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***“Veterinary paraprofessionals: their governance
and role in improving
Animal Health and Welfare in Africa”***

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Introduction

- ❑ Veterinary Para Professionals (VPP's) has been around and functional in most African countries for decades.
- ❑ VPP's contributed immensely on an ad hoc basis during disease prevention and control operations as well as eradication of diseases during outbreaks.
- ❑ In many instances VPP's contributed on a daily basis towards a disease free animal population within their communities without receiving the recognition they deserve.
- ❑ VPP's did fulfil a very important animal health function, sometimes in the most difficult circumstances and in many instances even without the most needed resources.

Background

Different VPP groups.

The OIE guidelines on VPP's define three (3) categories of VPPs based on their main fields of activities namely:

- ❖ animal health (AH)
- ❖ veterinary public health (VPH)
- ❖ and laboratory diagnosis (LD)

The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Chapter 3.4):

indicates that a Member Country's veterinary legislation should provide a basis for the regulation of veterinarians and VPPs in the public interest and suggests the creation of a regulatory entity, the veterinary statutory body (VSB), to carry out that regulation.

Results

Active VPP's

Number of active VPP's within the different VPP categories.

Role and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of VPP's towards veterinary services.

Training

What form of formal training exist for VPP's.

Governance

Who is regulating VPP's within the Member Country?

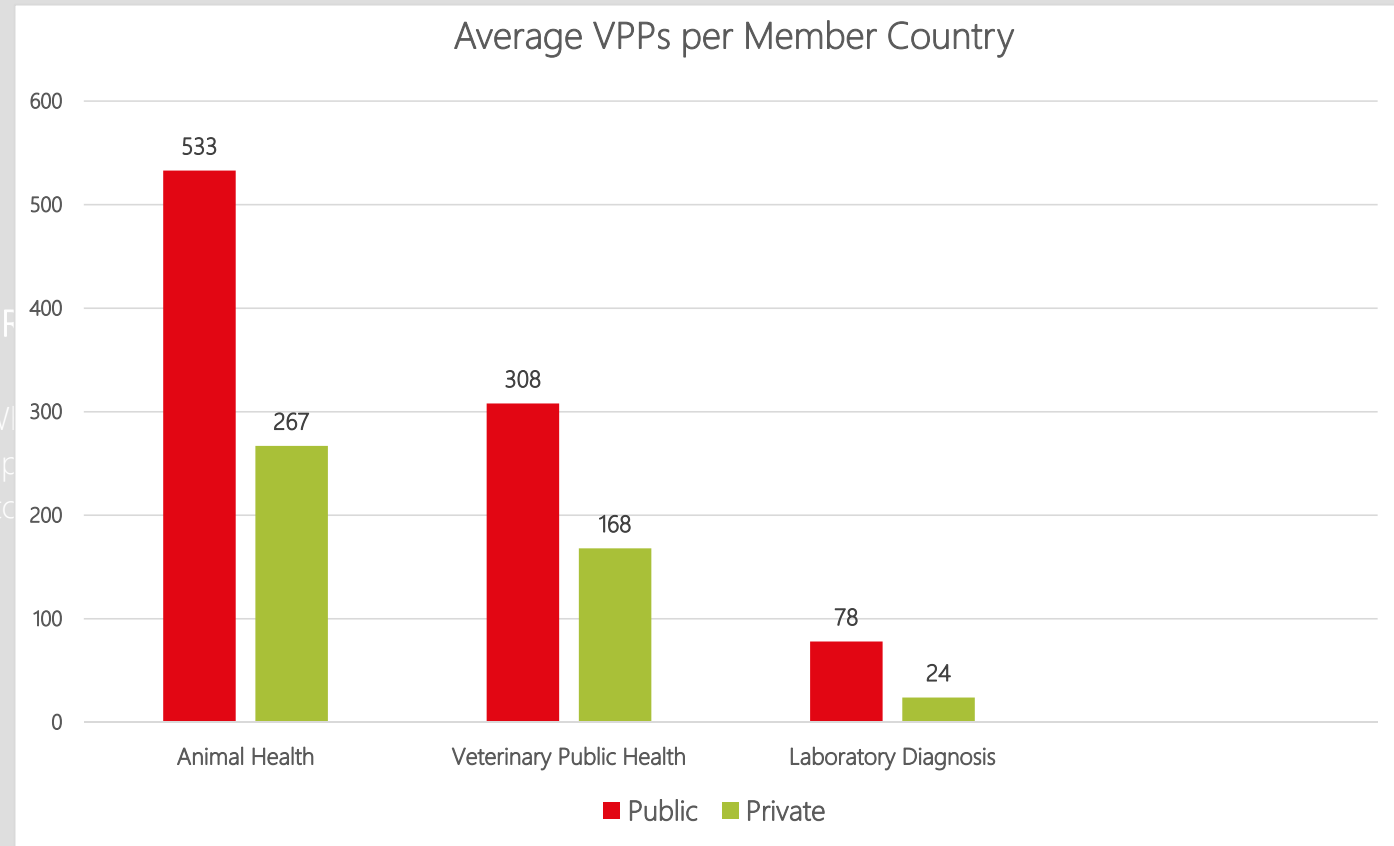
Challenges

What challenges do VPP's face within the Member Country?

