

WOAH Sub-Regional Workshop on Strengthening the Performance and Integration of Veterinary Paraprofessionals (VPPs) in Veterinary Services in West Africa

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Veterinary legislation and regulation as enabling factor for enhancing VPP integration within national veterinary services

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Outline

- Definitions : Legislation and veterinary legislation
- WOAHA standards on veterinary legislation and veterinary practice legislation
- Veterinary practice legislation
- Veterinary practice legislation and the Veterinary Statutory Body
- Importance of legislation around veterinary practice
- Importance of covering veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs) in veterinary practice legislation
- Veterinary legislation and regulation as enabling factors for the integration of VPP in the workforce

Definition

Legislation

- Rules governing all areas of life in a country
- Legal texts that convert policies into concrete actions and results
 - Assign the roles, powers and responsibilities of government
 - Establish the rights, duties and prohibitions of citizens
 - Create the basic system of implementation and controls.
- Features:
 - Established in advance
 - Official process
 - Binding (mandatory for everyone)
 - Published (accessible by everyone)
- Essential to a functioning society → legal certainty, transparency, fairness and accountability.





Definition

Veterinary legislation

- Rules governing all areas of the ***veterinary domain*** in a country.

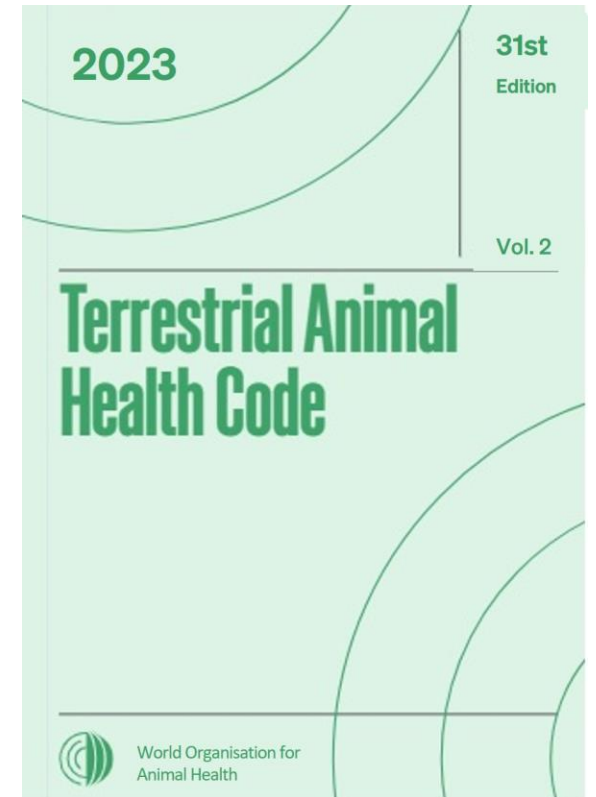
“All the activities that are directly or indirectly related to animals, their products and by-products which help to protect, maintain and improve animal health, animal welfare and veterinary public health.” (TAHC 3.4.2)

- Legal texts that convert veterinary policies into concrete actions and results:
 - Assign the roles, powers and responsibilities of the competent authority for animal health.
 - Establish the rights, duties and prohibitions of individuals who own/conduct activities related to animals (and their products and by-products).
 - Create the basic system of implementation and controls.

WOAH standards on veterinary legislation

Terrestrial Code Chapter 3.4:

- Competent authorities (3.4.5)
- **Veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals (3.4.6)**
- Laboratories in the veterinary domain (3.4.7)
- Health provisions relating to animal production (3.4.8)
- Animal diseases (3.4.9)
- Animal welfare (3.4.10)
- Veterinary medicinal products (3.4.11)
- Human food production chain (3.4.12)
- Import and export procedures and veterinary certification (3.4.13)
- General: purpose and objectives, definitions, structure and organization, drafting, alignment with international standards and obligations (3.4.1 – 3.4.4)





Veterinary practice legislation

The purpose of veterinary practice legislation is to provide a basis for regulating **veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals** in the **interests of the public**

1. Establishes the veterinary statutory body (VSB) as the *competent authority for regulating veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals*.
2. Provides for the definition of the *officially recognised categories of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals*.
3. Describe the *general structure and system of regulation of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals* by the veterinary statutory body



Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

Veterinary statutory body means an autonomous regulatory body for veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals. (TAHC Glossary)

Autonomous = operates independently, without undue influence from political or commercial interests.

