



AFRICAN UNION
**INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES**

THE VET-GOV PROGRAMME

Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa



Effective livestock sector policies and institutional changes, with adequate investment, immensely contribute to sustainable development and wealth creation.



“ Effective livestock policies and animal health legislations spur food security and poverty reduction in Africa”

OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

With the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the international community has agreed to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as one of its primary targets. Fifteen years later, poverty, however, remains a critical issue for sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where 50%, about 300 million people, live on less than 1USD per day. Worse, while globally poverty is decreasing, the number of poor in SSA is on the increase. Equally worrying, food insecurity is still a major problem in SSA, where the prevalence of food energy deficiency ranges from 37% to 76%. Food insecurity in SSA is undermining people’s health, productivity, and often their very survival. Therefore, much of the development agenda focuses on directing scarce resources to providing food to people in need or enabling them to acquire it themselves. In so doing governments and development partners have joined hands to foster economic growth and expand livelihoods options. In fact, such measures are now more urgent than ever before to meet the MDG of halving the proportion of people who suffer from poverty and hunger by 2015.

LIVESTOCK’S CONTRIBUTION TO POVERY ALLEVIATION AND FOOD SECURITY

The livestock sector is an important part of the economies of the African countries, accounting for about 25% of agricultural GDP on average. It has unrivalled prospects for growth because it has the fastest growing market which is driven by urban and higher income consumers within Africa and globally. It supports and sustains the livelihoods of over 300 million people in Africa. These people fully or partially depend on livestock for income and/or subsistence. Livestock can provide a steady stream of food and revenue, and are often the only means of asset accumulation and risk diversification. Moreover, it creates employment opportunities in the agriculture and industry sectors. In addition to employment, livestock offer other livelihoods services such as social capital, which is an important social function essential in establishing and maintaining the social networks through which risk is managed. In many agricultural systems, livestock are particularly important to women who engage in selling livestock products.

Despite its crucial role in Africa’s economy and livelihoods services, the livestock sector has, however, remained undeveloped because of a number of constraints, the main of which is the huge burden of animal diseases. In order to alleviate this problem, national veterinary services in Africa should play a prominent role in preventing and controlling emerging and re-emerging diseases. Their role should even go beyond the enhancement of animal production by reducing losses caused by animal diseases. They should also aim at safeguarding public health by tracking animal diseases transmissible to humans and protecting consumers from food-related health risks, and improving access to markets. Member States (MSs) however, cannot fulfil all these without adequate policies and legislations which are responding to the establishment of efficient and affordable veterinary services.

“Livestock support and sustain the livelihoods of over 300 million people in Africa.”



THE QUEST FOR ADEQUATE POLICIES AND LEGISLATIONS FOR THE SECTOR

Policies and legislations are the prerequisites for public and private investment, which can be used to implement programmes and projects. The prevailing agricultural policy environment in most African countries, however, appears to be unfavourable to attract investment in livestock development in general and the provision of efficient, affordable and sustainable veterinary services in particular. The following observations characterise the nature of agricultural policies in Africa:

- Despite livestock's fundamental importance, many agricultural policies focus on the crop sector. It is indicative of livestock's low profile in national planning that Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) contain only general points relevant to the livestock sector. Government policies for the agriculture sector for many years have been targeting food security through increasing cereal crop production, and have incorporated livestock primarily in terms of its contribution to crop production.
- Where livestock policies have been formulated, they tend to be based on poor levels of information and analysis, and are generally formulated without participation from key stakeholders, most notably the poor and the private sector.
- At this time of globalization, agricultural/livestock policies need to embrace major concerns of the global community, such as food safety and the transmission of diseases from animals to humans (zoonoses). Globally, animal health systems are becoming increasingly a 'global public good'. Failure of one country to prevent and control zoonoses or animal diseases may endanger others. To address this concern, the global community is pursuing the "One Health (OH)" approach. The approach envisions a global partnership aimed at minimising the impact of epidemics and pandemics caused by highly infectious diseases of humans and animals, thereby improving public health, animal health, food safety, food security, livelihoods and the environment.

It is therefore clear that change is required to review/change livestock policies towards contributing to the development agenda through tapping livestock resources. That is why policies and legislations have constituted a central place in the Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa (VET-GOV) Programme.

