RANEMA: a D-L Tool for Basic Epidemiology

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Since 2004, the *Ecole vétérinaire d'Alfort* (EVA) has worked in partnership with the *Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement* (CIRAD) to develop a distance learning course in basic epidemiology for animal diseases. The current method is based largely on a handbook on veterinary epidemiology (Toma B. *et al*. Applied Veterinary Epidemiology and the Control of Disease in Population. Maisons-Alfort, AEEMA. 1999) which was adapted to suit computer assisted learning (CAL) sessions. The contents of RANEMA are structured around a simple scenario: The trainee is a veterinarian working for the Veterinary Service of a virtual country, "Ranema". To carry out his professional duties, he must refresh his knowledge in epidemiology through a given set of activities. The course is divided into chapters that follow the logical framework of the book. Students can access the material, in French or in English, through an online subscription or through a CD ROM. Although the CD ROM and the book are stand alone tools, Cirad can provide ongoing technical support to organisations planning trainings in epidemiology to maximize the potential of the material. Internet access is required only to submit completed exercises for evaluation by a tutor. The current version of RANEMA can be adapted easily to suit various linguistic, contextual and didactic requirements. New courses also will be developed as by-products as RANEMA that will address the specific needs of different audiences, e.g. basic statistics, risk analysis, use of software for epidemiologists, etc.