STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION IN EDUCATION:

“EXPERIENCE FROM THE AFRICA REGION”

Proff Koos Coetzer and Gerry Swan
Faculty of Veterinary Science
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
WVA Prague, September 2013
Content

Background and context: Veterinary Education in Africa

• World Development and African Union Reports
• Perspective on global health
• Animal/Human/Ecosystem interfaces and Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA’s): context

Collaboration in education

• Undergraduate and Postgraduate training
• Continuing Professional Development
• One Health initiatives
• Accreditation and recognition of Veterinary training
• Regional Centres
• African Veterinary Information Portal (AfriVIP)
Background and context: Veterinary Education in Africa

• In 2008 the 30th World Development Report on agriculture, acknowledged the critical role that agriculture can play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

• Furthermore the African Union (AU) regards education as a key instrument in achieving its vision of developing quality human resources and contributing towards increased mobility of Africans around Africa. Their Plan of Action include the following focus areas:
  • Increased involvement of universities in the continent’s development efforts, including the development of the lower levels of education;
  • Identification and strengthening networks of Centres of Excellence to enhance the capacity of Africa to contribute to the global pool of knowledge and innovation;
  • The development of collaboration and partnerships between African Higher Education and public, civil society and corporate sectors;
  • The building of partnerships and networks among African institutions and organizations, and with those in the South and North
Background and context: Veterinary Education in Africa (continued)

- 46 Veterinary schools on the African continent: with the exception of the faculties in Cairo, Egypt (1827), Pretoria, South Africa (1920) and Khartoum, Sudan (1938), all other African veterinary schools were established after 1960.
- Training in most schools has focussed on producing veterinarians to serve their livestock sectors, with most veterinarians originally being employed by the state.
- Adjustment of curricula in veterinary faculties in sub-Saharan Africa has been primarily due to socio-economic reasons and increased privatisation of veterinary services.
- Ongoing curricular review and structural reforms are constrained by political inaptitude, the current level of funding and inadequate investment in most sub-Saharan faculties.
Background and context: Perspective on global Health

• The delivery of veterinary services is increasingly being accepted as a global public good: this places the veterinary profession under public scrutiny and awareness regarding its role in promoting global animal and human health.

• Outbreaks such as Avian Influenza, BSE, foot and mouth disease and bluetongue, that had a global impact, illustrate the interconnectivity and interdependence of countries.

• Global issues affecting animal and human health are as relevant in Africa as in any other developed and developing country, although the priorities may differ, also among countries in Africa.

• Developing countries remain focused on inadequate food supply, whereas developed countries are more concerned about newly emerging food-borne pathogens.

• Brown et. al, 2006 listed 12 essential criteria and characteristics of a global veterinarian.
Collaboration: Undergraduate education

• Regional Deans meetings: Eastern, Central and Southern Africa: OIE funded. Developed an implementation plan for greater collaboration and harmonisation of veterinary education. The 3 goals are:
  • Develop communication and collaboration mechanisms.
  • Curriculum review: Day-one competencies, self-evaluation report, delivery mode, OER.
  • Develop collaboration with northern partners.
• Exchange of students of staff (South-South-North and South-North collaboration): promote leadership skills, interpersonal skills, work in multidisciplinary teams, global exposure, interact with different cultures, and team work.
• Accreditation and recognition of veterinary training (see later).
• Contribution and sharing teaching and other materials: AfriVIP (see later).
Regional Centres

• Meeting the needs of the full scope of undergraduate veterinary training becomes more difficult when there is only one veterinary faculty in a country taking responsibility for all its veterinary training requirements.

• The high level of veterinary clinical training in companion animals which is common in the developed world is also not required in most parts of Africa.

• The excellent clinical facilities and veterinary academic hospital of international standard that exist in South Africa could for example be recognised as a regional centre for clinical training, particularly in companion animals.
Regional Centres (continued)

• Recognise existing, or developing new facilities as regional centres of competence in specialized fields of veterinary service such as wildlife, exotic species, poultry health and production, pig health and production, and aquaculture and fisheries. These are fields that are very important to most countries but require smaller number of veterinarians to be trained per annum.

• This will provide the necessary recognition of faculties in the Region and give an opportunity for faculties to focus and to be recognised by international bodies such as the OIE and FAO.

• The development of regional areas of competence in postgraduate training can similarly be developed and recognised.
Accreditation and recognition of veterinary training

• There is a societal expectation that all veterinary qualifications are of similar basic competencies and standard: higher standards employed by the major accrediting bodies in the USA, Europe, United Kingdom and Australasia.

• However, it is unrealistic for the international community to expect, and unlikely that all faculties in Africa will be able to meet the full scope of envisaged global accreditation requirements due to mainly socio-economic constraints and political priorities.
Accreditation and recognition of veterinary training (continued)

- According to our knowledge, external examination is the only form of external review used by most veterinary schools in sub-Saharan Africa.

- The existing experience of the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) in the licensure of veterinarians and para-veterinarians and setting of minimum standards for undergraduate and postgraduate veterinary specialist training, should be recognised and seized as an opportunity by other veterinary faculties in the SADC region, and possibly wider in sub-Saharan Africa.

- Sharing of this experience can serve as an interim arrangement with the purpose of instituting a regional accreditation body for example for southern and eastern Africa within the next 5 y.