Results

Active VPP's

Number of active VPP's within the different VPP categories.



Results

Role and Responsibilities

What is the role and responsibilities of VPP's towards veterinary services.

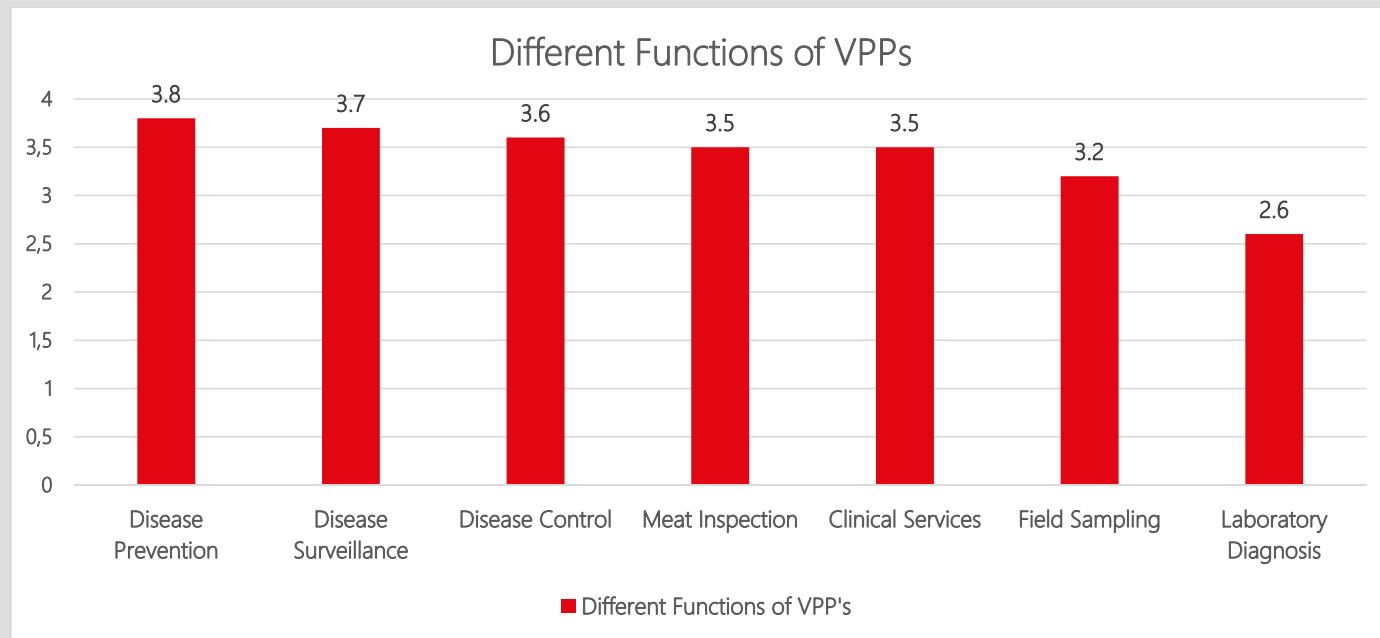
Almost two-thirds (28/45) of the responding countries indicated the role of VPPs to be 'very important' while one third (17/45) indicated it to be 'important'. None indicated the role of VPP's to be 'not so important' or 'not important'.

All Member Countries indicated the role that VPP's fulfil to be either 'very important' or 'important' and as such, VPPs most definitely make an important contribution towards service delivery of the veterinary team within the Member Countries.

Results

Role and Responsibilities

What is the role and responsibilities of VPP's towards veterinary services.



