

# Illegal veterinary medicines

Regional Workshop for OIE National Focal Points (cycle V)

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[www.AnimalHealthMatters.org](http://www.AnimalHealthMatters.org)  
[www.healthforanimals.org](http://www.healthforanimals.org)



# Illegal veterinary medicines

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**What to do about it ? How to achieve quality ?**



**Part 1:**  
**What we know about  
illegal veterinary medicines ?**

# What we know about illegal veterinary medicines ?

- HealthforAnimals completed global study
- Report will be available in early 2018
- Learn lessons from pharma, pesticide industries

## Report addresses:

1. Risks to animals, human health, society
2. Illegal veterinary medicine distribution chains
3. Controlling illegal veterinary medicines
4. Recommendations for actions
  - Regulation and enforcement agencies
  - Veterinarians
  - Manufacturers of authorized medicines
  - Retailers, wholesalers
  - Farmers and pet owners



# How we know it ?

It is illegal criminal activity - **difficult** to detect, investigate, **quantify**. The information we do have is based on 3 types of sources:

## 1. Law enforcement data and actions (and media coverage thereof)

- World Customs data, police forces, Interpol
- *“Seizure of counterfeit veterinary products”, 2013 China*
- *“Fake veterinary drugs on the market”, 2012 Uganda*
- *“Makers of fake veterinary medicine uncovered”, 2013 Vietnam*

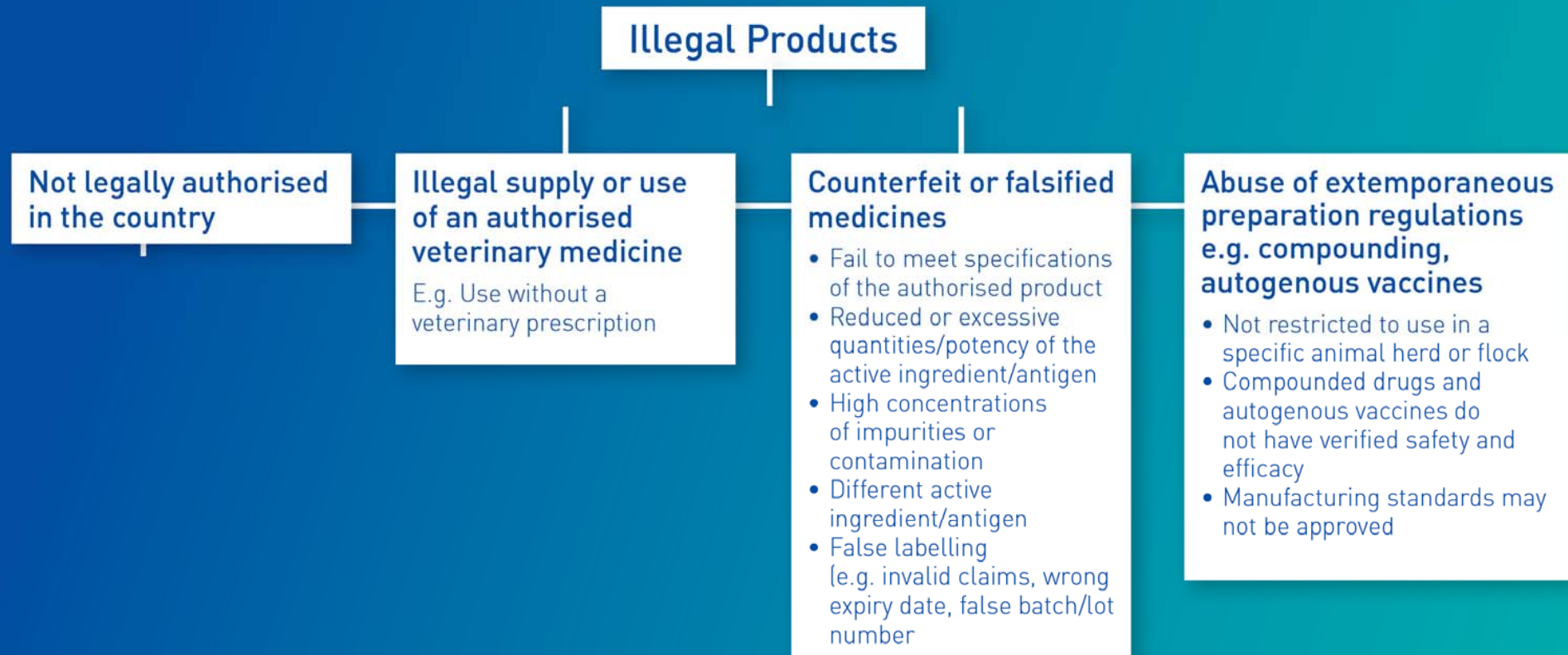
## 2. Some testing in some markets – extrapolation

- testing in developed markets by governments and others
- FAO, OIE, etc. projects in other markets, particular Africa

## 3. Industry/veterinarians experiences in the market place

- sense of likely sizes of markets
- reps visiting vets, distributors, farmers, etc.

