

ENVIRONMENTAL, ANIMAL AND HUMAN HEALTH: THE THREE-BRAIDED CORD FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARIAN

461ST INAUGURAL LECTURE (2018/2019 Session) Delivered by

Olanike K. Adeyemo, *FCVSN, FAAS, FAS, FTWAS*
Professor of Aquatic Epidemiology & Toxicology
Department of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Human activities involving urbanization, agricultural development, overuse of fertilizers, inadequate management of land use and waste disposal can affect environmental quality (terrestrial and aquatic). Environmental pollution from domestic and industrial sources is a major problem in Africa. In Nigeria, aquatic systems are used as receptacle of wastes while the relatively few environmental and conservation laws are largely ignored on account of non-existent monitoring and compliance enforcement.

One Health is an innovative approach to research, in this case, environmental health research. This approach helps to break down barriers between specialties and sectors to identify and effectively link the many serious challenges to the health of people, domestic animals, and wildlife to the integrity of the environment. Within a continually shrinking global world where borders are only imaginary (a case in point being the Ebola outbreak and the manner of spread from developing to developed world); an understanding of the epidemiology of diseases at the environment-livestock-wildlife-human interface is very beneficial to global public health and security.

One Health approach is especially important in Africa since most of the emerging and re-emerging diseases have been linked to wildlife and subsequently to the African continent. Embracing “One Health” approach, thereby establishing a more holistic methodology to preventing epidemic diseases and maintaining environmental health for the benefit of people, domesticated and wild animals and the ecosystem that supports us all is advocated and justified in the inaugural lecture.

The lecture traversed findings from extensive research on aquatic and wildlife epidemiology, toxicology, food safety and global public health showing the interdependency of environmental, domestic animal, wildlife and human health.