



Linking veterinary para- professionals and veterinarians in Africa

**The perspective of the African Veterinary
Association (AVA)**



BAPTISTA, Maria A. J. S.

**Pretoria – Soth Africa
13-15 October / 2015**





PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia



**KEEP
CALM**

**MOST OF THEM
DON'T SPEAK
PORTUGUESE**



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia





Our greetings



- Congratulations and our thanks to the organisers, especially for the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) invitation, all in favour of the Reinforcement of Veterinary Governance in Africa Programme, which is important, always thinking about the future of this continent, characterized by large inequalities in human resources and its coverage, in terms of Veterinarians.



- As is said: ***"Tomorrow belongs to those who prepare themselves today. "***



According to OIE definition:

A VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL

Is a person who, for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, is authorised by the veterinary statutory body to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of *veterinary para-professional*) in a territory, and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a veterinarian.

The tasks for each category of *veterinary para-professional* should be defined by the *veterinary statutory body* depending on qualifications and training, and in accordance with need.



We are taking the example of the Namibian Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, which in their Act 1 of 2013 defines a veterinary para-professional as follows:

- Any person who is registered or deemed to be registered (in terms of this Act) to practise a veterinary para-profession which has as its object the rendering of services supplementing the services, deemed in terms of the rules to pertain specially to a veterinary profession, working under direction of a veterinarian.



Key words

O
I
E

- is authorised by the *veterinary statutory body* to carry out certain designated tasks
- (dependent upon the category of *veterinary para-professional*)
- under the responsibility and direction of a *veterinarian*.
- qualifications and training



N
A
M
I
B
I
E

- has as its object the rendering of services supplementing the services
- working under direction of a *veterinarian*



There are many categories of veterinary para-professionals (organized or not):

- Veterinary nurses (graduated)
- Veterinary technicians (intermediate)
- Veterinary technologists
- Animal Health Technicians
- Laboratory animal technologists
- Livestock technicians (intermediate)
- Assistants of veterinary
- Community-based animal health workers
- Livestock keepers
- Others





Point of view



- Many veterinarians are worried about emerging and re-emerging diseases, in this time that is increasing the role of veterinary para-professionals in surveillance, early disease detection and monitoring, when rapid response actions require capacity building activities on all levels.



The AVA agrees that the role of veterinary para-professionals has been very important in África as we can confirm in the geographical coverage of a reporting system of diseases in Tanzania, the first report in the case of Rinderpest in Uganda and Somali, in the case of a respiratory disease in camels in Etiopia, in Namibie, Tchad, Nigeria, Mauritanie, Mocambique, Côte d'Ivoire and others.⁸



As we know the cattle-breeding is the basis of food sustainability of many African countries struggling against hunger and poverty, and many of those countries have many rural areas; it becomes obvious that it is needed to evaluate the role of veterinarians in ensuring animal health, a form of food security for the human beings.

- In the other side is the problem of the health of dogs that in Africa play several important roles that go from the security of the owners until the invaluable help in getting the hunting, as staple food.

This situation leads us to a greater need for caring animal health which, given the shortage of veterinarians in many cases, is a serious problem that could be solved with the help of veterinary para-professionals, of course .



The problem



Although of these clear concepts, the use of veterinary para-professional has often been a controversial issue and resisted by veterinarians, because many times they don't act as a complement but they are obliged to play the role of the veterinarians, what has been considered as a problem.

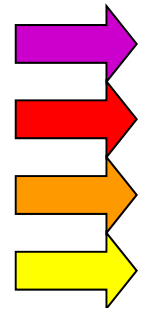
This situation raises a number of questions about the basic and continuing formation of those veterinary para-professionals that should be guaranteed that it becomes a solution and not another problem, what should be considered as a priority in training plans that benefit the continent as well as the adequacy of its framework.



