direct mass media agencies to regularly supply information and conduct communication on prevention and control of zoonoses/EIDs and to integrate programmes on prevention and control of infectious diseases into other information and communication programs.

The Ministry of Transport (MOT) is responsible for for state management functions related to to road, rail, inland waterways, maritime

and aviation transportation in the country, including prevention and control activities for zoonoses/EIDs within the transport sector.

The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) and the People's Public Security Forces are responsible for preventing, detecting, stopping and combating crimes and legal and administrative violations, including in relation to social order and stability in the case of serious zoonoses/EIDs emergencies, and environmental sanitation.

- **The Environmental Police** are a force under the People's Public Security Forces with responsibility for preventing, detecting, stopping and combating crimes and legal and administrative violations related to the environment and natural resources and environmental aspects of food safety (including regarding zoonoses/EIDs such as disposing of diseased or culled animal carcasses).

The Ministry of Finance (MOF) is responsible (together with MPI) to coordinate with and support MOH to propose Government investment funding for EIDs prevention and control.

The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is responsible for state management functions in relation to incorporating zoonoses/EIDs in national socio-economic development, state budget and ODA investment plans, and in mobilizing and coordinating overall state management of ODA funds.

The Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) is responsible for state management functions regarding science and technology, including developing and directing the implementation of strategies and plans for overall orientation of scientific research related to the development of standards for the veterinary/animal health system, specific

priority diseases, livestock production, and medicine, pharmaceuticals and health care.

The Ministry of National Defence (MOD) is the advisory organ for the Party and State on national defence and military guidelines and duties, and is responsible for state management functions on national defence and building, managing and commanding the Viet Nam People's Army, the Militia and Self-Defence Forces. MOD is responsible to coordinate with MOH, MARD and other agencies on infectious diseases prevention.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is responsible for state management functions on foreign affairs, including research and strategic forecasting on the international situation and international relations (e.g. instructing Viet Nam's overseas representative offices to gather information on zoonoses/EIDs that could pose a threat to Viet Nam); on consular affairs (e.g. providing information about zoonoses/EIDs, response measures and specific plans or actions regarding foreign citizens in Viet Nam); and on international treaties and agreements (e.g. coordinating with MOH, MARD and other agencies on signing and implementation of international treaties and agreements on zoonoses/EIDs).

The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) is responsible, in coordination with MOH and concerned agencies, to support MOET regarding education about prevention and control of infectious diseases.

The Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MOCST) is responsible for proposing recognition of national tourism areas, national attractions and national tours, and issuing regulations on management of tourist areas (in principle, taking into account disease spill over risks from wildlife into livestock and humans).

Zoonoses/EIDs responsibilities of other national agencies

The Fatherland Front and its members build national unity, conduct communications and mobilize people to participate in national strategies and key issues facing the nation, including prevention and control of zoonoses/EIDs. Fatherland Front members, including the **Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU)**, the

Viet Nam Farmer's Federation (VFF), the **Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union**, and the **Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA)**, carry out this role with their respective chapters and associations.

The Viet Nam Red Cross participates in

community mobilisation and communications and supporting preparedness planning for public health emergencies including zoonoses/EIDs.

National professional and industry associations such as the **Animal Husbandry Association of Viet Nam (AHAV)**, the **Large Livestock Producers' Association**, the **Poultry Producers' Association**, the **Vietnam Veterinary Association**, the **Viet Nam Public Health Association (VPHA)**, and the **Viet Nam Animal Feed Association (VAFA)** represent and build awareness and

capacity of their members on zoonoses/EIDs prevention and control and related issues.

Key state media organs, including Viet Nam Television (VTV), Radio Voice of Viet Nam (VOV), the **Viet Nam News Agency (VNA)** and **Nhan Dan (People) Newspaper**, as well as other national general and sectoral media agencies are responsible for ensuring timely and accurate information on zoonoses/EIDs and related issues to the Vietnamese public, based on information from competent authorities and in accordance with Vietnamese law.