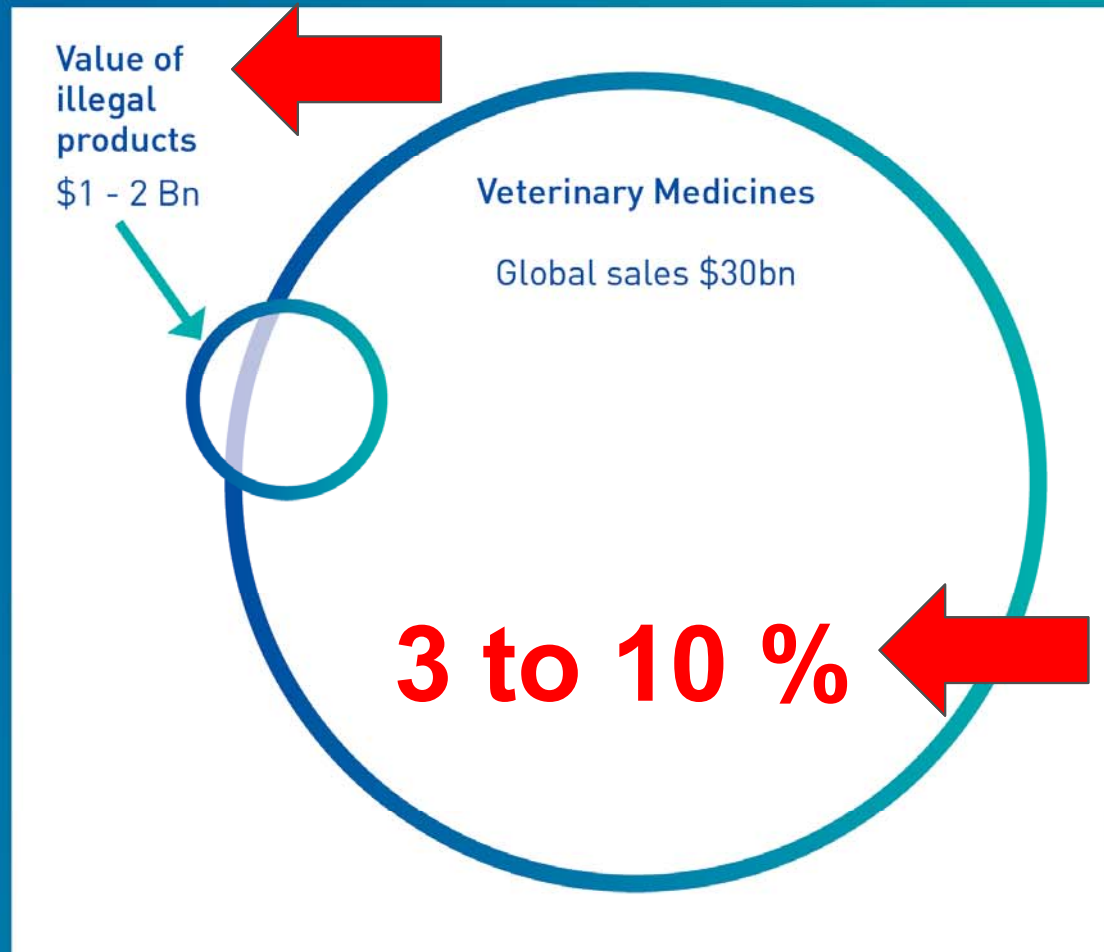
# Different types of illegal veterinary medicines