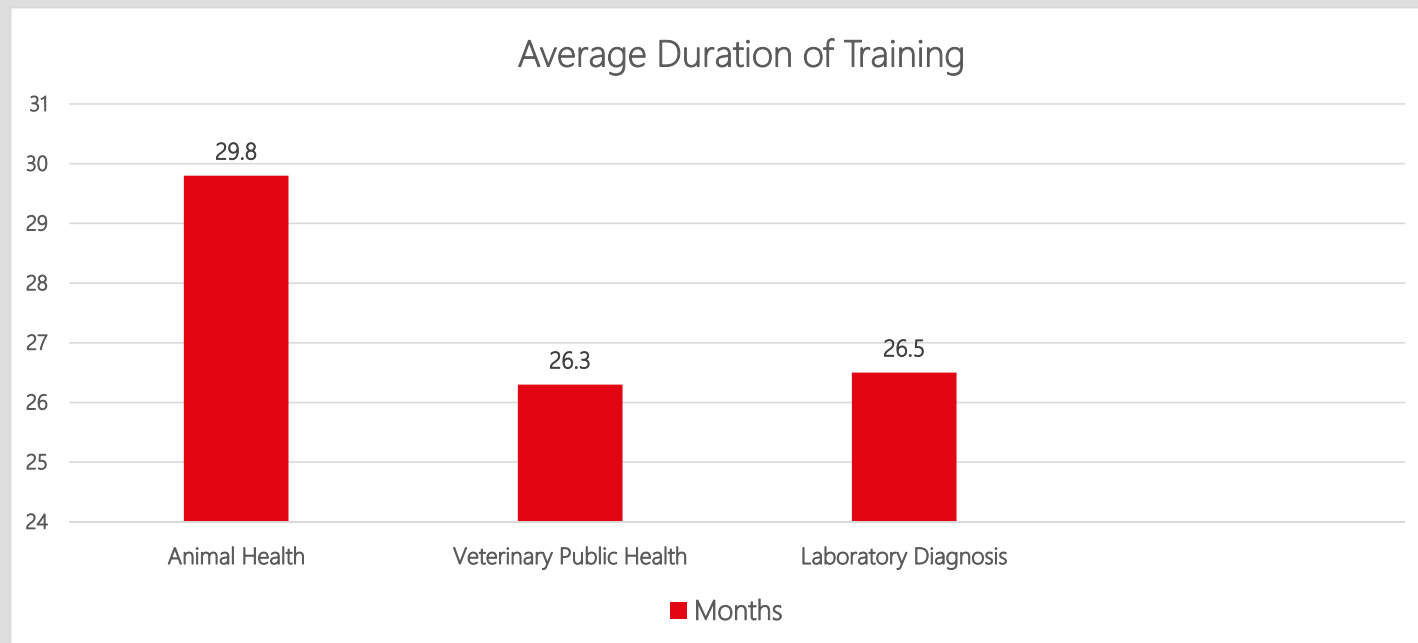
VPPs are definitely more involved towards animal health and veterinary public health regulatory functions, while their involvement towards laboratory diagnostic services is less substantial.

Results

The majority of Member Countries (80%; 36/45) indicated that their VPPs undergo formal training. However, the duration of formal training differs vastly between countries and between the different VPP groups. The duration of training appears to depend on the specific needs of each country.

Training

What form of formal training exist for VPP's.

