Livestock vaccination campaign along Kenya-Tanzania border bears fruit

Communities of Kajiado and Narok counties in Kenya had reason to smile when their livestock were vaccinated during a government vaccination campaign in early March, 2015. The USAID-funded SMP-AH Project at AU-IBAR supported the county teams with logistics for government personnel during the vaccination campaign. This campaign was one of the outcomes of a cross-border meeting for Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda held at Mwanza, Tanzania from 25th to 27th August 2014. SMP-AH project teams and community leaders from Narok, Kajiado and Migori counties in Kenya together with their counterparts from the cross border region of Ngorongoro District and Mara region in Tanzania had earlier held a series of meetings and developed joint work plans, mainly targeting regular cross-border meetings, disease surveillance, cross-border disease control, community awareness, and implementation of livestock identification and traceability systems as priority activities.

Joint meetings culminated in the identification of sheep and goats pox, Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and enterotoxaemia in sheep and goats; and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and CBPP in cattle as priority diseases that needed urgent response through vaccination. Accordingly, Narok County in Kenya initiated plans to vaccinate sheep and goats in cross-border disease-prone areas against Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) and CCPP, while Kajiado County decided to vaccinate cattle against FMD, sheep against PPR and goats against CCPP in cross-border areas.

“We the doctors in the community really appreciate the assistance we are getting from USAID through AU-IBAR because they have helped us by getting the vaccination at a cheaper price and more available”.

“As a parent I thank AU-IBAR because after the vaccination of my livestock, I managed to sell my livestock and I also managed to pay school fees for my children.”

Dan Massai, a trader from Losho at Ngosuani market in Narok County.

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Dr. Joram Waweru, a veterinarian working in the central/south County of Kajiado as a livestock officer
Kajiado County: On Wednesday 4th March 2015, the vaccination campaign was launched at Olugulului Village, Kajiado County by Dr David Nkedianye, the Governor of Kajiado County. In his remarks, the Governor thanked the Directorate of Veterinary Services in Kenya, AU-IBAR and USAID for supporting the vaccinations campaign in Kajiado County. He acknowledged that their support had reduced the cost of vaccination. He, however called for more support from AU-IBAR, USAID and other partners to ensure diseases were ‘eliminated’ from the County through such vaccination campaigns conducted at least twice a year. The Governor reiterated that the County Government was ready to partner with the Directorate of Veterinary Services and AU-IBAR to control the diseases, given that livestock is the backbone of the economy in Kajiado County and its value constituted billions of Kenya shillings. He stated that Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Blackquarter, Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia, Peste des Petit Ruminants and East Coast Fever (ECF) were important diseases affecting livestock in the County.

Vaccination in Kajiado County targeted cattle for FMD, goats for CCPP and sheep for PPR. A key benefit acknowledged by livestock owners was the drastic reduction in the cost of vaccination.

Mr Parit Ole Noowak - a livestock owner at Olugulului Mambali Water Point, Kajiado stated ‘a reduction of Kenya Shillings 120 per dose of FMD, from KES 140 to 20 as a result of the support from Kenya Government, AU-IBAR and USAID towards the vaccination campaign was a phenomenal reduction’.
Narok County: On 6th March 2015, the vaccination campaign was launched in Loita ward of Narok County near Masai-Mara, close to the Kenya-Tanzania border. The vaccination targeted goats for CCPP and sheep for PPR. The launch was officiated by the Minister in the Governor’s office in-charge of Agriculture and Livestock. Among the delegation were staff from the Directorate of Veterinary Services in the Kenya Government, veterinary officials from Ngorongoro District in Tanzania, a team from AU-IBAR and Narok County representatives. The Minister for Agriculture and Livestock, Narok County thanked the Directorate of Veterinary Services, AU-IBAR and USAID for supporting the vaccination of livestock in cross-border areas.

Several people from the communities at a livestock market in Narok emphasized to the vaccination team that “livestock is our major source of employment, enabling many of us to work as brokers, traders, transporters, livestock farmers, venders of veterinary drugs, animal health officials, market-controllers and abattoir workers.”

“So far I thank USAID and AU-IBAR for the help they have brought to us through the vaccination because that has decreased the high rate of diseases that spreads between the animals.”

“I thank AU-IBAR for coming up with the project of vaccinating the animals between Tanzania and Kenya. This has helped bring the two countries together. So when the animals are moving from Tanzania to Kenya or from Kenya to Tanzania, we are now sure that our animals are safe.”

Family members of livestock owners acknowledged the value of the income accruing from the sale of livestock in supporting family daily needs and children’s education.
‘My name is Ann Nasieku and what we are talking about is the medicine that has been brought. When there is disease that affects our livestock we get help and medicine without wasting time. We are grateful because we have received this medicine and we won’t have to suffer looking for medicine for our livestock. We are grateful to AU-IBAR, thank you.’

“I thank AU-IBAR for providing us with the vaccinations because it helped our community enormously”.

“When the county government and AU-IBAR offered the vaccination programme, we really appreciated it and we saw that it was a boost in our economy. We really thank AU-IBAR and USAID because they helped us by helping our community since we rely on livestock”
"I really thank the AU-IBAR for providing us super logistics such as all the vehicles for the movements of the vaccines which brought a great support to our staff members."

Livestock marketing activities in a market in Narok County, 6th March 2015

A boy from Narok County ensures his goats are vaccinated
“I really thank AU-IBAR with this initiative that was brought up by them. It has managed to bring us together at regional levels in the meetings conducted from the top levels to the county levels. Through that it has helped us to interact with our neighbours across the borders.”

“I want to thank AU-IBAR for bringing us together so that we can work together on controlling the diseases, with information so that we can organize synchronized vaccination campaigns in order to effectively cover livestock across the borders”.

The vaccination team in Narok including representatives of the Directorate of Veterinary Services, Kabete, Kenya, a team from Ngorongoro District in Tanzania and a team from AU-IBAR, Nairobi, during the vaccination campaign in Loita Wards in Narok, Kenya, on 6th March 2015.
Elated with the success of the vaccination campaign, the stakeholders agreed on the following actions in order to advance such programmes in the cross-border areas along the Kenya-Tanzania border:

◊ Border counties with support from partners to implement vaccination of livestock in cross-border areas twice a year during grazing;
◊ Tanzania to expedite arrangements for vaccination of livestock in cross-border areas on the Tanzania side to synchronize diseases control;
◊ Veterinary and communities’ representatives from Kenya and Tanzania to kick-start regular bilateral cross-border meetings to facilitate implementation of activities in cross-border areas;
◊ Kenya Government and partners to consider undertaking capacity building of livestock keepers in Kajiado and Narok counties in livestock feeding and feed preservation as a coping mechanism for drought.