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for Animal Health
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Report of the second meeting of the WOAH ad hoc group on Community-based animal health workers (CAHWs)

Paris, May 2023

Executive summary

The second meeting of the CAHWs ad hoc group (henceforth referred to as “the Group”) took place from April 25th to 27th 2023, at WOAHA Headquarters in Paris.

A total of 8 experts were able to be present for this first face-to-face meeting of the Group. They were welcomed by WOAHA Deputy Director General of Institutional Affairs and Regional Activities, Dr Jean-Philippe Dop, the WOAHA Secretariat (Dr Xyomara Chavez, Dr Johan Oosthuizen and Dr David Sherman) and a representative of VSF-International (Dr Alexia Rondeau).

This was also the opportunity to formally introduce Dr Nandipha Toyota Ndudane as the Chairperson of the Group.

The 3-day meeting had as its main objective to develop and deliver a list of competencies which will be the basis for the subsequent development of the CAHWs curricula guidelines.

Through informal interactions, formal presentations and breakout group discussions, the Group exchanged personal and professional insights regarding CAHW training or programmes and to share different approaches and perspectives for identifying the most important competences to be included in CAHW training. These collaborative efforts resulted in the identification of 11 Spheres of Activities with 37 related competencies as described below in the full report.

Dr Ndudane, ended this session by congratulating the Group for their collegiality, inputs, contributions, efforts and the timely accomplishment of this meeting’s objective.

1. Welcome and opening remarks

Dr Jean Philippe Dop, Deputy Director General of Institutional Affairs and Regional Activities welcomed the Group and confirmed two main objectives of the CAHWs guidelines:

- To identify core technical knowledge that all CAHWs should have, keeping flexibility for local needs, in order to provide framework for training institutions and training of trainers to build competency-based training programmes.
- To serve as a useful tool for veterinary statutory bodies to provide them with a frame of reference for them to develop criteria for them to know which CAHWs to register.

Dr Dop also reviewed the history of the earlier ad hoc Group on the Role of Private Veterinarians and Para-Professionals In the Provision of Animal Health Services which met in 2003 and identified CAHWs as a category of veterinary para-professional.

The Group also had the opportunity to interact and better know each other through an ice breaker.

2. Previous meeting takeaways

- The general work dynamic will involve a two-step approach: first the development of competencies, followed second by the development of the curriculum.
- The Group was encouraged to use the VPP guidelines for guidance and where possible as a supportive document but advised that they don't have to adopt the same methodology.
- CAHWs guidelines will involve a modular approach: Guidelines should have enough flexibility for training providers and institutions to create their own curriculum selecting some competencies and their associated learning outcomes.
- There was discussion as to whether or not CAHWs were a category of VPPs. The question was deemed relevant because it was noted that the perception varied in different country settings, as some of them consider CAHWs as VPPs, but others don't. Hence the importance of the development of these guidelines to support acceptance and recognition of CAHWs.

3. Progress since first meeting in February 2023

- **CAHWs working definition revised by the Group:** "A Community Animal Health Worker (CAHW) is a person selected from or by their own community and provided with short, initial, or recurring vocational training to perform very basic animal health and animal husbandry-related services, who is accountable to a VPP, a veterinarian, or an appropriate official; and who is currently active in their community. The CAHW can also play an important role in a range of sanitary tasks such as disease reporting."
- **Tasks:** The Group was asked to provide feedback on the Spheres of Activities (SoA) presented by Dr Johan Oosthuizen's report. This SoA's were propositions that the Group needed to review, modify and/or agree when relevant.

4. Group presentations on topics requested by the WOAH team

The Group was given the opportunity to present their own experiences related to CAHWs topics. Presentations were as follows:

- Toyota Ndudane: "[The new role of CAHWs in South Africa within provincial Veterinary Services](#)"
- Robyn Alders: "[Economic, social and environmental sustainability of poultry vaccinators](#)"
- Satender Arya: "[Qualifications/national occupational standards: challenges and plausible solutions for CAHW training](#)"
- Chris Bartels: "[Experience on curriculum development, training of trainers and regulation of CAHWs in Cambodia and Myanmar](#)"
- Andy Catley: "[CAHWs and global humanitarian standards – the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards](#)"

- Tim Leyland: "[Findings of an evaluation of CAHWs in the Horn of Africa with particular reference to South Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia](#)"
- Elise Le Bihan & Veronique Renault : "[Competency-based approach applied to CAHWs training curricular: competency-based approach – principles and importance + proposed list of CAHWs competencies, extracted from the literature review and from Dr Renault's expertise](#)"

Two experts of the Group, who were unable to attend to this meeting, sent their presentations:

