



EXPLORING THE WHYS AND THE HOWS OF EPIDEMIOLOGY

Integrating social sciences with veterinary research for better understanding and action towards improved animal health in the Global South

WELCOME!

NOVEMBER 20, 2018. 1200-1700

Picture by Erika Chenais

HALF DAY SEMINAR

Come and join us for this open seminar and participate in the discussions for better integration of social sciences into epidemiology.

More information on registration and program on next page...

VENUE

Swedish University of
Agricultural Sciences (SLU)
Uppsala

Ulls hus, Lecture hall W
Almas Allé 8, 756 51 Uppsala



Picture by Erika Chenais

ABOUT THIS SEMINAR

This seminar will focus on how veterinary epidemiology and social science can cooperate for increased understanding of aspects other than factual knowledge that affect decisions relating to disease control.

Controlling animal diseases is critical for reducing rural poverty and increasing household livelihood resilience in many contexts. For many recurring diseases threatening the livelihoods of poor people, the epidemiology is well known. Despite this, effective control is not achieved. It is clear that veterinary or medical knowledge alone is not sufficient to achieve disease control and that understanding local sociocultural, economic and political dimensions is equally important. Integration of social sciences into epidemiology has so far been limited and social science competence also remains at the periphery of disease outbreak management.

The importance of community involvement, and the need for full integration of social sciences in disease control was painfully evident in the recent Ebola epidemic in West Africa. The understanding of how human behaviour drove transmission of the disease, achieved through a multi-disciplinary, biosocial, bottom-up and community-centred approach and drawing on social science competence, was critical when the epidemic was eventually brought under control. The Ebola outbreak will be used as an example during the seminar.



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REGISTRATION

If you want to have a lunch sandwich and coffee, please register before November 9 by visiting the [website of the event here](http://www.siani.se) or visit www.siani.se



Swedish University
of Agricultural Sciences



NATIONAL
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PROGRAM

12.00 Lunch outside Lecture hall W

13.00-16.30 Presentations

- Klara Fischer, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU): *Where is the participation in participatory epidemiology? How engagement with social science could lead to improved understanding of situated knowledges on animal disease*
- Orla Shortall, The James Hutton Institute: *The politics of epidemiological knowledge: geographies of acceptance and resistance of a bovine disease eradication scheme in Scotland.*
- Erika Chenais, The Swedish National Veterinary Institute (SVA): *Increasing the local relevance of epidemiological research: situated knowledge of cattle disease amongst Basongora pastoralists in Uganda*
- Susanna Sternberg Lewerin, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU): *Veterinary social science: on Ugandan cattle farmers' disease prevention practices*
- Karl Ståhl, The Swedish National Veterinary Institute (SVA): *Improved disease control by community participation - the case of African swine fever in northern Uganda*
- Paul Richards, Wageningen University: *Local understanding of Ebola - some lessons from West Africa*
- Panel discussion with Paul Richards, Orla Shortall, Susanna Sternberg Lewerin and Karl Ståhl. Moderated by Klara Fischer

16.30 Closure with coffee

Short bios of speakers and abstracts of presentations

Klara Fischer



Klara Fischer is a researcher in Rural Development at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Klara's research concerns the interaction between policies and technologies of development and farmers practices. In cooperation with veterinary researchers Klara has e.g. studied Basongora pastoralists' local priorities, perceptions and practices regarding cattle disease in Uganda and how these relate to veterinary medical

knowledge and policy priorities on the same, and how Swedish farmers' interactions with their animals, veterinarians and the wider policy environment affect their practices and thoughts on antibiotic use and resistance in dairy farming

Where is the participation in participatory epidemiology? How engagement with social science could lead to improved understanding of situated knowledges on animal disease

Participatory epidemiology (PE) has been suggested as a particularly suitable research method in veterinary research and epidemiology to study epidemiology and social impacts of diseases in the Global South. I came across the concept of PE when I first started working with veterinary researchers. Coming from rural development studies I was well familiar with participatory methodology and also the critique that had emerged of the widespread use of participatory methods for gaining quick access to data in rural contexts in the Global South. While PE has

emerged from participatory methodology I discovered that this critique, and the associated lessons about power and participation, was largely invisible in the PE field. Also, social science engagement in PE to date is virtually non-existent. In recent research projects I have worked with veterinary researchers and epidemiologists to draw lessons from the social sciences and to increase the sensitivity to local knowledges and practices in PE, which I argue could increase its potential as an important tool in disease impact assessment and control.

Orla Shortall



Orla Shortall is an agricultural sociologist at the James Hutton Institute in Aberdeen. Orla has a multidisciplinary social science background: her work draws on agricultural sociology, science and technology studies and agricultural bioethics. Orla's main research interest could be described as the philosophy of agriculture: what agriculture is for, why we value it

and how we can understand change within agriculture. Orla currently holds a three year postdoctoral fellowship from the British Academy exploring farmer, stakeholder and public views on the future of indoor and pasture based systems in the UK and Ireland entitled "Cows eat grass, don't they?" www.docowseatgrass.org. Orla is part of the Scottish government's Centre for Expertise on Animal Disease Outbreaks (EPIC) where her work explores farmers experiences of a national cattle disease eradication scheme and framings of risk in avian influenza outbreaks.

