

Veterinary Para-Professionals and Mutual recognition Agreements: The Case of EAC

*Paper presented at the OIE Regional Conference on the Role of Veterinary Para-Professionals (VPP) in Africa
'Linking Veterinary Para-professionals and Veterinarians*

Pretoria (Gauteng) South Africa

13th to 15th October, 2015

Timothy E.O Wesonga

Senior Livestock and Fisheries officer

Livestock and Fisheries Division

Agriculture and Food Security Department

EAC Secretariat, ARUSHA , TANZANIA

Email: twesonga@eachq.org

Introduction: Presentation Plan

Integration, the Genesis of the EAC MRA
Initiative to improve on trade in Services the
EAC

- The EAC MRA concept
- VPP regulatory framework and differences between states – Laws governing VPPs
- Forms of MRA

Cont'd

- MRA Negotiations issues
- What is a VPP?
- VPP Practice
- Status of VPPs in EAC
- New registration of VPPs
- VPP training in EAC
- Accreditation Process for tertiary level courses for recognition of VPP qualifications
- Training Institutions offering courses

Cont'd

- Recognized courses
- Minimum Academic Requirements for Veterinary Services MRA
- Categories of VPP in EAC
- Registration of Para-Veterinary professionals
- Summary of SWOT in Considering MRA in Veterinary Services within the EAC- VPP focused
- Recommendations
- Acknowledgment

Introduction to EAC



Deepening and widening Cooperation

- EAC is a regional inter-governmental organization of the five Partner States of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania
- **MISSION:** *To widen and deepen economic, political, social and cultural integration in order to improve the quality of life of the people of East Africa through increased competitiveness, value added production and investment*

EAC integration process/stages as established by the EAC Treaty

EAC Milestones



Introduction

- In article 104 the Treaty commits Partner States to adopt measures to achieve the free movement of persons , labor and services and ensure the enjoyment of the right of establishment and residence of their citizens within the Community
- **Article 5.2 (e) states that Partner agree: *‘to remove measures that restrict movement of services and service suppliers , and harmonise standards to ensure acceptability of services traded’***

EAC Common Market Protocol

- **Article 5.3(a) states that, in order to facilitate the implementation of the CMP, they will *'cooperate to harmonise and mutually recognize academic and professional qualifications***
- **Article 11 of the CMP -On Harmonization and Mutual Recognition of Academic and Professional qualifications:**
 - a) Mutually recognise the academic and professional qualifications granted , experience obtained, requirements met, licences or certifications granted, in the Partner States**
 - b) Harmonise their curricula , examination , standards , certification and accreditation of educational training institutions**

What is meant by Mutual Recognition ?

- Trade of regulated services across borders brings the issue of market access for foreign suppliers
- Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) are a way of allowing foreign service suppliers to provide their services into regulated markets without the need for duplicate authorization processes in both the supplier's home country and destination market (host country)

Cont'd

- The word 'mutual' implies that these arrangements are reciprocal, although that does not necessarily mean that the requirements on either side are identical.
- The word 'recognition' does not always imply full authorization in the importing country, it may simply mean that there is recognition of the level of testing or certification already carried out in the exporting country which may then be supplemented in the host state

Forms of MRAs

Harmonizing Standards

- A **common standards** in which underlying educational curricula and training regimes are identical – Harmonised stds are time consuming and politically difficult to negotiate

Competency based

- Seek to recognize that regional agreements can be based on the recognition of different qualification which are all based on the same underlying competences

Cont'd

Managed MRAs

- Recognise that although basic underlying competences are largely shared, there are essential elements of practice which are local
- Therefore regulatory authorities in the host country impose some **'compensatory measures'**

Structures of MRA – Seven key issues

Governance

- who is responsible for authorization and registration?

Mode of Supply

- presence of service suppliers -temporary or Permanent

Scope of Authorization

- **scope** of the practice being permitted to any foreign qualified persons authorized under the terms of the agreement.

Eligibility

- set minimum requirements that a professional in one country has to fulfil before they can use the MRA to access the market in another country.

Equivalence

- Minimum requirements for eligibility may require compensation in host to attain equivalence and obtain right to access the host country market.

Automaticity

- this relates to the degree/ diplomas of discretion involved in making determinations under the MRA.