- Dilip Bhandari: "[Heifer International field experience of CAHW program in Asia](#)"
- Gachengo Muriu: "[Animal health auxiliaries \(AHAs\) training center located at Marialou in South Sudan](#)"

General conclusions following the presentations and discussions:

- CAHWs can be employed by the government, by the community or clients in specific. It will depend on the country setting.
- In order for a CAHW program to be sustainable, it is important to consider the economic, social and environmental aspects of a country.
- National occupational standards must be customised to particular countries or regions in order to consider the diverse species/production systems present.
- For cost-effectiveness purposes, CAHWs training may also need further assessment in order to properly provide relevant knowledge.
- Shorter training with focused content and more CAHWs trained may lead to a bigger impact on Veterinary Services. This impact will depend on the number of active CAHWs and number of CAHWs trained and also on available budgets.
- Conditions identified for effective CAHWs services were summarised as: Accessible, Available, Affordable, Acceptable, and of good quality.
- When building a training plan, there are two fundamental questions: who is the audience and what competencies need to be delivered.

5. Priorities and considerations for AHG in developing Competency and Curricula guidelines

After a general discussion led by the Chairperson, the Group highlighted the following points:

- Importance of considering the One Health approach and disaster management while developing the CAHWs guidelines.
- Need of reflection on how to consider and include relevant indigenous knowledge
- Disease surveillance reporting and a well organised high-level reporting structure need to be addressed in CAHWs guidelines since it will provide CAHWs a fair value for their work.
- Regarding the CAHWs guidelines, WOAHA needs to deliver a harmonised product in which the needs of communities, donors and the Organisation will be addressed.
- Useful to define which are the common core knowledge/competencies for CAHWs, for a better guideline structure.

6. Subgroup discussions: Finalisation of Sphere of Activities, developing of the list activities and the list of competencies

The Group worked as a whole and in smaller groups over two and a half days. A common work document template was provided and used for this matter.

The main objective of this second meeting was to develop a list of competencies, which the Group managed to deliver on time.

In total, 11 Spheres of Activities were created and will be listed below. To keep in mind that this is a working list that needs to be validated and finalised by the Group through May 2023.

1. Scope of work for CAHWs
2. Animal husbandry and production
3. Basic veterinary science

4. Sampling procedures
5. Basic clinical procedures
6. Animal diseases
7. Veterinary medicinal products
8. Animal disease surveillance, prevention and control
9. Food hygiene
10. Business and management skills
11. Communication and community engagement

The final agreed list of competencies will be shared in the following report, as some modifications may need to be validated by the Group during the third meeting.

7. **Logistics**

Regarding tasks for the Group:

- Creation of a Subgroup (Robyn Alders, Chris Bartels and Elise Le Bihan) to work on the introduction and context around the competency document, informing users how the guidelines should be used and the contexts in which CAHWs will work. The outline will be drafted for next meeting.
- Secretariat in charge of cleaning the Excel sheet of the draft list of agreed Spheres of Activity and competencies, and transferring it into a Word document for easier future editing.

Regarding the dates for next meetings:

Meeting #	Type	Date	Hour
3	Virtual	06-07 of June	12M - 3PM per day
4	Virtual	25-26 of July	
5	Virtual	21-22 of September	
6	Face-to-face	17-18-19 of October	10AM – 5PM per day
7	Virtual	21-22 of November	12M - 3PM per day
8	Virtual	30-31 January 2024	

8. **Closing session**

The Group expressed satisfaction with the meeting's work, and the meeting's Chairperson thanked everyone for their contributions. On Wednesday, June 26, WOAHA also arranged a supper where the Group had the chance to further explore French cuisine in a cordial setting while getting to know each other better.

9. **Annex**

- Subgroup discussions' [working document](#)

Second meeting of the WOAH ad hoc Group for the development of competency and curricula guidelines for community-based animal health workers (CAHWs)

April 25 – 27, 2023 | 10 AM – 5PM (CEST)
WOAH Headquarters, Paris – France

AGENDA ITEMS

Chairperson: Dr Nandipha Toyota Ndudane

Day 1: Tuesday 25 April

Item 1 Welcome from Jean-Philippe Dop, Deputy Director General of WOAH, introductory remarks and adoption of agenda | David Sherman and Nandipha Ndudane (10 minutes)

Item 2 Break the ice: WOAH trivia + 2 truths 1 lie | Xyomara Chavez (10 minutes)

Item 3 First meeting takeaways | David Sherman and Johan Oosthuizen (30 minutes)

- General comments

Item 4 CAHWs project progress: Feb 2023 – Apr 2023 | David Sherman and Xyomara Chavez (20 minutes)

Item 5 Presentation of topics by AHG members on topics requested by the WOAH team (10 minutes each + 5 minutes of questions)