“ Institutional change is needed and required to tap the potentials of livestock for sustainable development in Africa. ”





THE VET-GOV PROGRAMME

The Programme contributes to the overall strategic objective of AU-IBAR, which is “to improve the contribution of livestock to food security and safety, economic growth and wealth creation in Africa.” In support of this objective, the VET-GOV Programme is poised to “improve the institutional environment at national and regional levels to provide effective and efficient animal health services in Africa. The strategic focus is on strengthening veterinary services towards (i) the establishment of adequate and affordable veterinary services on the national level and on (ii) strengthening regional institutions to play their coordinating, harmonising, supporting and integration roles between their MSs in line with the OH concept. This will be done through two intertwined interventions: evidence-based advocacy and capacity building programmes for policy formulation and implementation. The Programme is expected to deliver the following results:

- Result 1: Knowledge and awareness for institutional strengthening enhanced.
- Result 2: Institutional capacity for livestock policy formulation, animal health strategies and legislation enhanced.
- Result 3: Institutional capacity for the implementation of policies strengthened.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

AU-IBAR / Programme Coordinating Unit

The AU-IBAR Programme Coordinating Unit is in charge of the overall coordination of the Programme and implements activities either directly or indirectly through the RECs. AU-IBAR on the other hand executes tasks related to evidence-based advocacy and supports the various programmes that directly bolster the objectives of the VET-GOV Programme. In this regard, the Standard Methods and Procedures in Animal Health (SMP-AH), the Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-setting Organisations (PAN-SPSO) projects, the Integrated Regional Coordination Mechanism (IRCM) and the Animal Resources Information System II (ARIS II) programmes, as well as the ALive Partnership are directly supported by the VET-GOV Programme.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

The Programme strengthens the capacity of RECs to fulfil their mandates to (i) coordinate and harmonise the activities of MSs, (ii) provide technical assistance to MSs and (iii) facilitate regional integration. In this regard, the VET-GOV Programme assigned regional coordinators in each REC and aligned its activities through the RECs.

“AU-IBAR is poised to improve the contribution of livestock to food security and safety, economic growth and wealth creation in Africa.”

“VET-GOV is strengthening capacities in the Member States to support them formulate and implement livestock policies and legislations that foster efficient and effective veterinary services at national level”



Member States

The Programme recognises the importance of creating and strengthening national mechanisms, through which a participatory and inclusive livestock policy formulation and implementation process can take place. In so doing, the Programme creates and strengthens national policy hubs*, which are multidisciplinary platforms that bring together key stakeholders to foster the formulation and implementation of livestock policies in general and animal health strategies in particular.

AU-IBAR

The African Union - Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) aims to provide leadership in the development of animal resources in Africa. By supporting and empowering the African Union Member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), AU-IBAR's vision is that of an Africa free from hunger and poverty in which animal resources make a significant contribution within the global arena. Founded in 1951 to study the epidemiological situation and fight rinderpest in Africa, AU-IBAR's mandate covers all aspects of animal resources, including livestock, fisheries and wildlife, across the entire African continent. ARIS II as well as the ALive Partnership are directly supported by the VET-GOV Programme.



*NATIONAL POLICY HUBS

National policy hubs (PHs) are multidisciplinary platforms bringing together key stakeholders from the government, civil society organisations (CSOs), livestock producers, livestock keepers and the private sector to foster the formulation and implementation of livestock policies in general and animal health legislations in particular. In so doing, the PHs:

- Critically review livestock and livestock-related policies in their respective countries and recommend policy options that ultimately support the nation to adequately tap its livestock sector's potential.
- Promote evidence-based participatory policy making processes, where government, civil society, women, the private sector and academia can engage.
- Provide a forum for cross sectoral/inter-ministerial dialogues for livestock development.

The PHs are coordinated by National Livestock Policy Focal Points (NLPFPs), who are nominated and assigned by government ministries responsible for livestock. They also have an advocacy and communication function, which is executed by an individual or a team, drawn from the PH.

“VET-GOV is strengthening the capacities of RECs to support them play their coordinating, harmonising, supporting and integration roles between their Member States.”



IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO essentially (i) sustains the regional animal health networks (e.g. laboratory, epidemio-surveillance, communication, socio-economics of transboundary animal diseases [TADs], etc.) that play a key role in the harmonization of national approaches and regional integration and (ii) widely mobilises expertise in relation to livestock policy analysis.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

OIE is responsible for implementing activities related to (i) enhancing capacity of countries to assess compliance with OIE standards, (ii) building capacities in veterinary legislation and (iii) ensuring interoperability between the AU-IBAR's ARIS II and the OIE's World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS).