Responsibility



- FAO suggests, and some countries have this practice, that the Veterinary Statutory Bodies should have the responsibility to include in its organisation the veterinary para-professional but, many african countries only have veterinary professional associations that do not have the same role and function as a Veterinary Statutory Body.



Our question is:

¿ Is there any International Organisation dedicated to this para-professionals?



PresenterMedia



International Veterinary Nurse and Technicians Association (IVNTA)



This Association exists to:

1. Maintain contact with veterinary nurse & technician associations around the world,
2. Provide a channel of open communication for members,
3. Offer help and advice to enquirers.

THE QUESTIONS ARE: ***“DOES THIS ASSOCIATION HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO LEAD THE PROCESS? WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP THEM TO BECOME STRONGER, WHICH WOULD ALSO BENEFIT THE VETERINARIANS AND OUR PARA-PROFESSIONAL?”***



***IVNTA



Despite contrasts between veterinary nursing / technician training and conditions in member countries there are similarities:

- 1. Veterinary nurses/ technicians **are a valuable part of the veterinary team**, 2. Veterinary nursing / technology **is developing and progressing rapidly on a global basis**, 3. Many countries have established a professional body to represent veterinary nursing / technician staff with the aim of developing professional standards and career structure for VNs and VTs in their country, 4. Veterinary nursing / technology **is becoming increasingly valued worldwide**.



IVNTA (21 members)

- Africa (5 members: see below)
- America (Canadá, USA)
- Asia (Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Turkey)
- Australia (Australia, New Zealand)
- Europe (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom)





AFRICAN MEMBERS



- IVNTA Cameroon (Catholic Concern for Animals)
- IVNTA Ghana (Ghana Veterinary Medical Technicians Association)
- IVNTA Kenya (Moses Kwereba Gathua)
- IVNTA South Africa (Veterinary Nurses Association of South Africa)
- IVNTA Sudan (Sudan Veterinary Nurses Association)



The perspective of the African Veterinary Association



The theme of OIE for Veterinary Education 2013 is our main key: *“Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession”*.

If we want to ensure this we have to:

- Help the African Veterinary Technicians Association to find the best organisation and links with other similars around the world (national, regional or international organisations), (the IVNTA for example), helping them to build their own autonomie.
- Establish a good parternship between AVA and AVTA and to find the best way to establish an effective cooperation that helps to solve problems of animal or public health.



Perspective of AVA (cont.)

- Redefine the categories of the veterinary para-professionals we have and that are needed in each country and the competences of each one and its responsibilities.
- Give a permanent support of Veterinary Services to the veterinary para-professionals.
- Prepare conditions for a permanent training and monitoring to the veterinary para-professionals.
- Redefine international/national policies, guidelines and legislation to support their effective role.





Perspective of AVA (cont.)

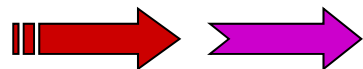
- Para-professionals must always have the supervision of Veterinarians and have an effective control to ensure adherence to ethical veterinary codes, what means that we must do an effort that a veterinary para-professional only works directed by a veterinarian, and does not, for example, make a diagnosis or prescribe any scheduled medicine to an animal, when the veterinary can be present, excepting the situations where the veterinary para-professional can be considered an specialist.





Our last word, which goes to the **African Veterinary Technicians Association**, GALVmed and other partners that also supported this event, is that it has been a very good initiative and we think that this first regional conference is the first step of a large network of collaborators which will help us to build and strengthening this linkage between veterinarians and its para-professionals, because as is also said in Africa ***"The echo of the first word will always lie in the heart ."***

- To this organisation our SAWABONA from the African Veterinary Association to mean that we respect you , we value you, and each of the African veterinary organizations is very important for the development project of AVA and its veterinarians.





We can look weak, but

When the cobwebs come together, they can tie up a lion.



