THE FIRST ESOLT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
2nd June 2016, Sheraton Hotel, Djibouti

ESOLT PSC Communiqué

In partnership with FAO
Members of the PSC who participated in the 1st ESOLT PSC meeting held on June 21, 2016

Names
1. Minister of Livestock and Animal Husbandry Puntland - Abdi Osman Mohamed
2. Director General MLFR - Mohammed Omar Nur
3. Director General MOLAH - Ahmed Abdi Shire
4. Essa Nur Liban - Veterinarian and MOL representative
5. OM Puntland Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Osman Mohamed Mohamud
6. Advisor MLFR - Ali Sheik Golool
7. FAO Agribusiness Officer - Abubakari Saeed Bancie
8. FAO livestock Coordinator - Khalid Saeed
9. EU Representative - Marino Vinci
10. IGAD representative - Dr Wamalwa Kinyajui
11. Prof James Wabacha - AU-IBAR
12. Dr Henry Wamwayi - AU-IBAR
13. Dr George Matete - AU-IBAR
14. Gueladio Aly Thiam - AU-IBAR
15. Mohamud Hassan Ali - AU-IBAR
16. Catherine Oduor - AU-IBAR
17. Grace Uwamwezi - AU-IBAR

INTRODUCTION
The project “Enhancing Somali Livestock Trade” (ESOLT), is a 30-month project that aims to strengthen the access to markets of Somali livestock commodities through enhancing the capacities of Somali public and private sector institutions in key aspects to enhance the competitiveness of Somali livestock.

The overall objective of the project is: To improve the livelihoods and enhance resilience to shocks and disasters of livestock-dependent households in Somalia

The Specific objective is: To enhance market access of Somali livestock and livestock products

The ESOLT project has three key result areas, namely:
Result 1. Competiveness of Somali livestock in international markets enhanced

Result 2. Compliance to market requirements for trade in livestock commodities improved

Result 3. Governance of Somali livestock value chains improved

The implementation of the ESOLT project started in November 2014 and it is jointly coordinated by the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), FAO-Somalia and line ministries responsible for Somali livestock.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been constituted and is expected to hold its meetings bi-annually to review technical and financial performance of the project and also discuss and agree on its work plan and budgets for the following months.

The 1st ESOLT PSC meeting was held on 21st June 2016 at the Sheraton Hotel in Djibouti, back-to-back with the meeting of the Reinforcing Animal Health Services in Somalia (RAHS) project.
THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PSC MEETING

The PSC meeting had the following specific objectives:

1. To review project progress reports, including technical and financial reports;
2. To discuss and approve the work plan and budget of the project;
3. To make recommendations to improve the performance of the project and facilitate coherent implementation of the project, including monitoring and evaluation;
4. To strengthen coordination and information sharing with complementary interventions in Somalia;
5. To ensure the full participation and coordination of stakeholders in the implementation of the ESOLT project activities.

CONSIDERATIONS

Noting that livestock trade is important for the Somali economy, and the need for an inclusive steering committee that ensures and builds dialogue amongst Somali stakeholders and appreciating its role in enhanced coordination, providing guidance and improving the delivery of project results;

Noting the special contribution of the steering committee in consolidating and integrating strategies, defining roles and responsibilities and building stronger collaboration;

Cognizant of the low involvement of the Somali institutions and stakeholders in the design and implementation of livestock projects and recognizing the need for Somali participation and leadership of the Steering committee of the ESOLT project which is a nation-wide Project;

Noting that the delays in the recruitment of project field staff have resulted in the late start and slow rate of implementation of field activities to date;

Considering, the need for effective decisions of the steering committee

Recognizing, the need to harmonize project messages and information flow on livestock trade and marketing across the different regions of the country and the need to sustainably enhance capacity of Somali institutions in implementing activities;

Recognizing, the role of M&E in assessing the progress of implementation and providing lessons for improving on-going and future interventions as well as in building the capacity of Somali institutions and stakeholders in overall project delivery;

Considering, that communication and visibility of the project is important in highlighting the EU contribution to the Somali livestock sector and the roles of the implementing partners and Somali institutions in implementing the project;

Recognizing, the need to explain the allocation of activity budgets and the related expenditures of the different ESOLT project activities by budget lines, while appreciating that projects do not necessarily allocate budgets on a regional basis but based on their contribution to project results;

Considering, the challenges of disbursement of funds for implementing specific activities in Central/South Somalia;
Recognizing, the priority interventions identified by the stakeholders in the different areas of Somalia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Project Steering Committee meeting:

• Reiterates its commitment towards the smooth and rapid implementation of the ESOLT project
• Recommends that mechanisms to improve consultations and participation of Somali stakeholders and line Ministries in the endorsement and approval of projects proposed by AU-IBAR and EU be identified and implemented at all stages including project design, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
• Urges the implementing partners to make sure they are results-oriented in project implementation and that they critically look at the cost-benefits of each activity to ensure they are effective, efficient and sustainable.
• The PSC endorses the Terms of Reference for a one nation-wide Project Steering Committee with an amendment to incorporate a Somali institution as co-chair based on consultation and feedback by the respective Directors General's. The Director Generals of the Federal Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range (MLFR), the Ministry of Livestock, Somaliland and the Ministry of Livestock and Animal Husbandry of the Puntland State to hold consultations on proper modalities for Somali co-chairing of the PSC. The Director Generals to jointly report on the outcome of their deliberations and agreement in this regard within 30 days of the PSC meeting.
• The ESOLT project to develop strategies and articulate mechanisms and structures for the rapid implementation of activities and follow-up of PSC recommendations and action points.
• The project and stakeholder institutions in Somalia to enhance coordination and integration mechanisms with the use of coherent messages for dissemination to stakeholders in all the regions. The project report be submitted at end of July 2016.
• AU-IBAR makes every effort to finalize the recruitment of project staff by July 2016.
• AU-IBAR and the implementing partners improve the financial management systems of the line ministries to ease disbursement of funds managed directly by the line Ministries. AU-IBAR conducts financial management capacity assessment of MLFR and hold a meeting with them to agree on the way forward.
• AU-IBAR and FAO requests early for a no-cost extension of the ESOLT project from the EU.
• All monitoring and evaluation activities of the project to involve Somali institutions and stakeholders.
• The project visibility and communication plan be implemented in a harmonized and coordinated way throughout Somalia and pass key messages to wider stakeholder audiences.
• AU-IBAR and FAO to share the detailed breakdown of project activity budgets and expenditures in the next PSC meeting.
• The line ministries identify priority project interventions and AU-IBAR and FAO to work on allocating more funds to support the livestock marketing infrastructure rehabilitation as identified by the project stakeholders.
• M&E framework be finalized and shared with partners.

Date and venue of the next PSC meeting is August 30th 2016 at the AU-IBAR offices in Nairobi

Produced on this day 21st Day of June 2016 at the Sheraton Hotel in Djibouti