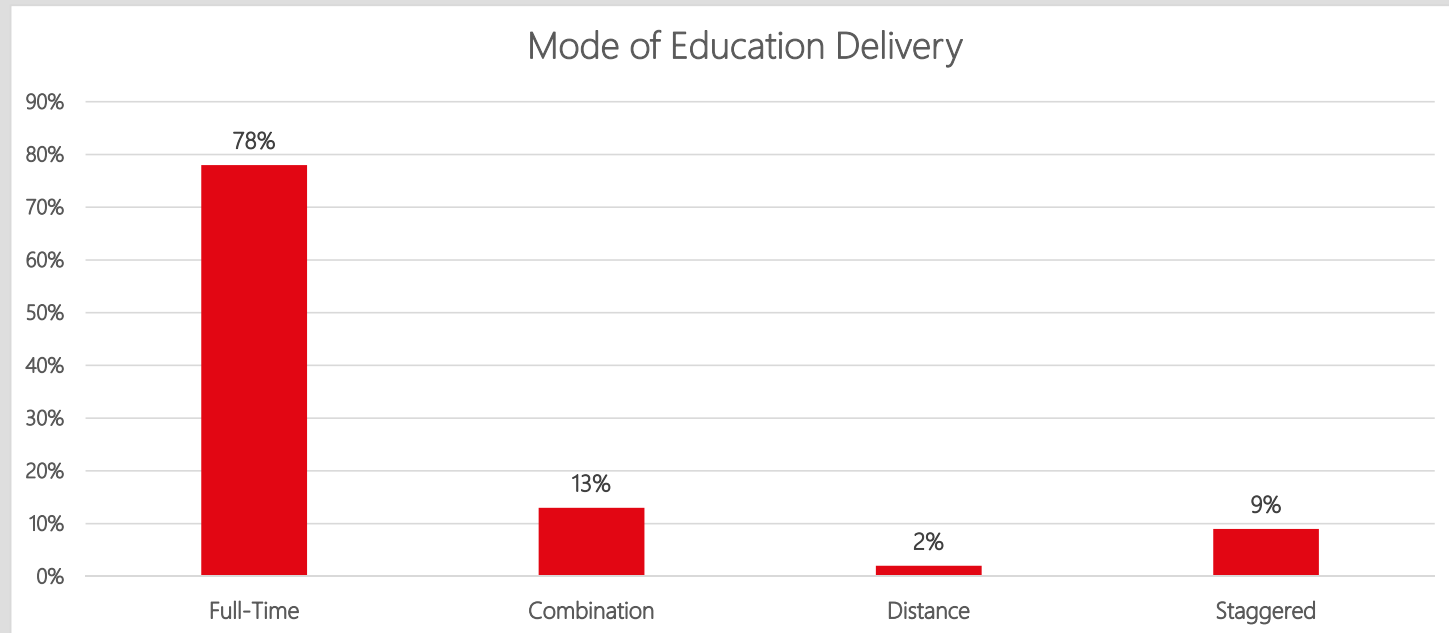


Results

In terms of the number of training institutions for VPPs per Member Country and per category, the following - institutions offering certificate qualifications is the largest category, with 3 institutions per country, followed by diploma qualifications (2.5 institutions) and institutions offering degrees (2 institutions). While the mode of delivering is mostly full-time (78%).

Training

What form of formal training exist for VPP's.



Results

Training

Involvement of VSB
in formal training.

Although 40% of Member Countries (18/45) indicated that the VSB is not involved at all, the other Member Countries indicated that the VSB is involved in other aspects of VPP training standards.

Only 33% (15/45) of Member Countries indicated that the VSB is involved with assessing curriculum matters while 20% (9/45) indicated VSB involvement with the placement of VPPs after graduation.

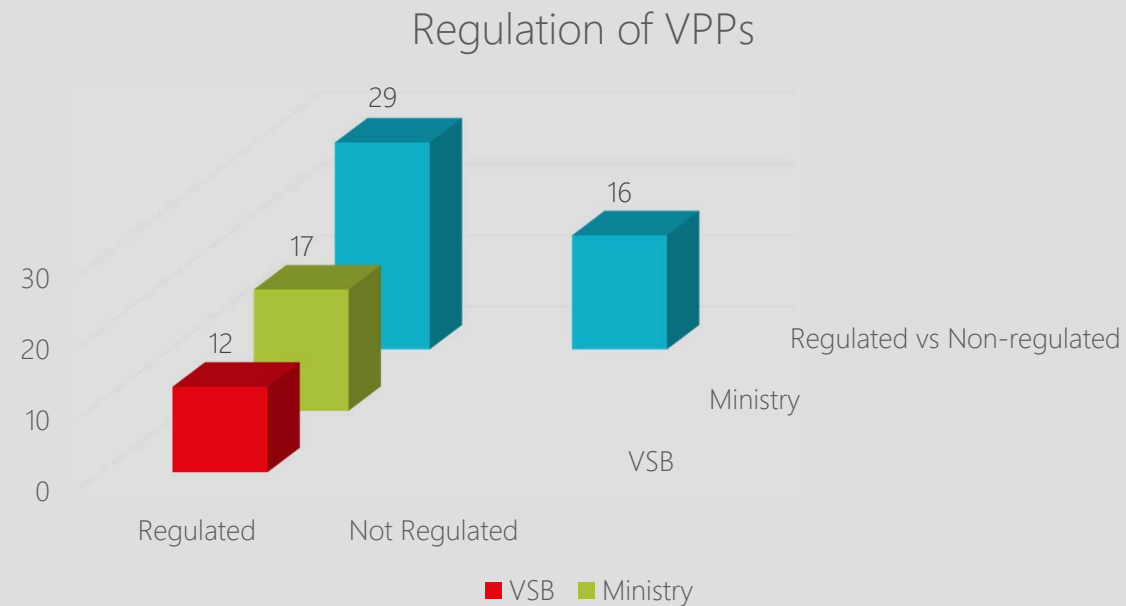
Other aspects of VSB involvement include continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities (18%; 8/45) and provision of exit examinations (4%; 2/45).

Results

Governance

Who is regulating VPP's within the Member Country?