Oie

WVA

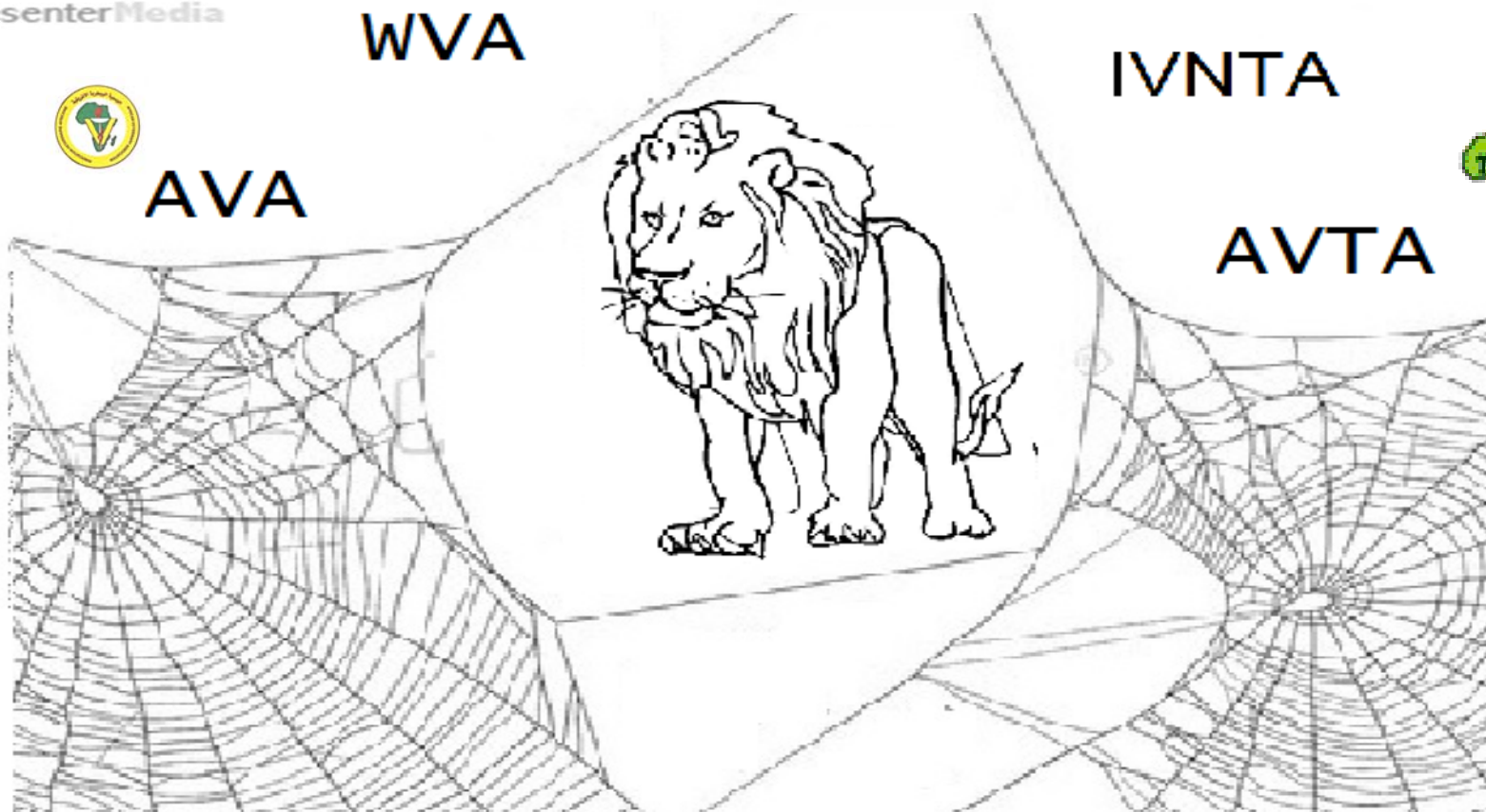
IVNTA



AVA



AVTA





PresenterMedia



UBUNTU

"I AM BECAUSE WE ARE"