- This accreditation body will then take the responsibility of setting minimum standards of veterinary training and for the accreditation of veterinary faculties in the Region.
Collaboration: Postgraduate training

• Joint MSc and PhD degrees: Erasmus Mundus model in European Union.
• Joint supervision of students: MSc and PhD. (South-South and South-North)
• Sharing expertise and content of postgraduate modules e.g. One Health and Wildlife Health modules.
• Cross-border accreditation/recognition of modules.
• Postgraduate training: should not only focus on the technical, interpersonal and leadership skills but also on other enabling skills, including institutional management of partnership and collaboration networks.
Collaboration: Continuing Professional Development

- OIE and AU (through Common Wealth Veterinary Association initiative) regard CPD activities as crucial in strengthening veterinary services in Africa.
- As part of the CVA OER Africa and other partners’ pilot CPD modules in 4 countries in East Africa.
- Cross-border accreditation and recognition of CPD activities by veterinary councils and associations.
Collaboration in One Health (OH)

• Human/Animal/Ecosystem interfaces: more complex in most parts of Africa than elsewhere.

• Several OH networks in Africa to address these health challenges e.g. SACIDS, Afrique 1, Nexgen, and Universities: Great opportunity for collaboration between these networks in the South (South-South collaboration) and with OH initiatives in the North (South-North collaboration).

• Joint OH “summer” schools/symposia: share experiences, practices and results: building of community of practice.

OER

The Internet and digital technologies have transformed how people learn. Educational resources are no longer static and scarce, but adaptable and widely available, allowing educational institutions, teachers, and learners to actively participate in a global exchange of knowledge via Open Educational Resources (OER).

• OER are free and openly licensed educational materials that can be used for teaching, learning, research, and other purposes

• OER may freely be used, remixed and redistributed without charge

• OER often have a Creative Commons license that state specifically how the material may be used, reused, adapted, and shared.
Creative Commons licenses...

...help creators retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make use of their work

...ensure licensors get the credit for their work they deserve

...serve as the baseline, on top of which licensors can choose to grant additional permissions when deciding how they want their work to be used.
AfriVIP: Vision

To develop and sustain AfriVIP under an open licensing framework as the authoritative and quality-assured global online portal of information and credit-bearing, life-long learning opportunities, resources, discussion, and interaction about uniquely African veterinary and allied science matters.
AfriVIP: Vision

This will be achieved by drawing together the substantial intellectual capital, information and research and educational materials through a dynamic and evolving network of Faculties of Veterinary Science working in Africa and further afield.
Primary rationale for establishing AfriVIP

- Increased availability of high quality, relevant, research and learning materials.
- Creative Commons licence framework remove restrictions around copying existing resources, open licensing holds potential for reducing the cost of accessing educational and research materials.
- The principle of allowing adaptation of materials can contribute to enabling learners to be active participants in educational processes.
- The potential of openly licensed resources is best achieved through a collaborative partnership of people working in communities of practice, preferably across institutions.
Specific objectives: AfriVIP

- Establish an online knowledge hub, which becomes the preferred point of access to information and research and educational materials on veterinary sciences across Africa aimed primarily at veterinary and paraveterinary professionals and students across and beyond Africa.

- Share experience of, expertise in, and resources for veterinary sciences using openly licensed educational and research materials.

- Aggregation and access to other relevant repositories in Africa and further afield to ensure that the AfriVIP becomes a preferential point of access for veterinary and paraveterinary professionals and students, farmers, agri-businesses, governments, NGOs, and other key stakeholders seeking and sharing veterinary sciences information, educational knowledge and content and research findings in Africa.
Specific objectives: AfriVIP (*continued*)

• Share research on critical issues in the use of openly licensed materials for veterinary science course design and delivery, supporting both formal academic programmes and CPD activities.

• Advocate for enabling policies and environments for the sharing of resources, experience, and expertise to improve education and knowledge transfer in veterinary sciences.
The Development Pathway

1. Awareness and Strategic value: OER

2. Internal Faculty repository: Identification and development

3. Content-rich Learning Environment, e.g. UG, PG, CPD

4. External repositories and links: Identification and development, e.g. SAVA, Vet Faculties, OIE, FAO, AU, AHEAD, CVA

5. Credit-bearing (e.g. CPD) short courses for life-long learning and career development

6. Marketing strategy

7. Income generation (Business plan)
Veterinary and agricultural portals and websites

Repository?

Veterinary and para-veterinary students and professionals, farmers, public

East and Southern African Veterinary Faculties
Commonwealth veterinary association / African Union

Others?

South African Veterinary Association
Suid-Afrikaanse Veterinêre Vereniging
Open Environment

Student Login (Username & Password)

Under & Post Graduate Courseware (Communication, Assessment, Marks, etc.)

Content

Student Login

Registration

Login

Student Content

Print certificate

Public & farmers

Database of CPD and other materials with an Open License

Option to collect credits / CPD points

Continuing Education University of Pretoria

Online Quiz for credits or CPD points

Study / Read CPD content / article

Payment

Professional Vet & para-veterinary Professionals

Online Quiz for credits or CPD points

Payment
Product mix

Free access

Information/content

Registration

Free access

Whole qualifications

Part qualifications

Credits

Short courses (Modules)

Credits

Structured CPD activities (sub-modules)
OIE Collaborating Centre for Training in Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Health and Management
OIE Collaborating Centre for Training in Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Health and Management

Focus: One Health

- MSc (Animal/Human/Ecosystem Health)
- Certificated and credit-bearing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities

Target groups
Animal, human and environmental health officers
OIE Collaborating Centre for Training in Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Health and Management

CPD Programmes / Packages:

- Livestock health, management and production
- Emerging and re-emerging diseases
- Ecosystem health
- Public health / Food safety
- Welfare
- Wildlife health, management and production
- Zoonoses
- Arthropod vectors
- Trade and marketing of animal commodities and products
- Health management tools
- Policy
Questions and comments

Thank you!