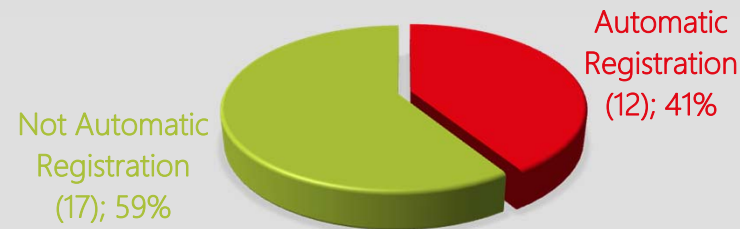
Nearly two-thirds of Member Countries (64%; 29/45) indicated that their VPPs are regulated while 16 countries (36%) indicated that VPPs are not regulated at all.



Results

Two-thirds of Member Countries with a VPP regulating authority (66%; 19/29) indicated it is compulsory for VPPs to register with the authorities.

REGISTRATION WITH REGULATING AUTHORITY (29)



Only 21% (6/29) of Member Countries with a VPP regulating authority, indicated additional examinations to be an additional requirement for registration, while 7% (2/29) indicated internship as an additional requirement for registration.

Governance

Who is regulating VPP's within the Member Country?

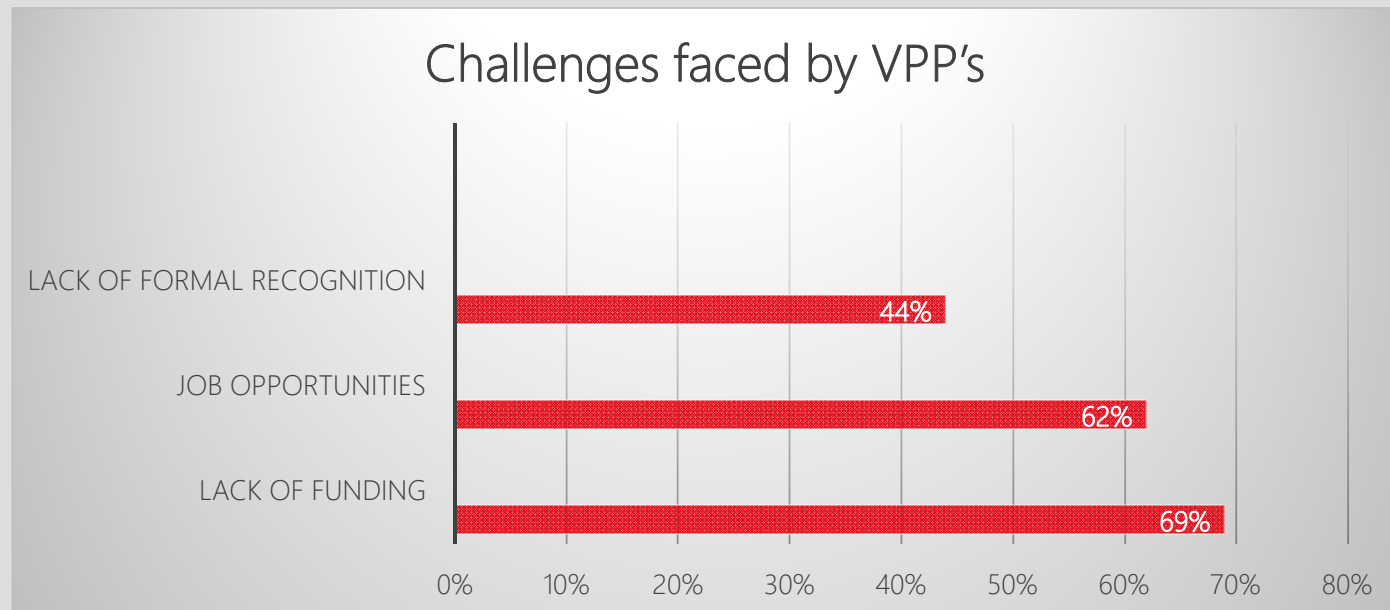
Results

Challenges

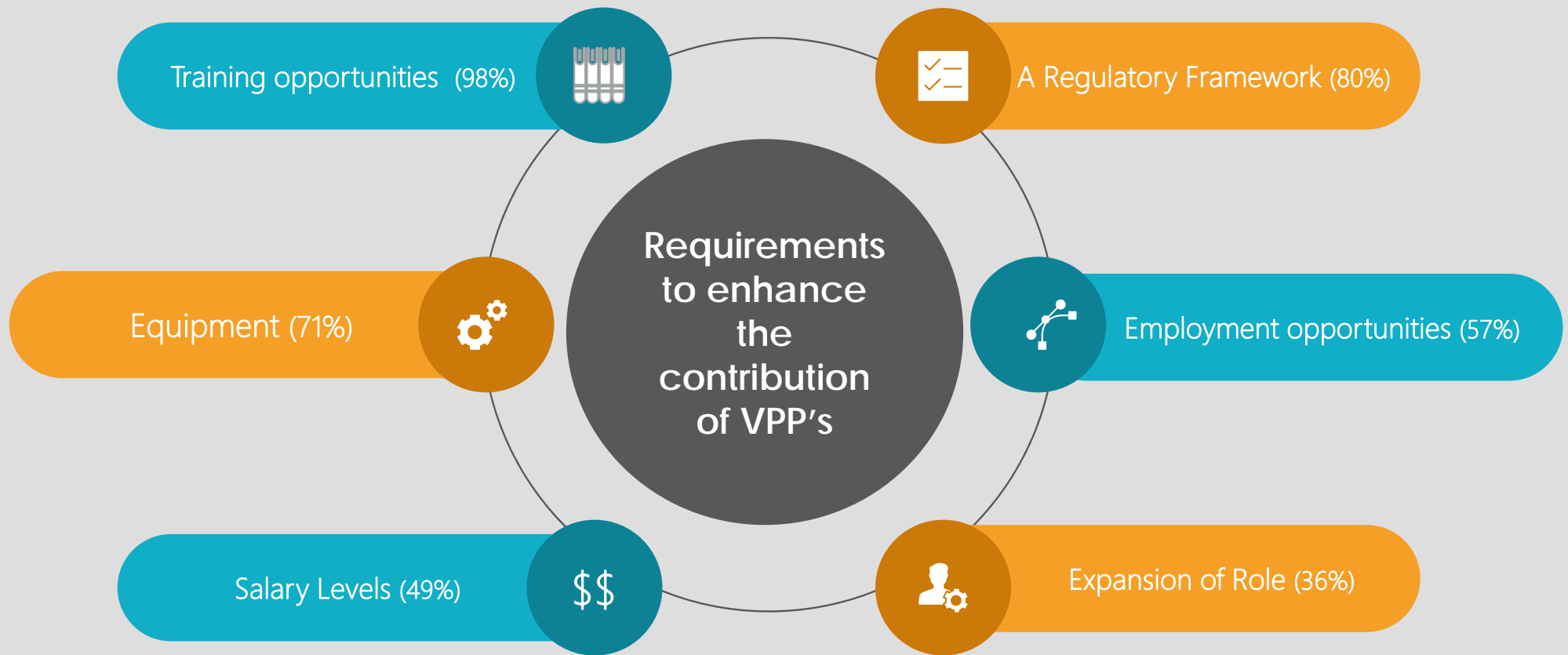
What challenges do VPP's face within the Member Country?

Lack of funding as indicated by 69% of respondents (31/45), and lack of job opportunities (62%; 28/45) were the two main contributors towards the current challenges VPP.