Regulatory body = has the authority to control veterinary practitioners

Veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals = regulates all categories of practitioners

Independence of the VSB is ensured through transparent governance and funding arrangements including an elected, representative council or equivalent, and financial arrangements for the collection and management of registration fees.



Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

1. Establish the VSB:

- Mandate, responsibilities, powers, competencies
- Structure and composition
- Operating rules and procedures
- Sources and uses of funding

2. Provide for the definition of the officially recognised categories of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals in the country, including:

- Prerogatives
- Minimum educational/training requirements
- Basic competencies
- Supervision



Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

3. Outline the basic system of controls:

- Recognition of qualifications (e.g. registration)
- Conditions to practice (e.g. licensing)
- Minimum initial and continuous educational requirements and competencies for the various professional categories of veterinarians and VPPs
- Adherence to codes of conduct
- Disciplinary actions



Importance of legislation around veterinary practice

Sets standards for the qualifications and competencies of veterinary practitioners and enforces those standards → **quality control**

Protects individual interests...

- Animals
- Owners
- Consumers
- Businesses
- Veterinary professionals and paraprofessionals

...and societal interests

- Public health
- Economy

As with all legislation, veterinary practice legislation promotes legal certainty, transparency, and accountability → trust and confidence.



Importance of covering veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs) in veterinary practice legislation

The WOAHA standards recommend including veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs) in veterinary practice legislation. (TAHC 3.4.6)

- Establishes the officially recognized categories of VPPs and their qualifications, prerogatives and competencies.
- Ensures all practice areas (professional and paraprofessional) are covered without gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies among the different categories of practitioners.
- Allows the VPP system to be tailored to national circumstances and needs.
- Facilitates VPP supervisory arrangements.



Veterinary legislation and regulation as enabling factors for the integration of VPP in the workforce

- Define, in law/regulation, an explicit, task-based scope of practice for VPPs (e.g., basic clinical care, vaccination, sample collection, animal health extension, biosecurity advice) tied to competency levels.
- Include delegated acts: allow veterinarians to delegate specified procedures to VPPs under defined conditions (supervision level, setting, client consent).
- Define clear accountability lines: VPPs accountable to the VSB for conduct and veterinarians accountable for delegated acts within supervision rules
- Clarify legal responsibilities: when VPPs act independently vs. under delegation, and veterinarian liability for delegated acts



Veterinary legislation and regulation as enabling factors for the integration of VPP in the workforce

- Provide legal protections for VPPs acting in private and public sectors
- National accreditation body or VSB-led mechanism to audit and reaccredit training providers regularly
- Give VSBs statutory authority to register VPPs, set standards, investigate complaints, and enforce sanctions
- Publish guidelines and policies for delegation, supervision levels, and remote supervision
- Establish appropriate disciplinary procedures and appeal mechanisms
- Structured supervision, referral and collaboration mechanisms

