



# **Role of Veterinary Para-professionals in Africa: The perspective of World Animal Protection**

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# Animal Welfare and Africa's Development Agenda



- World Animal Protection - aware of the challenges facing the African continent; and that animal welfare has huge potential in contributing towards food security, improved livelihoods, poverty reduction and sustainable development which resonates very well with Africa's development agenda.
- For many years, we have been advocating for governments to recognize the benefits of good Animal Welfare to human welfare
- The need to demonstrate this linkage in achieving Africa's development agenda is becoming increasingly important.

# Animal Welfare and Sustainable Livelihoods



- Today, with around one billion of the world's poorest people relying on animals for their food and income, responsible animal management has a positive impact on land use, climate change, pollution, water supplies, habitat conservation and biodiversity.
- Responsible animal management also reduce the risk of diseases that are transmissible from animals to humans and improves food safety.
- Livestock being part of social and cultural stratum in Africa is expected to play a central role in attaining food sufficiency since 75% of rural households in sub-Saharan Africa own livestock.

# Challenges facing the Veterinary Sector in Africa



- Africa is still lagging behind in accessibility to quality veterinary services that is key to sustainable development of the livestock sector in the areas of animal health, animal production, animal welfare and public health.
- There are countries on the African continent that are without adequate qualified veterinary surgeons
- But even those that do have qualified surgeons, they are very inadequate with a lot of challenges/limitations which, brings to the fore the importance of veterinary para-professionals in Africa particularly in the rural areas where the majority of Africa's

# The reality of Veterinary Para-professionals



- In most African countries veterinary para-professionals work within the private sector with private veterinarians, farmer organizations or as self-employed operators.
- Inappropriate categorization – an admission without action
- Lack of standardization in training
- Discriminated against – no ‘genuine’ attempt to make them a force to reckon with
- Restricted employment offer because they are meant to be a ‘quick fix’ solution?
- Lack appropriate tools and infrastructure to deliver top notch services

# THE ROLE OF WORLD ANIMAL PROTECTION IN THE empowerment of Veterinary Paraprofessionals



- World Animal Protection, believes in **a world where animals live free from suffering** and recognizes the importance of paravets in animal health care provision and promotion of good animal welfare practices.
- Ten years ago, we embarked on a journey to empower undergraduate vets & para-professionals with knowledge & skills to deliver quality animal welfare advice through Advanced Concepts in Animal Welfare for Veterinarians & Advanced Concepts in Animal Welfare for Agriculture and livestock Training Institutes programmes in collaboration with Faculties of Veterinary Medicines and Livestock Training Institutes across Africa.

# The purpose of the Advanced Concepts in Animal Welfare programmes



- Sought to inculcate in students an understanding and belief in animal welfare that will result in them applying and advocating for good practice when they are delivering outreach activities to animal owners in their daily work.
- Aimed at generating unlimited number of animal welfare proficient workforce in order to meet and satisfy the demand for veterinary services in the ever expanding livestock labour market in Africa.

# The Impact of our programmes



- Increased propagation, uptake & institutionalization of animal welfare courses in 7 Faculties of Veterinary Medicine & 18 Livestock Training Institutions drawn from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Zambia.
- Graduates from these institutions are expected to be catalysts for change during extension thus ensuring long-term positive impact at scale for animals through quality animal welfare advice to farmers resulting in the adoption of humane solutions at grassroots level.
- World Animal Protection has also been supporting the running of a Veterinary Emergency Response Unit (VERU) jointly with the University of Nairobi with the view of responding to the



# Impact of our programmes



- World Animal Protection's support to veterinary para-professionals is premised on the recognition that capacity building and streamlining of responsibilities including supervision should be carefully defined to enhance efficiency and to minimize risks such as wrong administering of vaccination resulting in untold suffering and sometimes death of animals.

# Our Asks for Building Consensus



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## VPPs are an imperative

- Think global and act local ('glocal')
- Be realistic because there is a need (gap) to be met/filled
- Definition and categorization
- Guidelines and standards
- Standardized training/capacity building
- Disease reporting and response
- Research, education and advocacy
- Promotion and protection of animal welfare
- Let's do it for animals – they are sentient but don't self represent

Presentation title goes here

*Helping animals helps people!*

# Recommendations and Conclusions



- World Animal Protection is thus calling upon all governments, other national statutory bodies and the OIE to support and promote capacity building of veterinary para-professionals within formal institutions across Africa in order to bridge the deficit of human resource capacity in the veterinary sector.
- Furthermore, governments should strive to put in place effective systems and mechanisms for monitoring service delivery by veterinary para-professionals under close supervision of trained veterinary personnel to promote linkages and collaboration.
- The OIE on the other hand should continue to provide relevant guidelines and standards that will enhance the performance of all veterinary professionals leading to overall improved productivity of the livestock sector in Africa.
- Consequently, trained veterinary para-professionals would immensely lower cost of veterinary service delivery across Africa resulting in improved

# Thank You



When I was 5 years old, my mother always told me that happiness was the key to life. When I went to school, they asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I wrote down 'happy! They told me I didn't understand the assignment, and I told them they didn't understand life.

John Lennon