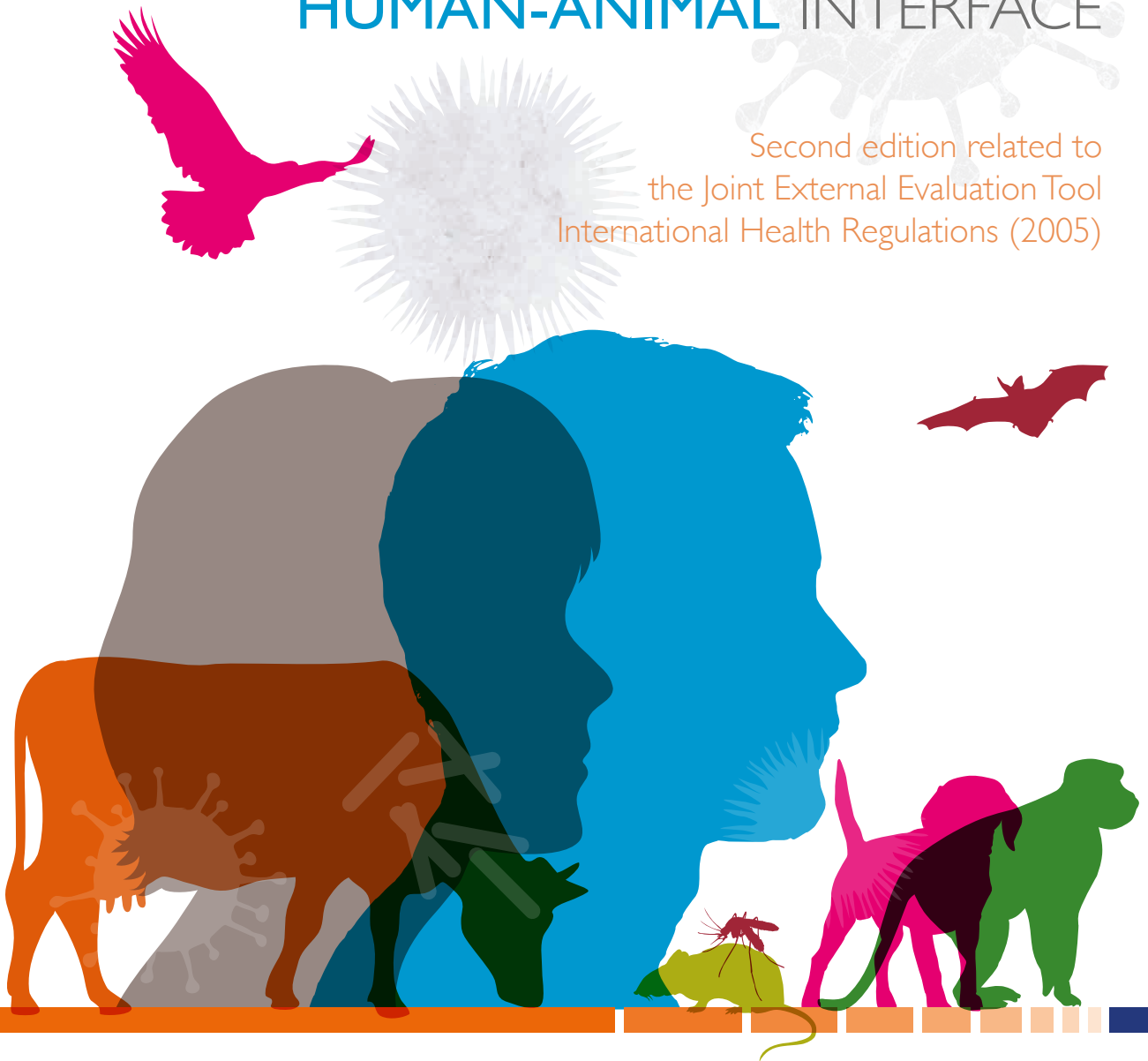


# HANDBOOK

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

Second edition related to  
the Joint External Evaluation Tool  
International Health Regulations (2005)