Non-State Actors

Empowering non-state actors, i.e. civil-society organisations and the private sector, in policy formulation and implementation, as well as in advocacy and communication, has been considered as a compulsory element for achieving improved governance in the livestock sector. Acknowledging this, the VET-GOV Programme builds the capacities of non-state actors, particularly farmers associations and organisations to enable them play their role of convincing governments to strengthen their veterinary services.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Steering Committee

The Programme is guided by a Programme Steering Committee (PSC) comprising of representatives from the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Secretariat, implementing partners, development actors in the sector and the European Commission. The PSC is chaired by the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission to ensure African ownership of the Programme, and its alignment with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process. All implementing partners are represented in the PSC. The PSC meets at least once a year and provides strategic guidance, oversees coherent implementation of the different agreements and monitors the Programme's progress.

Programme Coordinating Unit

The AU-IBAR Programme Coordinating Unit is in charge of the Secretariat of the Programme Steering Committee. AU-IBAR convenes the meetings and prepares draft agendas in consultation with FAO and OIE. It is also in charge of consolidating and channelling reporting to the PSC for all implementing partners/agreements.

“Empowering non-state actors in policy formulation and advocacy is an important step towards achieving improved governance in the livestock sector.”

Management Committee

A Programme Management Committee (PMC), composed of the three main implementing organisations (AU-IBAR, OIE and FAO) and implementing RECs, ensures that activities implemented under the different agreements are synchronised, sequenced and inter-related for the achievement of the programme objectives. The PMC is chaired on a rotational basis between AU-IBAR, FAO and OIE. The PMC meets at least twice a year and reports to the PSC.

Regional Advisory Committee (RAC)

Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) is organised at the level of each implementing REC. The objective of these governance organs is mainly to ensure consultation and coordination with and among Member States, countries being not systematically involved in the PSC and PMC. The RACs incorporate implementing partners, key stakeholders of the sector, and are chaired by the RECs. They meet at least twice a year.

Funding

The programme is run through a financing agreement between the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat. For the European Commission, the EU Delegation in Nairobi, Kenya, follows up the implementation of the programme.



VET-GOV IN ACTION 2012 - 2013

Date & Venue	Key activities
January-Feb 2012, Nairobi, Kenya	Programme induction
May 2012, Paris, France	Programme Inception Meeting
May -June 2012	Stakeholder meetings were held for CEN-SAD/UMA, COMESA, EAC and IGAD, ECCAS, SADC, ECOWAS, in Cairo, Livingstone, Nairobi, Libreville, Gaborone, and Lome, respectively.
June 2012, Arusha, Tanzania	First Steering Committee Meeting
June 2012, Naivasha, Kenya	First planning and team building event
June-October, 2012	Missions to countries for the Programme's introduction, base-line data collection - 47 countries were visited
September 2012	Appointment of National Livestock Policy Focal Points in 52 Countries
October 2012, Naivasha, Kenya	Benchmarking workshop with National Technical Focal Points drawn from IGAD Member States
October 2012, Naivasha, Kenya	The Policy Analysis Training Workshop for Regional Coordinators and Counterparts from RECs
October/November 2012, Arusha, Tanzania	The First NLPFPs Meeting, where 39 countries represented to agree on the establishment of Policy Hubs in Member States
November 2012, Lusaka, Zambia	2nd Steering Committee Meeting
January - April 2013	Multi-disciplinary stakeholders workshops were conducted and PHs structures were put in place in 23 countries
April 2013, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	54 National Livestock Policy Focal Points (NLPFPs) on VET-GOV Programme engagement/targeting

“The support to institutional strengthening of veterinary services is based on Good Governance principles of participation, inclusion, subsidiarity, transparency & accountability.”



A CALL FOR POLICY REFORM

There is a widely accepted understanding among decision makers and development partners in Africa that the development of the continent is inevitably linked to the state and sustainability of its agricultural sector.

“The livestock sector has unrivalled prospects for growth, which is the basis for economic development, improved livelihoods and employment for millions in African.”

- After decades of neglect, agriculture is back at the forefront of African development agendas. In their declarations made in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003 and Sirte, Libya in 2004, African governments committed to investing 10% of their national budgets in agriculture, of which 3% for livestock.
- Following the Maputo Declaration, African Heads of State and Government have adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as a framework for achieving 6% per annum growth in agricultural production, which is the minimum required to make up the present food deficits as well as meeting the increasing needs of fast growing populations.
- All African leaders adopted the United Nations MDGs declaration, which calls for development by improving social and economic conditions in the world’s poorest countries.

In view of this, there is a promising future for the livestock sector, as it comprises the largest agriculture sub-sector in Africa. The livestock sector has unrivalled prospects for growth, which is the basis for economic development, improved livelihoods and employment for millions of African farmers and industrialists.



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