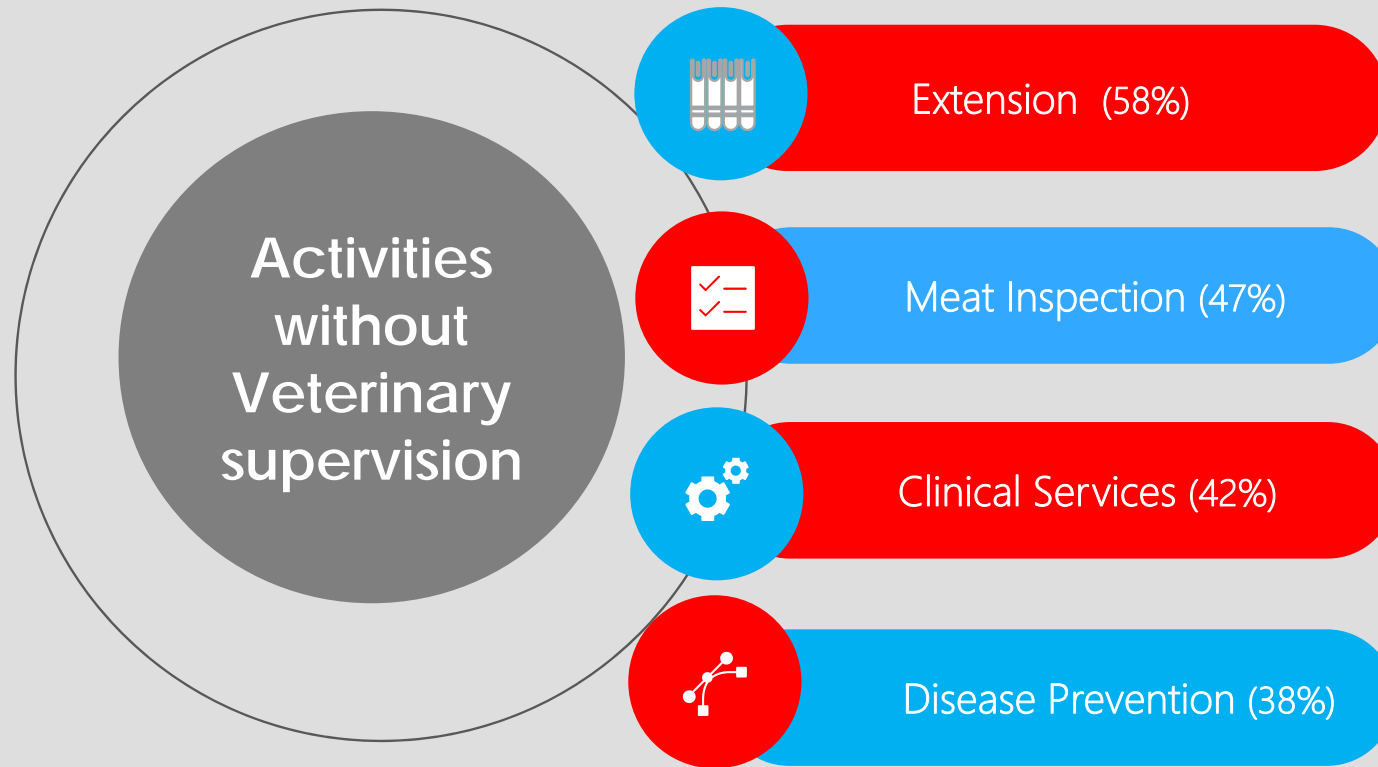
However, 44% of respondents (20/45) indicated lack of formal recognition as a further challenge.



Results



Results



Results

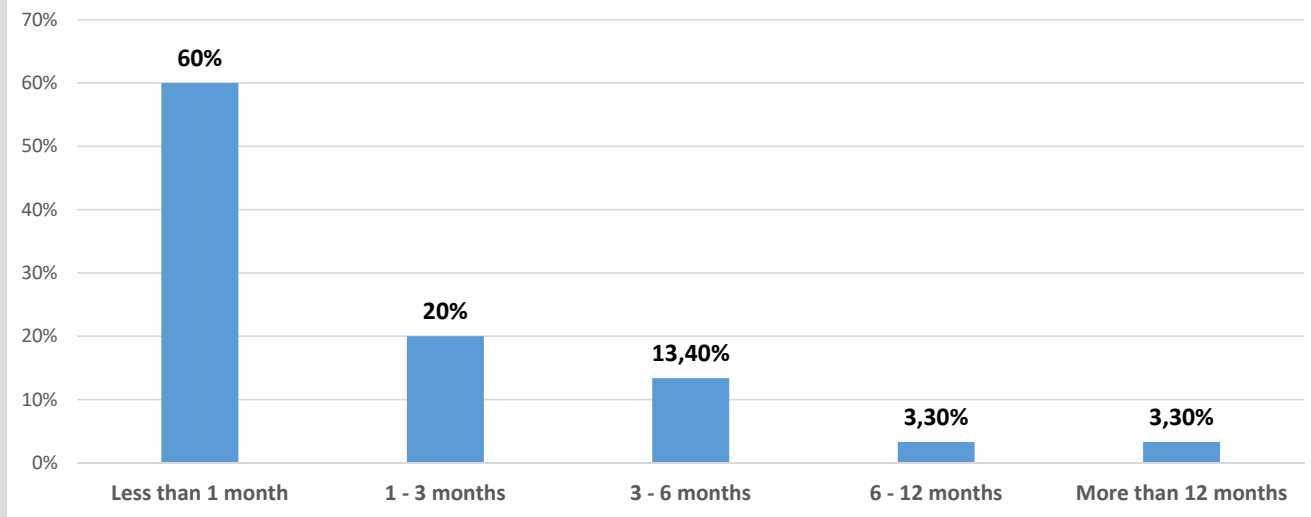
The majority of Member Countries (68%; 30/44) indicated the presence of CAHWs.

The number varied between 100 – 1000 while twenty percent (6/30) of the Member Countries with CAHWs indicated they are unsure with regard to the number.

CAHW's

Presence of CAHW's within the Member Country?

Duration of CAHW Training



Discussion

Categories

- Different categories of VPPs with different training and educational backgrounds clearly exist.
- The animal health category seems to be the most widely recognised VPP group within both the public and the private sector, with an average of 533 animal health VPPs per Member Country.

