



Improving Policy for Veterinary Laboratories in Kenya

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION MEETING

29th – 30th January 2015, Naivasha, Kenya



FINAL COMMUNIQUE

Within the implementation of the pilot project entitled “**Improving Policy for Veterinary Laboratories in Kenya,**” a stakeholder consultation workshop took place at Lake Naivasha Panorama hotel in Naivasha, Kenya on 29-30 January 2015.

National stakeholders included representatives from: the Directorate of Policies and Research Development; Kenya Veterinary Services, including the Diagnostic Division Administration, Central Veterinary Laboratories (CVL) and Regional Veterinary Investigation Laboratories (RVILs); University of Nairobi; Private Veterinary Association (Self Employed Veterinarians); private laboratory (ANALABS); Kenya Livestock Producers Association (KLPA); Kenya Poultry Farmers Association (KEPOFA); Agrochemicals Association of Kenya (AAK); Kenya Veterinary Vaccines Production Institute (KEVEVAPI); as well as representatives from FAO (Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) lab unit in FAO HQ, Rome and Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) Nairobi) and international and national policy and legal consultants. The list of participants is enclosed in Annex 1 for reference.

The meeting was officially opened by **Dr. Kisa Juma Ngeiywa**, Director of Veterinary Services of Kenya. FAO remarks were provided by **Dr. Bouna Diop**, Regional Manager of FAO ECTAD Eastern Africa.

The project aims to pilot the implementation of guidelines for strengthening national veterinary laboratory policy; developed by FAO following a review of veterinary laboratory policies at national and regional level conducted in 2013. The project implemented by DVS Kenya and FAO is funded within the implementation of the Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa programme funded by the European Union and jointly implemented by AU-IBAR, OIE and FAO.

The stakeholder consultation meeting followed a desktop review organised in Nairobi from 20 – 21 January 2015 to identify gaps and challenges in the existing information related to veterinary laboratories in Kenya.

This stakeholder consultation meeting’s objectives were to:

- Discuss the outcomes of the desktop review, (identification of gaps in the existing information by national experts);
- Identify the areas for intervention that should be considered in the development of a veterinary laboratory policy; and
- Adopt a road map for improved policy for Kenyan veterinary laboratory system.

Over the two-day meeting, participants addressed several topics, including:

- Policy: Definitions, Concepts and Historical evolution;
- Legal frameworks for veterinary laboratories;
- FAO approach on laboratory policy;
- FAO review and guidelines on laboratory policy;
- Outcomes of the desktop review consultation (20 – 21 January 2015);

- Current policies and the legal framework governing veterinary laboratory services in Kenya.

Key highlights from the presentations are summarized below.

Policy: Definitions, Concepts and Historical evolution

Policy was amply defined with respect to veterinary laboratories. It was noted that the term, “policy” may be defined as set of decisions which are oriented towards a long-term purpose or to a particular problem by governments (among many other possible definitions). It is generally viewed as a statement of government intention and often refers to a set of documents and legislation and includes measures for implementation. For the government to achieve its goals of efficiency, equity and security, policies are critical. In many cases, policies precede or are complementary to strategies, implementation or action plans. Policies are especially relevant in identifying incentives that can make economic actors including veterinary laboratory service providers and users pursue an agreed agenda.

The evolution of policies in Kenya revealed that the country has undergone various phases which have shaped the country’s development and growth path. The pioneer policy document was the Swynnerton plan in 1954. The other significant eras in policy evolution include African socialism in 1965, Structural Adjustments in the late eighties, economic recovery in 2003 and the current transformation period that was initiated by the adoption of Vision 2030 blueprint.

Livestock policies have also evolved over the years and it has become necessary to develop other policies and strategies that are deemed urgent and relevant to the development of the livestock industry. It is in this respect that the need for a document spelling out the policy and legislative requirements that can anchor the future of veterinary laboratories assumes urgent significance.

