

# INVOLVEMENT OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE SECTOR IN ONE HEALTH NETWORKS AND COVID-19 RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

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## ABSTRACT

One Health (OH) is an approach to building global health security through systems thinking about the ties between human, animal, and ecosystem health. Interdisciplinary collaborations are central to OH and the increasing engagement of social science disciplines in OH initiatives is transforming the approach. An understanding of interactions between the social science and traditional OH sectors can inform training and capacity building. As part of a large cross-sectional study featuring a global online questionnaire, we conducted a subanalysis focusing on the 79/1050 respondents (7.5%) who self-affiliated with the social sciences sector. Sixty (76.0%) of the 79 indicated that they were part of a One Health network (OHN), and 60 (76.0%) of the 79 were involved in COVID-19 response activities. Being part of an OHN was positively associated with self-reported involvement in COVID-19 response activities (odds ratio 4.5, 95% confidence interval: 1.5-13.9). Receiving OHN communications and attending webinars were mentioned. The most common COVID-19 response activities were research and education. The results also provided a snapshot of social scientists engaged in OH across WHO regions, types of organization (*e.g.*, academic, governmental), and response level (*e.g.*, local, international). Barriers to participation in COVID-19 response included lack of financial support or path for involvement; facilitators were personal and organizational interest. Although the number of respondents from the social sciences was limited, we found participation in an OHN was significantly associated with involvement in the COVID-19 response. These results highlight the role of OHNs and others to foster collaborative engagement with social science professionals as part of OH capacity building. This work was supported by the One Health Commission and the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme.

Keywords: interdisciplinary, One Health, public health, ecosystem, pandemic

Themes: Sociology