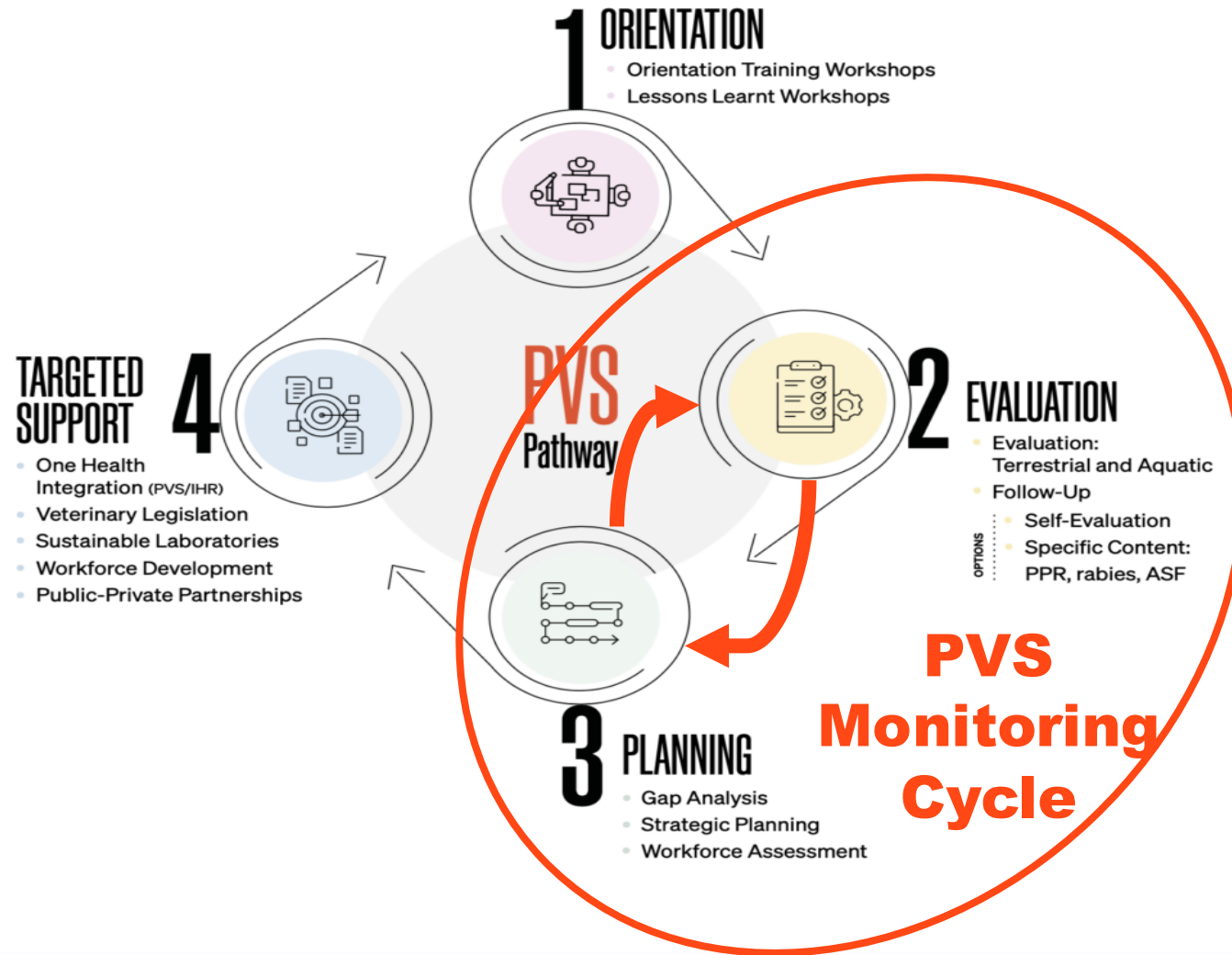



Veterinary legislation and regulation as enabling factors for the integration of VPP in the workforce

- Develop national competency frameworks for VPPs
- Implement competency-based education and accreditation of training institutions
- Implement standardized exams/internships.
- Require formal registration or licensing for VPPs after passing accredited training and competency assessment.
- Make ongoing continuing capacity development mandatory for license renewal; define minimum CPD hours and acceptable activities



The PVS Cycle



 Scan the QR code to learn more!



TARGETED
SUPPORT

4



- One Health Integration (PVS/IHR)
- Veterinary Legislation
- Sustainable Laboratories
- Workforce Development
- Public-Private Partnerships

Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP)

to identify gaps and weaknesses in national veterinary legislation, and to assist Members in revising or developing new legislation.

Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP)

Stage 1: Identification missions

Assess compliance of the national veterinary legislation with Chapter 3.4. of the WOAH Terrestrial Code
Provide recommendations for legal modernization

1 week in field (or remote)

Stage 2: Agreements

Support in modernising veterinary legislation
Strengthen the Member's capacity in legal drafting

6-month Preparatory Phase,
1-year Agreement (extendable)

Awareness raising on the importance of **quality legislation**

Skills transfer for legal drafting

Collaboration between technical (veterinary) and legal drafters

**Thank you for
your attention**