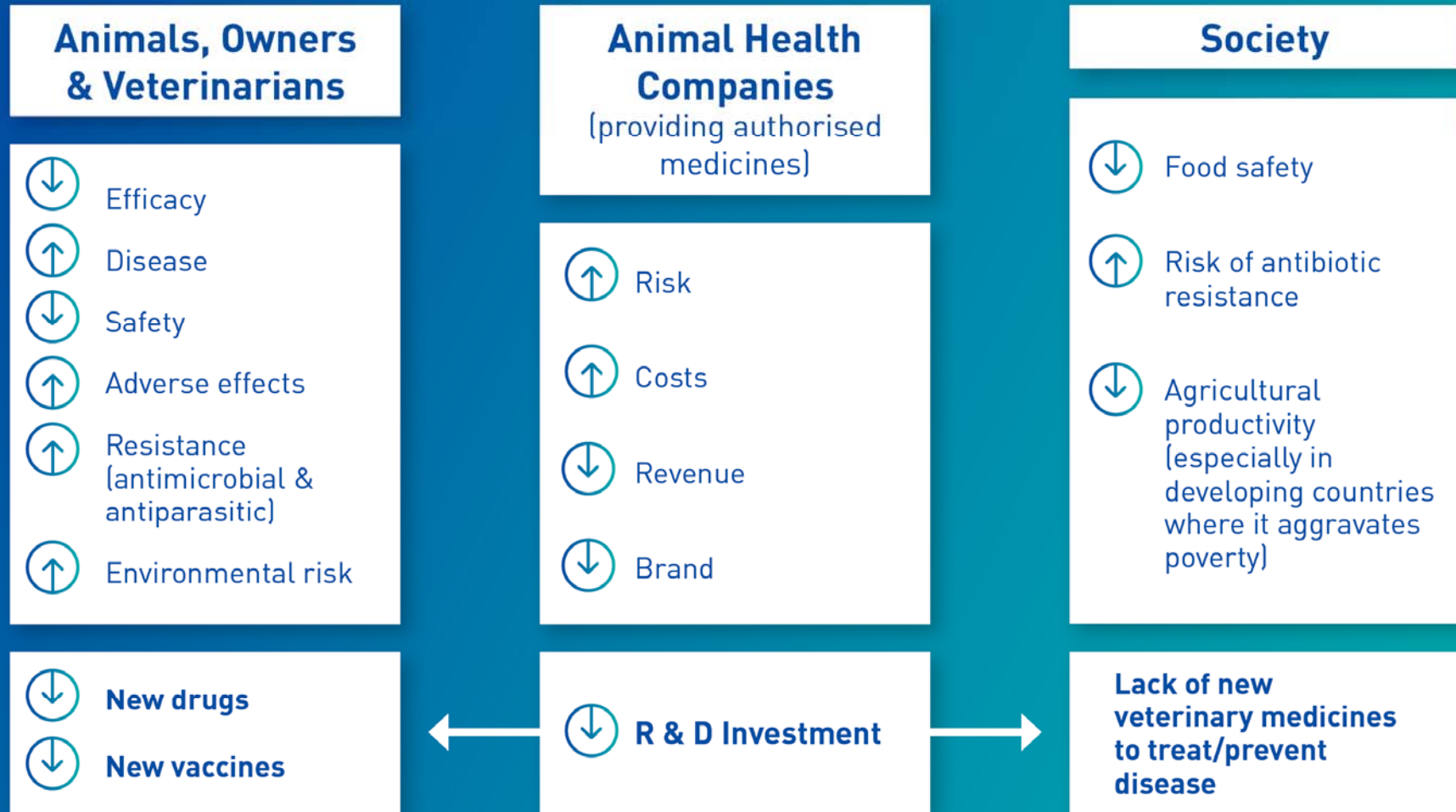
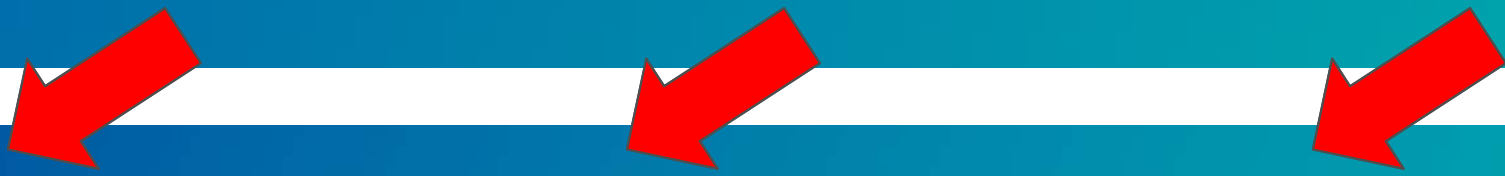
**Authorized veterinary medicines are approved by regulators for the treatment and prevention of diseases/disorders, and includes vaccines and pharmaceutical drugs**

