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HARMONIZATION OF POLICIES ON LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION
AND DISEASE CONTROL

HARMONIZATION OF POLICIES ON LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION AND DISEASE CONTROL

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The East and Southern African Subregional possesses a sizeable livestock wealth. In 1980, the total number of livestock was estimated as 83.5 million cattle (49 per cent of Africa's), 62.4 million sheep (34 per cent of Africa's), 59.1 million goats (40 per cent of Africa's), and 7.2 million camels (59 per cent of Africa's). 18 per cent of total area is categorized as permanent pasture and forests and has traditionally been the basis in livestock production and development. Most of the non-arable land and marginal areas are used for rough grazing. The agricultural aftermath and by-products though not properly utilized provide an important source of animal feed. Water is not a serious problem with the exception of the arid areas in the northern and southern parts of the subregion. It could be said that the subregion has a comparative advantage over the other subregions in Africa in the production of meat and milk.

2. The cumulative effect of increase in income, population and rapid urbanization has been the cause of phenomenal increase in the consumption of livestock products. The explosion in demand without corresponding increase in supply spurred imports and resulted in deteriorating self-sufficiency ratios. The Regional Food Plan for Africa (AFPLAN) indicates that self-sufficiency ratio for meat would decrease from 116 per cent in 1972-1974 to 97 per cent in 1985 and 87 per cent in 1990 and for milk would decrease from 94.1 in 1972-1974 to 83 per cent in 1985 and 75 per cent in 1990. Even with the increase in demand, the subregion could greatly improve the level of its self-sufficiency particularly in meat in view of the good potentiality of livestock development in the subregion. With the favourable world prices and continuous shortage in meat, export of livestock holds a great promise for the subregion. However, achievement of self-sufficiency and promotion of export require a determined effort from the government of the subregion in initiating effective programmes of livestock development.

Production Policies

3. The livestock sector plays a significant role in the economies of some countries of the region (Botswana, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Tanzania). Even in countries where livestock is not a major economic activity, it continues to play an important economic and social role in the life of the traditional farmers. However, the attention given to livestock is not commensurate with its contribution

to the economy, the resources it is utilizing and its potentiality for development as indicated by its share in government plans.

4. Traditional livestock keeping dominates. The livestock are mainly kept by traditional farmers and in some instances by nomads, semi-nomads or transhumants. Livestock are communally grazed depending mainly on natural pastures. Productivity whether in terms of milk or meat is low. The overall standards of animal husbandry, management, disease control and economic efficiency are also low. Only one or two countries succeeded in modernizing the livestock sector, for the remainder there are only small pockets of modern livestock production.

5. The livestock production faces a number of constraints. Animals are relatively of poor genetic characteristic as reflected in low productivity and reproductivity levels. Low plane of nutrition, poor management, frequent drought coupled with misuse of range, inadequate disease measures and insufficient institutional and infrastructural support services are some of the constraints to livestock development to be found almost in all countries, however, with varying degrees. The shortage of the trained manpower at all levels remains as one of the major constraints.

6. Clear and well defined policies are required for effective development of livestock. Integration of livestock with crop husbandry seems to offer good promises in many countries. Control of diseases coupled with determined efforts to solve food problems could greatly enhance productivity and production. Basic improvements in institutional support particularly in extension, research, training, marketing and credit are required for successful production programmes. Emphasis is required to be given to qualitative rather than quantitative improvement. Modernization of the traditional sector should be the central theme of development policies.

7. In view of the common problems facing the countries of the sub-region, many of the improvement measures call for an increasing degree of co-operation between the countries of the subregion. There is a need for subregional collaboration in the fields of research, control of diseases, training and other production supporting services such as feed and vaccines. However, effective implementation of subregional programmes and project require harmonization of production policies of the member countries. Agreements on common policy, priority targets, strategies and on decisions on the best methods to be adopted for this implementation are all essential prerequisites for co-operation.

Recommendation

8. The member States are requested to make decisions on the following recommendations:

(a) Information

- (i) Improve collection of information on livestock at national level;
- (ii) Establish a mechanism for exchange and dissemination of such information among member countries.

(b) Disease Control

9. There is an urgent need for co-operation of all countries in the control of the livestock diseases particularly foot and mouth, rinderpest, contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia, East Coast Fever, Brucellosis, Trypanosomiasis, African Swine Fever, and Poultry Diseases particularly Newcastle Diseases. Subregional Centres should be established to co-ordinate efforts for the control of one disease or group of related diseases. Therefore it is suggested that:

- (i) Subregional Ticks and Tick Borne Disease Control Centre be established in Malawi with a branch in Naguga, Kenya;
- (ii) Subregional institution for the control of tse-tse fly and trypanosomiasis should be established;
- (iii) Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia should adopt common strategies for the control of rinderpest and CBPP. Angola and Zambia should have joint campaign to control CBPP;
- (iv) Standardize rules and regulations for control of diseases.

(c) Research

- (i) Strengthen national research centres and give equal importance to research in animal production and range management;
- (ii) Establish a subregional animal research centre in Zimbabwe with branches in Ethiopia, Uganda, Somalia and Madagascar.

(d) Vaccines

- (i) Strengthen and expand vaccine production laboratories in Kenya and Botswana to produce foot and mouth diseases vaccine for the subregion;
- (ii) Strengthen and expand veterinary investigation centre in Mozambique to produce rabbies vaccine for the subregion.

(e) Artificial Insemination (AI)

10. Strengthen and expand AI centres in Kenya, Botswana and Tanzania to serve the subregion and eventually the whole region.

(f) Training

- (i) Encourage the establishment of the planned veterinary college in Zambia to cater for the needs of the countries of the subregion particularly those without veterinary colleges;
- (ii) Strengthen veterinary college in the subregion and draw a detailed programme for their future development putting emphasis on specialization of each vet. college in specific fields according to the needs of the subregion;
- (iii) Support and make programmes for establishment of livestock production and meat training centre in Kenya, slaughter training centre in Botswana and range management training centre in Tanzania.

(g) Animal Feed

11. Examine the feasibility of developing a joint project for production of animal feed particularly super concentrate in Djibouti, Tanzania and Mozambique. Related to this, consideration should be given for establishing subregional feed reserves particularly concentrates.

(h) Improved Breeds

12. Examine the feasibility of establishing a subregional project for production of Grand parent Checks and improved cattle and sheep breeds in Uganda, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

(i) Manufacturing of Livestock Equipment

Study the possibility of developing a subregional project for manufacturing livestock tools and equipment particularly for poultry.