Post approval conditions

- ongoing conditions attached i.e. regular submission of home state approval documentation, proof of indemnity insurance cover, or compliance with continuous education and training requirements

MRA negotiations: Key issues addressed

These is based on the model of EAC MRA Agreements used by other professions

- **Who should be covered by this agreement?**
- **Who should be the signatories to the agreement?**
- **What are the main goals or objectives of the MRA?**
- **What are the key defined terms that need to be agreed?**
- **What are the undertakings that the Professional Regulatory Authorities prepared to make to each other? (e.g. the basis for registration, how they will regulate and discipline migrant EAC professionals and veterinary para-professionals)**

Cont'd

- **What are the criteria for recognition of veterinary and veterinary para-professional qualifications?**
- **What is the scope of practice that is permitted to those who meet the criteria for recognition?**
- **What are the agreed standards for registration procedures?**
- **What role is envisaged for professional bodies?**

Cont'd

- **What requirements are expected of migrant Vet Surgeons & VPPs on an ongoing basis? (E.g. adherence to COEs, completion of CPD requirements, provision of insurance)**
- **How are non-EAC foreign qualified practitioners to be treated?**
- **What arrangements are to be made for ongoing regional cooperation and capacity building?**
- **What are the timelines involved in implementing this agreement?**
- **What will be your dispute settlement mechanism?**

Veterinary Para- Professionals -Definition

A person who, for the purposes of the Terrestrial code, authorized by the veterinary statutory body to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of veterinary para professional) in territory , and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a veterinary surgeon.


The tasks for each category of veterinary para- professional should be defined by the veterinary statutory body depending on qualifications and training and according to need.

Laws Governing VPPs

Partner State	Name of Act / Regulations	Does it cover VPPs	Act Describes the various categories of VPP and prescribes its training , qualification, tasks and extent of supervision
Burundi	Loi no. 1/06 21 Mars 2011 Portant Re'glementation de l' Exercice de la Profession veterinaire ; and Reglement d'Ordre Interieur del' Ordre National des Medicines Veterinaires du Burundi	Yes	NO
Kenya	The Veterinary Surgeons and veterinarv Para- Professionals Act	Yes	Yes

Partner State	Name of Act / Regulations	Does it cover VPPs	Act Describes the various categories of VPP and prescribes its training , qualification, tasks and extent of supervision
Rwanda	<p>Law no. 56/2013 of 09/08/2013 establishing the Rwanda Council of Veterinary Doctors</p> <p>Ministerial order No. 008/11.30 of 18/11/2010</p> <p>Determining the organization of veterinary pharmacy practice</p>	No	No
Tanzania	<p>Veterinary Act no. 16 2003</p>	Yes	Yes
Uganda	<p>The Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1958(NB. Under review)</p>	No	NO

Related Legislation on Veterinary Practice in the EAC Partner States - Categories


- i. Legislation relating to human and animal Production
 - ii. Legislation relating to the Human food Production chain
 - iii. Legislation relating to animal disease , use and control veterinary medicines
 - iv. Legislation relating to laboratories in the veterinary domain and powers of competent authorities – i.e inspection
 - v. Legislation relating to game and other wildlife
- 

VPPs Practice

Common underlying concepts on VPP (Based on Kenya & Tanzania law)

- VPP will have a certain recognized level of education
- Need to be registered to hold a certain title
- The tasks they are permitted to undertake are specific (they may or may not be defined in **detail** in the legislation)
- Tasks will be undertaken under **direct or indirect** supervision of a veterinarian

The tasks for each category of VPP should be defined by the VSB depending on qualification and training, and according to need (OIE Concepts) *i.e. matching qualification and skills*



Cont'd

- Kenya and Tanzania have definition of veterinary para-professional practice contained in governing law. The description vary and are not similar.
- **Questions** – ‘over description’ –leads to enforcement challenge. What are on farm husbandry practices and what is veterinary?
- **Conclusion: The EAC MRA should cover ‘ Veterinary services in its widest possible definition , including veterinary professionals services, given the commitments made in Annex V of the Common Market**

Status of Veterinary Para-Professionals in East Africa

Partner State	Title of Registered Para-Professional	Name of competent Authority	Current Number Registered	Ratio of VPP: VS	Area of work
Burundi	Veterinary Technician	Ministry of Agriculture & livestock	768	13	52%- Government 27%- Parastatals 21%- Private practice
Kenya	Veterinary Technologist & Veterinary technicians	Kenya Veterinary Board	4829(46 Veterinary Technologist +4383 veterinary technicians)	4	28% - Government 1.5% Parastatals 70.5 %- Private practice
Rwanda	None	None- registration scheme is under	Estimated no. 2500 (not registered)	N/A	20%-Government 30- Private practice 10% NGO 40% - Unknown

Partner State	Title of Registered Para-Professional	Name of competent Authority	Current Number Registered	Ratio of VPP: VS	Area of work
Tanzania	Veterinary Para professional and Paraprofessional assistant	Veterinary Council of Tanzania	2134	3	84%- Goverenment 2% - Parastatals 14 – Private practice
Uganda	None	None- not required to register with Uganda Vet Board	N/A	N/A	Not Known