Categories

Discussion

Training

- The duration of formal training for VPPs differs widely between countries, ranging from 6 months to 36 months.
- On average, the three VPP groups undergo almost the same length of training, varying between 26.5 and 29.8 months.
- VPP training facilities are available in Member Countries. The median, ranging between 2 and 3 training facilities per Member Country.
- The vast majority of Member Countries indicated full-time study as their mode of delivery.

Training

Discussion

Service Delivery

- Within the African continent, animal health VPPs perform a very important and fundamental role in delivering a much-needed veterinary service to communities in need of such a basic service.
- The services they provide include disease surveillance, prevention and control as well as basic clinical services when the need arises or where there is a lack of human and other resources.
- On the other hand, veterinary public health VPPs, provide a very important meat inspection service to ensure that communities have access to safe meat.
- Even if VPPs providing veterinary laboratory services exist in some Member Countries, their importance is underestimated, and they are mostly underutilised.

Service Delivery

Discussion

Service Delivery

- Member Countries confirmed that VPP's do in fact work across the three different tracks as well as in related fields, such as academia and training institutes.
- In the public sector, they are mostly involved with veterinary medicine, either as representatives or as owners of drug stores.
- In more than 50% of responding Member Countries, VPP's are allowed to work independently in the field of extension services while 10% fewer countries allow VPPs to perform clinical services or meat inspection as part of work for own gain.
- However Member Countries prefer these activities to be done under the supervision of a veterinarian.

Service Delivery

Discussion

Challenges

- VPPs face numerous challenges, including, but not limited to, a lack of job opportunities and funding as well as a lack of formal recognition by regulating and government institutions.
- Lack of funding may contribute to the shortage of well-trained VPPs, and low salary levels may contribute to poor motivation among VPPs.
- Lack of funding most definitely contributes to a shortage of equipment and material as well as other much needed products, thus increasing the challenges VPPs are facing.

Challenges

Discussion

Challenges

- Formal recognition plays a very important role in providing the much needed job security and job opportunities for VPPs and as such need to be addressed.
- Without adequate training and study opportunities, the possibilities for progression within formal occupational structures become limited and can only contribute to and increase the already enormous burden of challenges that VPPs have to face.

Challenges

Discussion

Regulating

- The majority of African Member Countries regulate VPPs through either a Veterinary Statutory Body or the Ministry of Agriculture, with just over half of these countries indicating that the Ministry is the regulating body.
- This means in effect that in only 12 Member Countries the VSB is responsible for regulating VPPs.

Regulating

Discussion

Regulating

- Further to the above, it is compulsory to register with the regulating authority in a mere 19 African Member Countries, while only 12 of these countries provide for automatic registration on completion of training.
- Member Countries indicated that their VSB is involved at different levels of training standards but mostly with assessing the curriculum and student placement after they have completed their studies.

Regulating

Discussion

CAHW's

- Training of CAHWs differs from country to country, ranging from relatively short and informal instruction to a more advanced form of training.
- CAHWs are mostly trained in-house with the help of veterinarians and VPPs and their service delivery focuses on disease prevention and control as the main objective.
- In certain instances, people working in the private livestock sector intervene to assist with training of CAHWs with very intense and specific disease prevention activities in mind.
- Currently almost no regulatory authorities exist for the control of training and the registration of CAHWs, which is partly the reason for the lack of formal training and regulation.

CAHW's

Conclusion

- ✓ VPPs are present and operational in most African countries, where they play a very important role and fulfil an important regulatory function supporting the mandate of veterinary service delivery.
- ✓ VPPs are present in both the private and public sector, working under supervision as well as independently in their own clinics or as inseminators, farm managers and animal health advisors.
- ✓ VPPs do experience numerous challenges including, but not limited to, lack of job opportunities, lack of resources and lack of further training.
- ✓ VPPs are also employed in academia and the pharmaceutical industry, as academics and representatives, respectively.

Conclusion

- ✓ VPPs undergo on average between 26 to 30 months of formal training, with variations according to the country's specific needs and available resources.
- ✓ VPP registration with the regulating authorities is in most instances not a requirement or compulsory due to the absence of a functional VSB.
- ✓ VPPs are in most instances not allowed to work beyond their own country borders.

Conclusion

- ✓ CAHWs are present and functional within member countries, delivering a much needed service within communities.
- ✓ CAHWs are mostly trained in-house and on an ad hoc basis by veterinarians and VPPs.
- ✓ CAHWs training is undertaken with a specific disease prevention and control objective in mind and lasts on average less than one month.

Thank you for your attention



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