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Uganda: Identifying and Producing Core Livestock Indicators

Recognizing that any sustainable improvements in agricultural statistics should build on close cooperation among major users and suppliers of data, the Uganda Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) have agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) 'for joint implementation of data activities'. The purpose of the MoU is to support the improvement of the quantity and quality of livestock-related data available to decision makers. The MoU includes three components:

- The identification of and an agreement on Uganda core livestock indicators.
- Analysis of available data –including the UBOS National Panel Survey and routine data collected by Local Governments and used by MAAIF– to assess which core indicators can be already generated, and of what quality, and to draw recommendations on how to improve systems of livestock data collection for the core indicators to be regularly produced and to improve their quality.
- A report that presents the core livestock indicators and recommendations to improve systems of livestock data collection, within the context of the overall agricultural statistics system. The ultimate objective is to identify resources to pilot methods for improved collection of livestock-related data.

Core Livestock Indicators in Uganda

To identify the Uganda core livestock indicators, MAAIF and UBOS first agreed on a definition of core indicators. These were defined as those that the two institutions need

on a regular basis to properly fulfill their mandate, e.g. those indicators which are essential to deliver their core outputs. Subsequently, MAAIF and UBOS co-organized a one-day workshop on 31 May 2012, in Kampala, for which the objectives were to:

- Discuss and agree upon a set of core livestock indicators recurrently needed by MAAIF and UBOS, the two major livestock data stakeholders in the country.
- Reach a consensus on which livestock indicators the agricultural statistical system should produce regularly.

The objectives of the workshop are consistent with Pillar 1 of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, e.g. 'Identifying a minimum set of core data' which should be regularly collected by country governments to 'provide the beginning point for the improvement of agricultural and rural statistics'. They are also in line with Pillar 3 of the Global Strategy 'Sustainability of Agricultural Statistics', which stresses that any sustainable agricultural statistical system builds on effective cooperation and collaboration between different stakeholders, 'especially the national statistical institutes and ministries of agriculture'.

About 45 participants attended the workshop, joining together representatives from both the public and the private sector, including the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the African Union (AU-IBAR) and various research institutions.

Following a series of presentations and plenary discussions, participants identified a core set of livestock-related indicators for Uganda, which both MAAIF and UBOS agreed were critical for national planning and investment. MAAIF and UBOS largely make use of the same core indicators, including livestock population and production related indicators, but also prices and animal health-related and disease-related indicators.

Uganda: agreed upon core livestock indicators

Core livestock indicators	UBOS	MAAIF
Livestock inventory	X	X
No. of animal slaughtered (<i>off-take</i>)	X	X
Production-related indicators (<i>meat, milk, eggs, etc.</i>)	X	X
Trade-related indicators	X	X
Price-related indicators	X	
Animal disease-related indicators		X
Staff and resources available in livestock		X

X=collection of the indicator by institution.

The above agreed upon indicators serve the purpose of calculating livestock production, a key indicator for designing and assessing MAAIF's interventions as well as responding to UBOS's need to estimate livestock value added, a key component of GDP.

Exceptions are limited to: price data, disease and resource-related indicators. Price data are needed by UBOS, less so by MAAIF which, by nature of its mandate places more priority on the quantity rather than the value of production. Disease related indicators are critical to MAAIF, but not by UBOS. These indicators include information on disease prevalence and incidence, and on staff and resources available to monitor and control disease outbreaks and spread.

It is noteworthy that some of the core indicators, and in particular the calculation of production, are derived from a combination of several data / indicators, such as from animal number, yields, slaughter, etc. In the case of the livestock value added, this requires information also on quantity and prices of all inputs which would be subtracted, if a net calculation.

The time dimension and level of disaggregation of MAAIF and UBOS indicators often differ, with MAAIF prioritizing monthly and district level indicators, while UBOS requires quarterly and national level indicators.

The way forward

There is evidence that that MAAIF and UBOS collect and use similar livestock related data / indicators. It is also clear that the identified core indicators on their own are not necessarily sufficient to formulate effective investments in the sector. Others indicators may be needed by different stakeholders for a multitude of purposes. Indeed, it was noted that the formulation of effective investments could build on *ad hoc* collected data and indicators, such as information about breeds, water, feed, etc.

The identified core indicators, prioritized by meeting participants, were recognized as those needed on a regular basis for MAAIF and UBOS to fulfill their mandate. These indicators are considered those which provide a solid foundation for sector management and planning.

The core livestock indicators represent the building block upon which to start improving the system of data collection. Indeed, the generation and increased accessibility of key core livestock data/indicators needed for sector planning by MAAIF and UBOS are the core pillar of a better livestock data system. It was also recognized that resources will be needed, at a later date, for supportive surveys to produce additional data and indicators which feed into investment decisions.

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