- Nandipha Ndudane: “The new role of CAHWs in South Africa within provincial Veterinary Services”
- Robyn Alders: “Economic, social and environmental sustainability of poultry vaccinators”
- Satender Arya: “Qualifications/ National Occupational Standards: challenges & Possible Solutions for CAHW training”

~ Short pause (10 min) ~

- Chris Bartels: “Experience on curriculum development, training of trainers and regulation of CAHWs in Cambodia and Myanmar”
- Dilip Bhandari: “Field experience in Asia: Sustainable models for CAHWs intervention” (*to be confirmed*)
- Andrew Catley: “CAHWs and global humanitarian standards - the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards”
- Tim Leyland: “Findings of an evaluation of CAHWs in the Horn of Africa with particular reference to S. Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia”
- Elise Le Bihan and Véronique Renault: “Competency-based approach applied to CAHWs' training curricula: Competency-based approach - principles and importance + Proposed list of CAHWs competencies, extracted from the literature review and from Dr Renault's expertise”
- Gachengo Muriu Matindi: “Pastoralist communities overview in Kenya” (*to be confirmed*)

Item 6 Priorities and consideration for AHG in developing Competency and Curricula guidelines | Nandipha Ndudane (60 minutes)

Item 7 Subgroup discussions (3 groups of 3): finalisation of Spheres of Activities (SoA) | All

Item 8 Closing of Day 1 | Nandipha Ndudane (5 minutes)

Day 2: Wednesday 26 April

Item 9 Recap of Day 1 | Nandipha Ndudane (10 minutes)

Item 10 Subgroup discussions: Developing of the list of activities relevant to SoAs | All

~ Lunch pause (1H30) ~

Item 10 (ctd) Subgroup discussions: Developing of the list of activities relevant to SoAs | All

Item 11 Discussions around the topics to consider for Competency guidelines development | All

Item 12 Closing of Day 2 + Dinner at “Le Petits Villiers” (75 Avenue de Villiers, 75017)

Day 3: Thursday 27 April

Item 13 Recap of Day 2

Item 14 Subgroup discussions: Developing of the list of Competencies

~ Lunch pause (1H30) ~

Item 14 (ctd) Subgroup discussions: Developing of the list of Competencies

Item 15 Logistics | Xyomara Chavez (15 minutes)

- Dates for next meetings
- Way forward

Item 16 Closing of Day 3 | Nandipha Ndudane and Barbara Alessandrini

ANNEX: List of pre-meeting reading materials/action items

- [Choose your modules](#) document
- [Competency matrix](#) document

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS OF THE WOAH *AD HOC* GROUP

Dr Robyn Alders

Senior Consulting Fellow
Chatham House Global Health
Programme
AUSTRALIA
Robyn.Alders@anu.edu.au

Dr Satender Arya

Chief Executive Officer
Agriculture Skill Council of India
INDIA
ceo@asci-india.com

Mr Chris Bartels

Founder
Animal Health Works
MONGOLIA
chrisb@animalhealth.works

Dr Dilip Bhandari

(absent on this meeting)
Senior Director of Programs
Heifer International
UNITED STATES
Dilip.Bhandari@heifer.org

Dr Andrew Catley

Research Director and Professor
Tufts University
UNITED KINGDOM
andrew.catley@tufts.edu

Dr Mamta Dhawan

(absent on this meeting)
International consultant
INDIA
drmamtadhawan45@gmail.com

Ms. Elise Le Bihan

Head of the PRISME training
platform
CIRAD
FRANCE
elise.lebihan@cirad.fr

Dr Tim Leyland

Co-Director
Lifstock Inc. Ltd
NEW ZEALAND
tjleyland@yahoo.com

Dr Gachengo Muriu Matindi

(absent on this meeting)
International consultant
KENYA
gachengomuriu@gmail.com

Dr Nandipha Ndudane

Principal
Tsolo Agriculture and Rural
Development Institute
SOUTH AFRICA
sgqanyaza@gmail.com

Dr Véronique Renault

Regional Manager for South East Asia
AVSF
LAOS
v.renault@avsf.org

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Dr Alexia Rondeau

CAHWs project manager
VSF-International
BELGIUM
a.rondeau@vsf-international.org

WOAH TEAM

Ms Barbara Alessandrini

Head
Capacity building department
b.alessandrini@woah.org

Dr Xyomara Chavez

CAHWs project manager
Capacity building department
x.chavez@woah.org

Ms Marie Lemeunier

Resource Mobilisation and Grants
Management Officer
Engagement & Investment
Department
m.lemeunier@woah.org

Dr Johan Oosthuizen

CAHWs project consultant
Capacity building department
j.oosthuizen_ext@woah.org

Dr David Sherman

Workforce development Programme
coordinator
Capacity building department
d.sherman@woah.org