Legal frameworks for veterinary laboratories

Understanding the current legal framework for veterinary laboratories in Kenya is crucial because policies are made and implemented against the backdrop created by the Constitution, laws, and regulations. The legal framework may contain a variety of provisions on mandates, governance, lab facilities, and technical requirements.

In Kenya, the current legal framework relevant for veterinary laboratories is found in the provisions from many different laws and regulations. Depending on the results of the ongoing stakeholder consultation process and the priority issues identified, the study of and possible development of legal instruments may be able to help address gaps and create clear mandates and the conditions for sustainable, long-term improvements in the provision of veterinary laboratory services. Policy and legislation are both available tools which may aim to address the same issues and may have the same goals.

FAO approach on laboratory policy

While assisting countries in strengthening their laboratory capacities under the USAID-funded Emerging Pandemic Threat (EPT) program, FAO noted the lack of clear policy framework for

accessible, efficient and cost effective laboratory services in most of the countries/regions supported. FAO therefore initiated the development of an approach on veterinary laboratory. These developments included the definition of Veterinary Laboratory Policy, a review of the prevailing veterinary laboratory policies across the continents, at national and regional level, and the draft of guidelines for the implementation of an efficient policy for veterinary laboratories. FAO defined three possible levels of intervention: (1) for all laboratories, (2) specific to labs conducting official & compulsory analyses, and (3) governance and management of public laboratories. FAO also proposed the use of the FAO Lab Mapping Tool (LMT) as a possible laboratory assessment tool to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of individual laboratories in Kenya, as part of the whole national laboratory system.

Review of prevailing veterinary laboratory policies

The review on prevailing veterinary laboratory policies conducted by FAO in 2013 identified weaknesses and strengths of existing policies, to serve as a basis to develop guidelines on laboratory policy, both at the national and regional level. The review identified various policy gaps, including: a lack of a clear definition of veterinary laboratory policy; insufficient empowerment to conduct regional activities; inadequate mandate to meet the public and private market needs; and inappropriate organization and structure of the national laboratory network. The review confirmed the urgent need to move the veterinary laboratories into a coherent national system and to (re)organize their network, in order to increase their visibility, improve their credibility and ensure their sustainability. This can only be addressed through the development of a veterinary laboratory policy and its related legal framework to ensure its implementation.

Prevailing policies framing veterinary laboratories in Kenya

The veterinary laboratory system is mainly addressed in two overarching policies: the Veterinary Policy (Draft VP - of 2012), and the National Livestock Policy (NLP - version of November 2008). For the Draft VP, several proposed policy interventions were identified for: (1) the technical domains in which the laboratory services are mentioned and those in which they are not; (2) the supporting domains which the laboratory services should benefit from; and (3) the institutional framework in which the laboratories should be addressed. For the NLP, the following were identified: (1) the two main domains in which the veterinary laboratories are mentioned and the related policy interventions; and (2) the domains in which laboratories are not mentioned although laboratories play a key role in these activities.

Main outcomes of the desktop review consultation (20 – 21 January 2015)

The key challenges identified during the desktop review included the following:

- Inadequate policies or guidelines on: pricing in public and research and training labs; roles of county government; linkages between county and national levels of government; biosecurity and biosafety in private sector labs or clinics handling samples;
- Limited access to laboratory services in the vast areas that hold high livestock populations;

- Inadequate utilization of laboratory services by consumers (private vets, field public sector vets and livestock keepers);
- Inadequate communication and marketing strategies by the labs;
- Delayed/inadequate feedback to clients following sample submission;
- Few skilled laboratory personnel;
- Low capacity for sampling, packaging, storage and transportation;
- Lack of an integrated and comprehensive Laboratory Information System (linking all the laboratory service providers for disease information sharing and reporting);
- Non-accreditation Laboratories

Participants to this meeting conducted a mapping of veterinary laboratory services in Kenya under the veterinary domain (Annex 2 and 3).

