



The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Republic of Liberia
In collaboration with
The African Union, Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
REINFORCING VETERINARY GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA
(VET-GOV) Program

National Consultative Multidisciplinary Stakeholders Workshop (NCMSW)
May 06-10, 2013, Monrovia, Liberia

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

In collaboration with the AU-IBAR, the Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Liberia and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the National Consultative Multidisciplinary Stakeholders Workshop on the establishment of Livestock Policy Hub (LPH) took place from the **6th – 10th May 2013**, Monrovia, Liberia. It was attended by 42 participants representing stakeholders including senior staff of state and non-state actors (Government, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Private Sector Organizations, Academia, the National Livestock Policy Focal Point (NLPFP) and AU-IBAR VET-GOV Program staff.

(List of participants: Annex 1):

The overall objective of the workshop is to provide a better understanding of the VET-GOV program, paving the way to the improvement of the livestock sector through related policies, animal health strategies and veterinary legislations in the ECOWAS region.

WHEREAS, the workshop specific objectives are:

- To introduce and create awareness for the VET-GOV programs;
- To clarify activities that have taken place since the start of the VET-GOV program;
- To clarify the concept and agree on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the LPH;
- To clarify the concept and agree on the ToRs for the NLPFP;
- To identify possible members of the Policy Hub (PH) for the VET-GOV Program;

- To discuss possible structures of the PH;
- To validate country entry points as presented at the Review and Planning Workshop with NLPFPs; and
- To identify and deliberate on possible partnerships that can be established with relevant institutions and organizations.

WHEREAS, during the opening session a key note address was delivered on behalf of **Professor Ahmed El-Sawalhy**, Director of AU-IBAR. In his remarks the Director stated the AU-IBAR mandates and gave briefing on the VET-GOV program specific and general objectives, drew attention to the concept of the PHs and expected results and emphasized the role of the LPH as a mechanism for an inclusive approach that brings together representatives of public sector, non-state actors, private sector, civil society, NGOs, research, academia, and farmers organizations at national and regional levels in the implementation of the VET-GOV Program;

WHEREAS, Dr. Sizi Subah, Deputy Minister for Technical Services, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) stressed the objective of the LPH in Liberia and its specific objectives.

WHEREAS, the Acting Minister, Dr Moses Zinnah welcomed all participants and said that livestock is very strategic for the overall food security of Liberia and emphasized how Liberia is in full support of such policy workshop. On behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Dr. Florence A. Chenoweth, Dr. Zinnah declared the workshop officially opened for deliberations.

WHEREAS, the proceedings of the workshop conducted during three days enabled the participants to discuss the following issues:

- Enhanced understanding of the VET-GOV Program;
- Enhanced understanding of the concept of PH and its management at country level;
- Enhanced understanding of the concept of NLPFPs;
- Enhanced understanding of the concept of communication strategy and its management at country level;
- Identification of gaps, entry points and strategies for engagement;
- Clarification of functional linkages with CAADP and identification of strategies for engagement;
- Identification and deliberation on possible partnerships that can be established with relevant institutions and organizations, and
- Development and adaptation of policy tools and guidelines.

WHEREAS, after fruitful deliberations, the NCMSW recommends the following:

1) Establishment and Operationalization of the National LPH

- a. Establishment of a national LPH in Liberia and provide means and measures to ensure commitment, ownership and running of the Hub;**
- b. The LPH will be hosted within the MoA and linked to the Livestock Bureau;**
- c. The attached structure of the national LPH will constitute the basis for formation of the hub for further actions to be taken;**
- d. Sustaining the operations of the LPH through recurrent national budgets;**
- e. Sharing, reviewing and implementing the Policy Guidelines for the Livestock sector of Liberia;**
- f. ECOWAS to institutionalize the support to the LPH in terms of coordination, integration, harmonization and backstopping.**

2) Inclusion of Livestock in CAADP Process

- a. Linkages are to be created between the LPH with the CAADP national and regional teams in charge of developing and monitoring the national CAADP compacts;**
- b. Follow up on the following activities proposed under the livestock sub-program of the LASIP**
 - Rebuild veterinary services, including quarantine areas at border crossings;
 - Improve the institutional environment and infrastructure for livestock, and strengthen zoo sanitary standards.
 - Strengthen coordination between the MOA and other agencies such as the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare [MOHSW] and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) to better regulate and expand trade in livestock products.
 - Review and upgrade existing legislation and regulations pertaining to veterinary services and sanitation.
 - Exploit common pastoral property resources of the country.
 - Expand existing programs to re-stock the national herd, with a focus on small ruminants.
 - Initiate micro-projects to pilot animal production centers in selected villages.
- c. Sharing the CAADP Compact status with stakeholders**

3) Gaps and entry points

- a. **The attached listed gaps and proposed engagement entry points will constitute the agenda for the LPH first year meetings;**
- b. **The need for adequate funding to the livestock sector in general and the LPH in particular from the national budgets to implement these action plans and sustain the activities of the LPH beyond VET-GOV program;**
- c. **Follow up on the implementation of the Food and Agricultural Policy and Strategies (FAPS);**
 - Developing and enforcing comprehensive livestock regulations and operational rules and mechanism of enforcement, including technical standards for safety and quality control of the animals and livestock products;
 - Strengthening institutional framework for inter-ministerial coordination between MOHSW and MOA on respective roles and responsibilities;
 - Designating entry points for livestock entering Liberia that manned by technically competent personnel;
 - Supporting private sector involvement in the development of appropriate infrastructure (feed mills, hatcheries, abattoirs, processing and products development plants) that will be functioning and producing competitive products by ensuring appreciable access to credit and other financial and inputs services;
 - Implementing the ECOWAS protocols on transhumance and the Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS) for disaster management and impending forage shortage;
 - Protecting the water catchments areas, while constructing and maintaining water sources for livestock;
 - Promoting livestock stocking according to land carrying capacity to avoid soils erosion and degradation;
 - Providing technical support services on manure and bio-gas production and utilization;
 - Promoting private veterinary services delivery and private-public partnership in service delivery;
 - Strengthening technical support services on Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) control and eradication through the development and strengthening of veterinary laboratory system, infrastructure and facilities for livestock research and linking research-extension-farmers that value Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK);
 - Implementing and strengthening zoo-sanitary infrastructures and inspectorate services in harmony with the national and regional policies;

- Creating awareness, Research and Development (R&D) on biotechnology and bio-safety and bio-gas production;
- Promoting and strengthening a participatory livestock extension services to harmonize services provision and coordinate livestock data collection to finally establish a comprehensive management information system for the livestock sector.

d. On post-conflict issues:

- Support post-conflict livestock development programs;
- Initiate and implement livestock productivity recovery programs; and
- Retaining/maintaining Liberia membership in international organizations

Done in Monrovia, Liberia on May 10th, 2013