# Estimated value of illegal veterinary medicines

- Total loss estimated \$1 - 2 Bn
- International trade losses \$0.75 - 1.5 Bn
- Customs seizures exclude domestic (within country) losses
- Growing losses especially via e-commerce/ Internet and from compounding



# Negatives impacts on different groups





# Characteristics of markets with illegal vet. meds

## Farmers and veterinary services

- access to quality medicines is poor in remoter areas
- poorly funded local research institutes
- lack of awareness among livestock farmers - focus on price

## Distributors/importers

- weak distribution channels
- interest of small distributors is financial, not quality or return customers
- poor financial capacity of importers
- packaging of drugs is a limiting factor
- administrative procedures for imports long and bureaucratic

## Authorities

- no government policies or resources
- inadequate regulations and enforcement - lack of governance
- existing regulations not implemented
- solutions (medicines/vaccines) do not exist or not up to date

# Illegal veterinary medicines – main findings

## 1. There are illegal products in all countries

- different kinds and levels in different markets
- some types worse than others

## 2. This is likely a smaller problem than in human medicine

- production animals - not make economic sense to use substandard
- companion animals - people love them, why endanger their health
- smaller scale vet. market = lower profit margins = less criminal interest

## 3. There are incentives to make, sell use illegals in markets where:

- buyers are poorer and less informed about drawbacks
- criminal sellers are less likely to be caught/punished

## 4. Less illegal products in food-exporting countries because higher compliance/ enforcement

- in EU, US, Canada, etc. - illegal products mostly in companion market
- Sub-Saharan Africa – sometimes 60%+ of products illegal

**“Counterfeiting” of veterinary medicines in some geographies is a reflection of the sophistication of the market.**



**Example of illegal veterinary products**



**Veterinary drugs sold in an African village market**

(source of photos in presentation: Dr. Albert Douffissa. Presentation “ What is Needed to Improve Availability to Good Quality Veterinary Drugs and Vaccines.”)



**Part 2:**  
**What to do about it ?**  
**How to achieve quality ?**

# Why it is important to use **quality** veterinary meds.?

## **Quality products important for farmers:**

- if veterinary products don't work as they should, farmers lose animals
- lost animals = lower productivity = lost income

## **Quality products important for producers, who are:**

- responsible to ensure quality in design, development, manufacturing, distribution
- ensure that all sources of variability affecting a process are identified and managed
- producers' reputation

## **Quality products important for society:**

- poor products = poor production (meat, milk, eggs) = lower national productivity
- reputational risk for country damages export capacity
- disease spreading threatens other regions and countries
- consumer health risk of poor quality or fake drugs (residues and zoonosis)
- environmental risk

# What action should be taken?

## Regulation & Enforcement Agencies

- Effective regulation
  - Necessary government resources
- Rigorous enforcement
- Collaboration
  - Police
  - Customs
  - Regulatory agencies
  - Professional bodies
  - Manufacturers
- Private prosecution, legal action

## E-Commerce & Internet Sites

- Raise awareness
- Cease or comply
- Popup warning on legitimate sites
- Full compliance with legal requirements

## Manufacturers of Authorised Medicines

- Raise awareness
- Collect data
- Leadership in working with enforcement agencies
- Evaluate technology to support enforcement
- Protect patents and trademarks
- Protect reputation

## Veterinarians, Retailers, Wholesalers, Feed Mills

- Raise awareness
- Report illegal products
- Work with enforcement agencies
- Be alert and informed
- Do not encourage illegal compounded products and vaccines

## Farmers

- Awareness of risks of illegal products:
  - Efficiency
  - Safety
  - Residues
  - Environment
- Business risk if illegal products are used
- Report illegal products

## Pet Owners

- Awareness of risks of illegal products to efficiency and safety
- Report illegal products

# How regulatory requirements contribute to fight illegal meds.

## **Compliance with laws**

- Good Manufacturing Practice or local manufacturing standards
- regulatory information update and information collection
- internal compliance system (check and balance)

## **Distribution requirement**

- local company involvement (e.g. restriction on vaccines)
- Infrastructure for delivery (e.g. special storing condition, narcotic product, and toxic product)

## **Traceability**

- product identification and record of delivery

## **Training and record system**

- at the regulation change
- periodical reminding
- new staff addition, and new roles

# What industry is doing and going to do more ?

1. Increase **awareness** and deliver an effective narrative
2. Collaborate with international and national enforcement **agencies** to raise priority of action
3. Improve utilization of **data** collection and analysis
4. Facilitate **identification of authenticity**





**More information**

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