Then, participants agreed on several recommended areas for intervention that should be considered in the development of a veterinary laboratory policy. The proposed areas for intervention are organized into three major groups according to which categories of labs are intended to be covered:

1. All veterinary laboratories
2. Veterinary laboratories conducting official & compulsory analyses
3. Public veterinary laboratories (CVL, RVIL, Satellite, County)



1. Suggested interventions for all veterinary labs to be considered in the development of a veterinary laboratory policy:

- 1.1. Ensure that all laboratories have sufficient capability to carry out their services, such as by setting and enforcing minimum requirements to be licensed as a veterinary laboratory (acknowledging the current statutory role for the Kenya Veterinary Board), considering the following aspects, among others: facilities (infrastructure, sitting, etc.), personnel, equipment, waste management, biosafety, biosecurity, basic levels of quality assurance, animal welfare, and ethics.
- 1.2. Consider aspects of improving the marketing of available laboratory services, so as to better inform possible laboratory users.

2. Suggested interventions for veterinary laboratories conducting official and compulsory analyses, to be considered in the development of a veterinary laboratory policy:

- 2.1. Identify what is relevant to official analyses and what is relevant to compulsory analyses (regarding the Kenyan veterinary services' mandates).
- 2.2. Identify requirements and supervision means for delegation of official/compulsory analyses to labs not directly supervised by the DVS (such as county labs, private labs, and other institutions conducting veterinary analysis), considering the following aspects, among others: proficiency testing, quality assurance (including accreditation if deemed necessary); reporting; confidentiality; impartiality; communication.
- 2.3. Outline the needs for a clear regulatory framework to govern such delegations of official analyses, including a clear definition of roles and missions as well as conditions for suspension/revocation in cases of noncompliance.
- 2.4. Designate and clearly define the role and mission of national reference labs (currently no formal designation of reference labs).

3. Suggested interventions related to governance and management of public laboratories¹, to be considered in the development of a veterinary laboratory policy:

- 3.1. Evaluate the organizational structure of public veterinary laboratories and implement an appropriate network of public veterinary laboratories in terms of accessibility, available scope of analysis and specialization, in order to meet the public needs (ie veterinary services missions) and private needs.
- 3.2. Clearly identify mandates and obligations for all levels of public labs (national, regional, satellite, and county) and how they interact with each other.
- 3.3. Describe the interaction between county veterinary services and public laboratories.
- 3.4. Establish a structured process for collaboration between public laboratories and other categories of laboratories (public-public and public-private and public-other institutions, national and international level).
- 3.5. Establish the remuneration, staffing and options to address staff motivation.
- 3.6. Identify and address insurance and risk management issues for all staff working in the labs (also occupational health and biosafety)
- 3.7. Establish a structured process for communication and awareness campaigns directed towards stakeholders.
- 3.8. Build capacities in existing labs conducting official and compulsory analyses (only CVL, RVIL, FMD), considering the following aspects, human resources (proficiency, staffing levels), and equipment among others.
- 3.9. Establish a structured process to allow public laboratories to meet the private needs.

¹ It looks like the public labs activities are restricted to the official and compulsory analyses, while they could be allowed (and even encourage to provide "private" services (analyses but not only)

Finally the participants adopted the following recommendations and roadmap.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering the need to have a clear picture of the current situation on lab tests and services, the meeting recommended that DVS conduct an inventory of tests and services available in the veterinary domain in Kenya and make a prediction about the future needs (both public and private, both national and international by end of **March 2015**).
2. Considering the ongoing work coordinated by FAO to produce the reports which evaluate the current status of livestock and veterinary policies, legislation and the national laboratory system, the meeting recommended that FAO should finalize and share the reports with key stakeholders by end of **April 2015**.
3. Considering that the OIE Lab-PVS tool can provide options through assessment of the veterinary laboratory system, especially on required resources, pertinence and viability, the meeting recommended that DVS should request assistance from the OIE.
4. Considering that the FAO Laboratory Mapping Tool also provides a standardized assessment of strengths and weaknesses of laboratory capacities and functionalities at the laboratory as well as at the national level (based on aggregation of individual laboratory mapping data), the meeting recommended that the tool be regularly applied for the Kenya laboratory system.