The politics of epidemiological knowledge: geographies of acceptance and resistance of a bovine disease eradication scheme in Scotland

I'll talk about recent work we did on farmers' views of a national disease eradication scheme in Scotland.

Some farmers were reluctant to accept the scientific framing of their animals as diseased and problematic if they had an emotional connection with the animal or the animal looked healthy and productive.

There was also acceptance and resistance to the scheme based on the farmers' geographical location and the kind of markets they were embedded within.

We used the concept of biosecurity citizenship to analyse the political and personal webs that the epidemiological knowledge was being circulated within.

Erika Chenais



Erika Chenais is a doctor in veterinary medicine and an epidemiologist at the Swedish National Veterinary Institute.

Erika's research interests are epizootic diseases and disease ecology, ie how animal diseases impact humans, and how humans impact disease epidemiology.

Erika's research mainly concerns animal diseases affecting poor people in the global south, in particular African swine fever.

Increasing the local relevance of epidemiological research: Situated knowledge of cattle disease among Basongora pastoralists in Uganda

I'll talk about a recent study on pastoralists in Uganda, where we examined local priorities, perceptions and practices regarding cattle disease, in order to improve outreach and disease control and advisory work in such contexts.

Paying attention to situated knowledge and particular context-specific

issues proved to be of special relevance for local understanding and experiences with disease.

The results revealed the importance of moving research and advice beyond curing 'knowledge-gaps' and creating different ways of understanding disease.

Short bios of speakers and abstracts of presentations

Susanna Sternberg Lewerin



Susanna Sternberg Lewerin, professor in Epizootiology and Disease Control at SLU, is a Veterinarian with a PhD in bacteriology, and a postgraduate degree in veterinary epidemiology. She is a member of the European College of Veterinary Public Health. Her research focuses on the prevention and control of contagious animal diseases, combining microbiology and epidemiology and quantitative as well as qualitative methods.

Veterinary social science: on Ugandan cattle farmers' disease prevention practices

This talk describes a study on bovine infectious diseases in Western Uganda, where farmers' views and practices were explored in various ways.

Practically feasible ways to prevent disease introduction and spread among cattle herds were investigated in interviews and focus group studies.

Barriers to disease control as well as opportunities for improvement were discussed and assessed by the farmers themselves.

Some found the suggested disease prevention measures easier than expected while others were reluctant to try due to actual as well as perceived barriers.



Karl Ståhl



Karl Ståhl is a veterinary epidemiologist with a PhD in veterinary virology working at the Department of disease control and epidemiology at the National Veterinary Institute (SVA). His main research interests relate to the epidemiology of exotic infectious diseases of animals with particular focus on African swine fever. KS has ongoing research projects on African swine fever in Uganda since 2010.

Improved disease control by community participation - the case of African swine fever in northern Uganda

In this talk I intend to summarize research activities related to African swine fever carried out in Northern Uganda during the last 7-8 years.

The disease is constantly present in this region affecting livelihoods of rural smallholder farmers and constraining a potential development of the pig sector.

We understand the epidemiology of the disease in the local context rather well, and in theory know which measures would be needed to reduce the impact. Also, the

smallholders are aware of the impact of the disease and have a basic understanding of the epidemiology and possible means of control and prevention. Still no action is taken, and the disease continues to spread.

It is thus becoming evident that for efficient control of diseases such as African swine fever, sociocultural and economic dimensions are as important as veterinary knowledge and that any disease control strategy needs to take into account the local context.

Paul Richards



Paul Richards is Emeritus Professor of Technology and Agrarian Development, Wageningen University. He has carried out research for over 45 years in agrarian communities in West Africa.

Recent books include Ebola: how a people's science helped end an epidemic (Zed Books 2016), Mary Douglas: understanding social thought and conflict (with Perri 6, Berghahn 2017), and Institutions and agrarian development: a new approach to West Africa (with Erwin Bulte and Maarten Voors, Palgrave 2018)

Local understanding of Ebola - some lessons from West Africa

A key to Ebola control is how quickly affected populations come to an understanding of infection risks, and introduce behavioural modifications into care for the sick, and into patterns of social interaction more generally.

Ebola is a zoonotic disease. The international response paid too much attention to risks posed by hunting. Other human-animal interactions might have provided more relevant frameworks for learning about infection risks. Goat Plague (PPR), in particular, provides lessons readily to hand. It is a major problem in rural West Africa, and uncannily mimics some of the epidemiological characteristics of Ebola,

including need for strict quarantine. Villagers depend on goats, have a concern for goat health, and quickly saw the relevance of the comparison. But little if any use was made of this comparison as a framework for health messaging about Ebola.

The paper will argue that Ebola response might have benefitted from greater engagement with perspectives linking veterinary epidemiology and social knowledge of farming systems.