



## **Expert Meeting: Overview of CAP 357, Developing Rules and Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for Electronic Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems (ELITS) for Kenya**

### **Summary Report of Workshop held on 03<sup>rd</sup> – 04<sup>th</sup> August in Nairobi - Kenya**

Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems (LITS) are important components that contribute towards ensuring food safety; animal control and disease surveillance. In Eastern Africa, LITS are a key component in mitigating livestock thefts – cattle rustling – and by extension the attendant violence attributed to it, hence contributing to the overall human security of pastoralist communities, their adjacent neighbours, and the region as a whole. To date, branding and particularly hot-iron branding has been the technology of choice in animal identification. It is usually complemented by other systems e.g. ear notching, ear tags, paints, etc.

In most of the Member States participating in the Mifugo Project; Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda in the implementation of the Protocol on the Prevention, Combating and Eradication of Cattle Rustling in Eastern Africa, the Legal Acts governing livestock identification date back to the early 1900 with the last revisions only up to the 1970s. However, there have been tremendous technological developments since then that have transformed the livestock identification landscape.

In the recent years, Member States have met challenges in reviewing and incorporating these technological transformations to the existing laws. It is for this reason that, within the Article 6 of the Protocol on Cattle Rustling, the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), Ministry of Livestock Development, the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) and the ISS-Mifugo Project organized an Experts Meeting at the Hotel La Mada in Nairobi, Kenya on August 2-5, 2009 primarily to take stock of LITS in Kenya.

More specifically, the aim of the Expert Meeting was (a) to familiarize and update with the latest developments in Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems (LITS); (b) to review all the current livestock related statutes in Kenya and identify those that had components

related to Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems (LITS); (c) to unpack and critically analyze The Branding CAP 357 Laws of Kenya and identify gaps and challenges inhibiting effective applications of LITS; (d) to develop Rules and Procedures that incorporate the latest development in LITS for recommendation to the Minister; and, (e) to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for facilitating the implementation of the Rules and Procedures.

The meeting was officially opened by Dr. Peter Ithondeka, the Director of Veterinary Services (DVS) and it was attended by senior officers from the Department of Veterinary Services, Animal Production, Legal Department of the Ministry, the Anti-Stock Theft Unit of the Kenya Police, Parliamentary Committee on Cattle Rustling, an independent lawyer, expert in Livestock Identification, Specialized Desks from EAPCCO and the ISS.

The following recommendations were made:

- The Branding Act (Cap 357) required revision in order to update it and incorporate the developments in Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems. However, it was acknowledged that such revision would be tantamount to a Repeal of the ACT a process that takes considerable time unless backed by a Presidential Decree. Hence, as the process of repeal gets underway, it was agreed that Rules and Procedures and SoPs within the Context of Cap 357 and Cap 364 - Disease Control, are developed, mainstreamed and implemented. This is a shorter process, as it only requires the authority of the Minister;
- Taking cognizance of the pilot project on LITS implemented in Kenya in 2007-9, the meeting however observed that the exercise focused on the marketing aspect of LITS and noted the need to pilot test Electronic Livestock Identification and Traceability Systems (ELITS) in some of the conflict prone regions (Karamoja and Borana clusters) in view to test its security aspects. In addition, the pilot test should deliberately include a component of traceability of animal products under the farm-to-fork context;
- To ensure that LITS are entrenched within the Ministry, the Experts Meeting recommended the establishment of a Division of LITs within the department of the Director of Veterinary Service. In addition, a comprehensive Organizational Structure for the same was developed and recommended for operationalization;
- Given the threat posed by the problem of cattle rustling, the meeting observed the need for stronger cooperation with the relevant security structures in the country and particularly with the Police. The meeting recommended that the Commissioner of Police be approached and requested to establish a dedicated desk responsible for livestock identification issues thus, a LITS Desk;
- The meeting observed and acknowledged the regional nature of the problem of livestock (animal) movement, disease surveillance and control and cattle rustling. For this reason, it was strongly recommended that every effort be made to harmonize approaches and systems used in Livestock Identification and Traceability. This is in the spirit of the Protocol which is a comprehensive regional instrument addressing most of the issues in question; and,

- The meeting acknowledged that no amount of force or laws would tackle the challenges of effective livestock identification if they did not fully involve the pastoralist communities, other livestock owners and stakeholders. It was therefore noted that intensive public sensitization and awareness creation campaigns, at the horizontal and vertical levels be embarked on and sustained.

While officially closing the meeting, Mr. Awad Dahia, the Head of the Interpol Regional Office/EAPCCO observed the immeasurable benefits that could be derived by all the stakeholders upon the full acceptance and adoption of LITS in the region. He stated that through EAPCCO, his office will continue urging the signatory Member States to prioritize innovative approaches that address issues and challenges facing the livestock sub-sector and in particular those that threaten the human security in the region.

Mr. Dahia thanked all the participants, the Kenya Government through the Department of Veterinary Services and the Police for the continued support to the Mifugo Project. He also thanked the ISS and his staff at EAPCCO for facilitating the Experts Meeting.