Broader One Health/Ecohealth Issues

Anti-microbial resistance (AMR): MOH is responsible in relation to human health, including monitoring AMR in health care facilities and promoting rational and prudent use of antibiotics. Agencies of MOH with particular responsibility include MSA, DAV, Viet Nam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control (VAAC), GDPM, VFA, the MOH Inspectorate, DPF-MOH, the Health Insurance Department, VIHEMA, DST-MOH and DEC. MARD, and in particular DAH and DLP, is responsible for animal feeds, additives and antibiotics in relation to livestock production, veterinary safety, and food hygiene and safety of animal products.

Food safety: MARD responsibilities include the quality and safety of domestic, imported and exported agricultural (including animal and plant), forestry, fishery and salt products. Within MARD, DAH inspects animals and animal products, and DLP addresses livestock production practices. MOH responsibilities, particularly those of VFA, include production, processing, storage, transportation, export, import and sales for food, food additives, processing elements, bottled drinks, dietary supplements, fortified foods, tools, packaging materials and containers. MOIT is responsible for the food industry and processing and consumer industries, and managing markets. MSA-MOIT is responsible for inspection and control of markets and combating violations of the law. MOET is responsible for school education and school catering.

MPS, in particular the Environmental Police, is responsible for addressing crimes and legal and administrative violations. MOST coordinates with other concerned ministries and agencies on certification and national standards as well as scientific research.

Ecosystem health, environmental protection and environmental sanitation: MONRE, particularly VEA and DWMEA, is responsible for assessment; pollution prevention, control and remediation; indicators; fines and penalties and handling seriously polluting industries; and war legacy contamination. MARD, and its agencies including DLP, FPD and others, is responsible for animal husbandry, cultivation, forestry, fisheries and salt production. MOH, in particular VIHEMA, is responsible, and coordinates with MONRE and the Ministry of Construction, for environmental protection in health activities. MOIT is responsible for the industry and trade sector. MOT is responsible for impact assessment and implementation of transport strategies, plans and projects. MPS, particularly the Environmental Police, is responsible for crimes and legal and administrative violations. MOST is responsible, in collaboration with other ministries and agencies, for biotechnology in environmental protection. MOCST is responsible regarding culture, family, fitness, sports and tourism.

Other cross-cutting areas related to One Health include biodiversity, biosecurity, climate change, and vector-borne disease.

Coordination Mechanisms

The National Steering Committee for Avian Influenza Prevention and Control (NSCAI) is chaired by the Minister of MARD and brings together nine ministries and two departments of MARD and MOH. **The National Steering Committee for Human Influenza Pandemics Prevention and Control (NSCHP)** is chaired by the Minister of MOH, and brings together fourteen ministries, the VNRC and five departments and agencies within MOH. It is expected that these two committees may be merged in future, creating an overall national One Health/EIDs coordination mechanism.

The health sector **Steering Committee for Prevention and Control of Dangerous and Emerging Diseases** brings together twenty-one representatives of departments, agencies and other units within MOH.

The Partnership on Avian and Human Influenza (PAHI) brings together national

and international partners; it will be re-launched within 2016 as the Viet Nam One Health Partnership for Zoonoses (OHP). The Partnership's **One Health Communication Network (OHCN)** brings together partners working on One Health communications.

The **Viet Nam One Health University Network (VOHUN)** brings together seventeen universities/faculties working on One Health curriculum development and research.

Other committees related to zoonoses/EIDs and broader aspects of One Health/Ecohealth include the **National Steering Committee for Prevention and Control of Smuggling, Fake Goods and Trade Fraud**, the **Steering Committee for Drug Resistance**, the **Central Steering Committee for Food Safety and Hygiene**, and the **National Committee for Climate Change**.

For more information, please see: *Viet Nam National One Health Stakeholders: Report and Briefing Paper on mapping of Government of Viet Nam agencies and other One Health stakeholders at the national level, December 2015*. Information on Vietnamese agencies' cooperation with international partners, is available in the *Viet Nam Directory of One Health Projects and Programmes, July 2015* and at <http://onehealth.org.vn/project/>

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