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Routine livestock data collection in Uganda

The Uganda Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAFF), including the Department of Animal Production and Marketing and the Department of Livestock Health and Entomology in the Directorate of Animal Resources, is mandated to formulate and implement livestock sector policies, plans and programmes, as well as to control and manage animal epidemic diseases.

Reliable livestock data and statistics are critical for MAAIF's mandate, and generated by a variety of sources, including administrative records, surveys and censuses.

- (i) Administrative records livestock data are routinely collected by Local Governments in all districts of the country on a continuous basis.
- (ii) Agricultural surveys are administered every year or few years to a nationally representative sample of households on a multiplicity of their characteristics, and include some livestock-related questions. They are usually conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS).
- (iii) Agricultural and livestock censuses are conducted about every ten years and collect a limited set of information from every household in the country. They provide the gold standard data against which administrative records data and surveys can be corrected and judged. They are usually carried out jointly by MAAIF and UBOS.

Because censuses and surveys data are not available on a continuous basis, MAAIF primarily use administrative records livestock data for its daily activities, as well as for annual planning and budgeting.

The collection of administrative records livestock data

District or Local Government staff are responsible for the routine collection of livestock-related data.

At sub-county level, Livestock/Veterinary Officers at sub-county level provide extension services to rural households, and are expected to collect some livestock-related data. Their activities are directed and supervised by a District Livestock/Veterinary Officer.

The sub-country Livestock/Veterinary Officer collects data according to a format detailed at the District level - i.e. there is no a unique format used throughout the country - as data are primarily collected to meet the data needs of Districts / Local Governments.

On a monthly basis, the District Livestock / Veterinary Officer compiles and assembles data from the various sub-counties and submits a pre-determined spreadsheet to MAAIF. District Veterinary Officers are obliged to collect livestock related data and submit them to MAAIF through their respective Chief Administrative Officers.

Semi-autonomous bodies under MAAIF

There are five semi autonomous bodies that are operationally autonomous, but receive policy guidance from MAAIF, and collects some livestock-related data, mainly for their own operations.

- i. National Agricultural Research System and Organisation (NARS/NARO)
- ii. National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS)
- iii. Dairy Development Authority (DDA)
- iv. National Animal Genetic Resource Centre Data Bank (NAGRIC & DB)
- v. Uganda Trypanosomiasis Control Council (UTCC)

What livestock data are routinely collected?

The livestock-data spreadsheet that Districts compile and submit to MAAIF includes some general information on rainfall, water availability and grazing conditions in the District. It then reports livestock data on a variety of domains, including:

- 'Outbreaks of contagious diseases';
- 'Rabies';
- 'Other clinical cases handled';
- 'Tick control';
- 'Dip wash testing';
- 'Laboratory activities';
- 'Vaccine stocks';
- 'Veterinary inspection services';
- 'Internal animal movements in relation to animal laws';
- 'Artificial insemination';
- 'Veterinary regulatory activities';
- 'Meat inspection';
- 'Vaccination';
- 'Animal quarantine and other restrictions';
- 'Animal production';
- 'Types of livestock farming systems in the district';
- 'Livestock markets';
- 'Hides and Skins';
- 'Staff disposition and vehicle strength'.

On the quality and use of livestock data

The collected livestock data, which are jointly used with data from other sources, provide an invaluable source of information for MAAIF to formulate and implement sector policies. However, the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of data are often inadequate, because of limited resources, staff and technical capacity both at local government and national level.

Data collection is not among the top priorities of Livestock sub-county Officers, who have to respond to more pressing needs by farmers; District data are often based on extrapolation from old data, and data are not regularly submitted to MAAIF. The Statistics section at MAAIF is manned by two qualified individuals without a database of Agricultural Statistics and appropriate software; the Directorate of Animal Resources assigns an Officer for data collection as needs arise. The Agriculture Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan (DSIP): 2010/11 - 2014/15 reads: 'UBOS and MAAIF ... have never succeeded in putting in

place statistical systems to collect annual, nationally representative, agricultural production data. While attempts have been made, the systems eventually broke down'.

In addition, because livestock data are not easily combined with socio-economic data, it is difficult for MAAIF to formulate and implement policies that contribute both to livestock sector growth and accelerated poverty reduction, which are major objectives of the National Development Plan 2010/11 - 2014/15.

More and better livestock data

MAAIF recognizes that livestock data collection is a serious gap in Uganda, and the 2010 Agriculture Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan aims at establishing a 'functioning agricultural statistics service providing timely and appropriate information to sector stakeholders'.

According to the Statistics Acts 2008, UBOS is to lead and coordinate agricultural collection activities in the country. UBOS, however, does not have field staff and should closely coordinate with MAAIF and the Ministry of Local Government to improve the system of routine livestock data collection, analysis and dissemination, and make it consistent with a national master sample frame. This would ensure that livestock data can be combined with a variety of other data, including socio-economic statistics, to formulate and implement investments that benefit the livestock-dependent poor and other actors along the livestock value chains.

For further information please visit:

www.africalivestock.data.org

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