ROADMAP

ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMEFRAME
Finalise the Final Communique of the Naivasha meeting for wider dissemination to the meeting's participants and other stakeholders	DVS	By 6 February 2015
Collect and share the veterinary services guidelines recently developed to facilitate delivery of VS between the counties and national level	DVS	By 6 February 2015
Consolidate list of core stakeholders for future consultations	DVS, FAO	By 6 February 2015

Establish a Taskforce (ToRs, List of members) in charge of writing the draft vet lab policy	DVS, PS	By end of February 2015
Organise an e-conference for wider consultation in the process of developing the vet lab policy	FAO	By end of April 2015
Circulate reports prepared by national legal and policy consultants	FAO	By end of April 2015
Hold regional stakeholder consultation meetings	DVS	Between June and August 2015
Provide an update on the progress made in developing the draft of the vet lab policy during the next RAHN meeting to be held in Kampala	DVS, FAO	September 8 – 10, 2015
Organise the second international experts mission in Kenya	FAO	By end of September 2015
Organise a second stakeholders consultation meeting	DVS, FAO, AU-IBAR	By end of September 2015
Finalize the first draft of the Vet lab policy for dissemination to key stakeholders	Task Force	By end of November 2015

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Naivasha, 30 January 2015.

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ANNEX 2 – MAPPING OF VETERINARY LABORATORY SERVICES IN KENYA UNDER THE VETERINARY DOMAIN

Category	Type of Lab	Labs within the scope	Authorities
Public	National Reference Labs	CVL; FMD	DVS
Public	RVIL	RVIL; Satellite Labs	DVS
Public	Other Public Institutions	Fisheries Lab; DLRD&M (Bee Keeping Centre); Government Chemist; National Public Health Labs	Fisheries Directorate; Livestock Directorate; Director of Medical Services; Director of Medical Services;
Public	County Labs	County Labs	County Director of Vet Services
Public	University Labs	Universities- Egerton, Nairobi	Vice Chancellors, Ministry of Education
Public	Other Training Institutions	AHITI- small labs; MTI; DTI	DVS; DVS; Livestock Directorate
Parastatals	Parastatals	KALRO; KWS; KeBS- standards; KIRDI; KEMFRI; Kenya Medical Research Institutes (KEMRI); Kephis	Board of Directors;
Private	Private Labs	ANALABS; Norbrook; Kenchick; Pharmaceutical Companies; Farmer's Choice; Private veterinary clinics	General Manager;
International	International/Regional Labs	ICIPE; OIE/FAO Reference centres; AU-PANVAC; US CDC ILRI; ICIPE; Institutes of Primate Research (IPR)	

ANNEX 3: PROFILE OF LAB USERS

LAB USERS	MAIN ANALYSIS	MAIN NEEDS	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
<p>Poultry farmers, Dairy farmers, Poultry breeders, Feed millers, Other livestock keepers, Private veterinarians, Public veterinarians (State VS, County, subcounty), Veterinarians from KWA, Veterinarians from universities and other training institutes, Veterinary paraprofessionals (public and private), Agrochemical companies, Pet owners, NGOs, Medical practitioners, VS from neighbouring countries, CBAHWs, KEVEVAPI and other veterinary pharmaceutical actors, Projects, Food operators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dip strength analysis • Clinical Pathology • Milk culture • Haematology • Feed analysis (poultry sector) • Active Ingredient Analysis (AIA) • Culture and sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance technical capacity for RVIL (dip strength analysis, equine diseases diagnostic) • General procedure and infrastructures for samples submission • Adequate and efficient feedback • Enhance communication on the lab capacities • Enhance awareness of livestock farmers about lab services • Enhance reliability of results • Establishment of a regulatory body in charge to oversee/audit the lab performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of collection points (for samples) • Carry out an audit of the current status of the labs (performance, capacity, distribution) • Develop communication materials • Develop new services to meet market needs (following market analysis and stakeholders consultation) • Awareness campaigns in stakeholders meeting to promote laboratory services • Routine confirmatory diagnosis of rabies