

Bridge walk

a series of lectures on bridging the gap between different faculties and disciplines

Date & Time: Wednesday 06.11.2024 | 17:00 – 18:15

Organizers: Mohammad Khair Nahhas & Fares Damien

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Value-added transdisciplinary One Health research and problem solving

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Abstract

One Health addresses societal problems through systemic approaches in human – environment systems. Our first experience was working on the health of mobile pastoralists in Chad. Providing better healthcare for mobile pastoralists and their animals, which are their essential livelihood, is impossible without involving local communities, animal health officers, human health care providers and authorities in a dialogue on contextual priorities. These experiences were foundational for the recognition that participatory processes are a core component of action research. Bringing together community representatives, including women, men, and young people, along with authorities and service providers, made it necessary for scientists to modify their role and reflect on their positionality. From considering ourselves in the first place as resource persons with systemic knowledge, we subsequently became brokers between the different actors to create the minimal trust necessary for a frank dialogue, while considering power imbalances. In this way, we entered into transdisciplinary participatory research of co-production of transformational knowledge between academic and practical knowledge.

Biosketch

Prof. Dr. Jakob Zinsstag is a veterinarian with a PhD in tropical animal health. He spent eight years in West Africa at the International Trypanotolerance Centre in The Gambia and four years as the director of the Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques in Côte d'Ivoire. Since 1998 he heads a research group on human and animal health at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. Since 2011 he has been deputy head of department of Epidemiology and Public Health at Swiss TPH. He focuses on the control of zoonoses in developing countries and the provision of health care to mobile pastoralists using a One Health approach. He is past president of the International Association for Ecology and Health and former president of the scientific board of the Transdisciplinary network of the Swiss Academies.