New Registrations of Veterinary Para- Professionals

Partner State	Newly registering Practitioners	2013	2012	2011
Burundi	Veterinary Technicians	104	128	103
Kenya	Veterinary Technicians	3222	N/A	N/A
Tanzania	VPP	405	70	285
	VPP assistants	105	61	28
	Meat inspectors	14	0	0
	Vet Lab Technicians	73	0	0
	Foreign qualified veterinary Para- professionals	0	2 (South Africa)	0

Accreditation Process for tertiary level courses for recognition of VPP qualifications

This is only currently undertaken in Kenya and Tanzania -VSBs

Issues considered

- i. List of accredited academic institutions for VPP(Audit of Institutions report)**
 - ii. Procedure for adding new institutions accredited to offer VPP Courses**
 - iii. Criteria of for approval(check list)**
 - iv. Appraisal of approved – some every five years**
- 

Outline of Proposed Minimum Academic Requirements for Veterinary Services MRA

All will use Curriculum: Core essential minimum OIE courses

1. Veterinarian

- BVM or equivalent:
- Duration 5 years

Education Descriptors
and equivalences !!

2. Veterinary para-professional Level 1 (degree)

- Duration: A minimum of 3 years

3. Veterinary para-professional Level 2 (diploma)

- Duration: A minimum of 2 years

4. Veterinary para-professional Level 3 (certificate)


- Duration: A minimum of 2 years

Registration of VPP in EAC

- VPPs are currently registered only in Kenya and Tanzania
Little information is contained in the various legislative acts governing the requirements and procedures for registration
- In Kenya a VPP – Animal Course, Internship, member of an association, swear a prescribed oath.
- In Tanzania – Animal Health certificate enroll or enlist
Act permits Minister , recommendation of the VCT to specify requirements

Summary of SWOT in Considering MRA in Veterinary Services within the EAC

Strengths

- **Legislative framework is in place across the region**
 - **All Partner States a veterinary regulatory body**
 - **All Partner States are members of OIE**
 - **Presence of professional associations in most of the Partner States**
- 

Cont'd

Weaknesses

- **Systems of notification and coordination within the and between Partner States could be much improved**
- **Shortage of qualified professionals across the region**
- **The veterinary para-professions are underdeveloped. In many cases, they are only just being brought into regulatory framework**
- **Majority of farmers are small scale and may not be able to sustain Private veterinary practice**

Cont'd

Opportunities

- **Opportunities for private practice exist**
- **EAC intergradation is opening opportunities**
- **The large body of VPP could be harnessed more effectively to fill gaps in basic veterinary practice within the Sector and allow veterinary surgeons to focus higher skilled work.**
- **The MRA process offers vets an opportunity**

Cont'd

Threats and challenges

- **The veterinary profession and indeed the livestock industry needs to compete with many other areas for attention and investment by government**
- **The market for veterinary services is not effectively managed**
- **The pace of change in the way in which the profession is being regulated in different Partner States is not even**

Recommendations

Considering the role of VPPs in the livestock industry ;

- There is need for supporting and strengthening of the VPP associations;
- Involve VPP in all matters relating decision making in Veterinary matters including development of laws and regulation;
- VPPs must be well represented on the VSBs;
- VPPs must be encouraged to register and be respected ;

Cont'd

- Categorize the VPPs according to their education levels and skills – not just VPPs ;
- There is need to careful review and consider VPPs mandates in the respective governing laws – i.e why specify hoof trimming? - this a husbandry practice undertaken by farmers on the farm all over Africa ;
- VPP must be involved in all other MRAs in Africa like it was done with EAC

- MRAs aim to enhance the benefits of Efficient Veterinary Services Delivery [VSD] to Partner States
 - Safeguarding Professionalism for Public Health, Food Security, Wealth Creation, Animal Welfare and Environmental Welfare
- Participants in MRAs therefore need to have a mindset to honestly investigate each others' strengths and weaknesses so as to elicit intervention opportunities that do not threaten the fundamental aim to realize the benefits of efficient VSD

Acknowledgement

- German Government Agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) agreed to facilitate activities leading to the signing of the MRA by the veterinarians.
 - Florian BERNHARDIERT(GIZ)
 - Staicy Wagala (GIZ)
 - Gustav siniziziye (GIZ)
 - Alison Hook:GIZ Consultant
- Deputy Secretary General – Productive Sectors: Hon. Jesca Eriyo for allowing us to undertake the study
- Veterinary Regulatory bodies/ authorities in EAC – Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda , Tanzania and Uganda
- The EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers responsible for Agriculture and food Security for approving the study

THANK YOU THE NEXT STEPS



THE NEXT STEPS