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

Handbook for the assessment of capacities at the human–animal interface, second edition  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTEXT .....	5
OBJECTIVE OF THE HANDBOOK .....	6
CONTENT OF THE HANDBOOK .....	6
HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK .....	8
TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TECHNICAL AREAS IN THE JEET AND THE CRITICAL CAPACITIES CARDS IN THE OIE PATHWAY TOOLS .....	10
QUESTIONS IN THE JOINT EXTERNAL EVALUATION TOOL AND ASSOCIATED CRITICAL COMPETENCIES IN THE PVS REPORTS	
<b>PREVENT 1: NATIONAL LEGISLATION, POLICY AND FINANCING .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PREVENT 2: IHR COORDINATION, COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PREVENT 3: ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR) .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PREVENT 4: ZOO NOTIC DISEASES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PREVENT 5: FOOD SAVETY .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PREVENT 6: BIOSAFETY AND BIOSECURITY .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PREVENT 7: IMMUNIZATION .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>DETECT 1: NATIONAL LABORATORY SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>DETECT 2: REAL TIME SURVEILLANCE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>DETECT 3: REPORTING .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>DETECT 4: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>RESPONSE 1: PREPAREDNESS .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>RESPONSE 2: EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>RESPONSE 3: LINKING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SECURITY AUTHORITIES .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>RESPONSE 5: RISK COMMUNICATION .....</b>	<b>37</b>
ANNEX 1. Key obligations associated with the IHR (2005) for which the veterinary services contribute .....	40
ANNEX 2. List of PVS Critical Competencies to be considered in the IHR Monitoring Framework .....	41
ANNEX 3. Description of the OIE PVS Pathway .....	42



## CONTEXT

With the coming into force of the revised International Health Regulations (IHR (2005)), all States Parties<sup>1</sup> 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)<sup>2</sup>, and to develop a plan of action to ensure that these capacities be present and functioning throughout their territories.

*"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

Annex I of the IHR (2005) provides a list of core capacities – 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 – central, intermediate and 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 assessment, WHO and partners have developed an external evaluation (Joint External Evaluation, JEE) process and a tool (the JEET<sup>3</sup>). The first stage of the evaluation is a survey completed by the country using self-reported data for the various indicators on the JEET. A joint external evaluation team comprised of national and international subject matter experts then visit the country for facilitated in-depth discussions. As a result a draft report identifies status levels for a set of indicators, as well as an analysis of the country's capabilities, gaps, opportunities and challenges.

When it comes to the specific contribution from Veterinary Authorities in reaching the objectives of the IHR (2005), the OIE's Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway assesses the performance of the national Veterinary Services and their compliance with OIE international standards on the quality of Veterinary Services. All aspects relevant to the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the quality of Veterinary Services, as per OIE definition<sup>4</sup>, are reviewed by using the PVS Pathway tools. The PVS Expert Team collects and analyses baseline information against 47 Critical Competencies, each of which are described in a specific card (Critical Competency Card). More details on PVS Pathway tools can be found in Annex 3.

PVS Pathway reports can greatly facilitate the work of the JEE, both for the self-review and for the evaluation by the JEE external team, by providing concrete information regarding the national Veterinary Services' contribution to specific core capacities defined in the IHR (2005). This input may be obvious for some specific hazards (zoonoses, food safety, antimicrobial resistance). However there are other key areas that should also be considered for a more thorough and holistic review of strengths and gaps. This Handbook<sup>5</sup> has been developed to facilitate this exercise; it explains the synergies and complementarities between the two the JEE and the OIE PVS Pathway, with specific information including on how to use the data contained in a PVS Evaluation report to assist in the implementation of the JEE.

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/](http://www.who.int/ihr/9789241596664/en/)

3 - [www.who.int/ihr/publications/WHO\\_HSE\\_GCR\\_2016\\_2/en/](http://www.who.int/ihr/publications/WHO_HSE_GCR_2016_2/en/)

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

- Veterinary Authority means the governmental authority, comprising veterinarian, 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 OIE 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 Code in the territory. The veterinary Services are under the overall control and direction of the Veterinary Authority. Private sector organisations, veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals are normally accredited or approved by the Veterinary Authority to deliver the delegated functions.

5 - This document is the version 2 of the Handbook for the Assessment of Capacities at the Human-Animal Interface. Version 1 was associated with the IHR questionnaire used by IHR National Focal Points for their annual report to the WHA. This questionnaire is not used anymore since 2016.

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