
REMARKS BY THE Ag DIRECTOR OF AU-IBAR DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE PAN-AFRICA

PESTE DES PETITS RUMINANTS PROGRAMME (2022-2026)

Nairobi, Kenya 17th March 2022

- **Honourable Ministers and Representative of Ministers representing AU Member States**
- **Representative of the European Union**
- **Director of Agriculture and Rural Development of the DARBE**
- **Representative of FAO**
- **Representative of OIE**
- **Director General International Livestock Research Institute**
- **Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities**
- **Delegates from AU Member States**
- **Representatives of the Pan-African organizations**
- **Representative of the Sub-regional organizations**
- **PPR Experts from PPR Secretariat, OIE and AU-IBAR**

- **AU-IBAR staffs**
- **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**
- **All Protocols observed**

On behalf of the AU-IBAR, I warmly welcome you to this session of the launch of the 2nd Phase of the Pan-Africa Programme for the eradication of *Pestes de Petit Ruminants* for the period 2022-2026. I wish to sincerely congratulate the Team of PPR Experts for the excellent commitment they have dedicated, in the last 2 days, to achieve the objective of finalizing and validating the 2nd Pan-Africa PPR control and eradication program. This indeed marks a milestone for our renewed effort towards enhanced resource mobilisation for the control and eradication of PPR by the global target of 2030.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, as a trans-boundary animal disease, PPR is now endemic in nearly the whole of Africa. This disease was reported from as long ago as 1871, but the first scientifically recognized case was reported in Cote d'Ivoire in 1942¹. Until as recently as 1984, the disease was regarded as a disease of Western Africa. Since then, it has rapidly spread to the rest of Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East and Asia, where it continues to cause the devastation of sheep and goats. Its control and eradication require

a phased, risk-based approach with well-coordinated and harmonised activities across all regions. The disease is characterized by rapid spread among small ruminants, and high death rates in the affected animals, plus high economic impacts in areas of Africa where small ruminants contribute to guaranteeing livelihoods. PPR is considered as one of the main constraints in augmenting the productivity of small ruminants in developing countries and particularly severely affects poor farmer's economy. Indeed, it has a serious impact on the efforts to empower women in Africa, since these animals are an important resource for the most vulnerable segments of society. To address its challenge, the OIE and the FAO developed the PPR Global Control and Eradication Strategy and have set the goal of eradicating the disease globally, by 2030.

Since the achievement of the global eradication of Rinderpest in 2011, the AUC through its specialized technical institutions; namely AU-IBAR and AU-PANVAC, have been consistent in their commitment as champions for the global eradication of PPR. In a bid to control and eradicate the disease here in Africa, AU-IBAR and AU-PANVAC first led the formulation of a Pan-African Strategy for the control and eradication of the disease and the Control of other priority diseases of small ruminants in Africa in 2009. The strategy was latter aligned to the Global PPR Control and Eradication Strategy after its launch in April 2015.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, AU-IBAR and AU-PANVAC led the development of a 5-year Pan-Africa implementation programme; 2017-2021, to operationalize the Pan African PPR Strategy. During the implementation of the 1st Phase of the Program, a number of achievements were made and to mention just a few; technical and financial support were provided to AU MSs to develop and align their national PPR control and Eradication strategies with the continental and global strategies. One REC, namely IGAD and a total of 34 MSs were assisted to develop and validate their strategies and 5-years action plans. AU-IBAR secured political support of the Heads of State and Government through a decision for enhanced resource mobilisation and implementation of the strategy and programme. During the 1st phase of the programme AU-IBAR supported two Island States in the surveillance of PPR and Foot and Mouth Disease towards the formulation of e a dossier to demonstrate their PPR and FMD free status. In addition AU-IBAR supported Training exercises on PPR and FMD disease surveillance and sample collection for Cape Verde in December 2019. Comoros was assisted under the VETGOV project pilot to conduct mass

vaccination campaigns against PPR and the control of vectors in 2017 during the 1st outbreak of PPR in the islands.

Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, despite the progress made in the implementation of the 1st Phase of the Programme, the currently available resources are limited and do not allow for the implementation of an effectively coordinated PPR eradication Programme throughout Africa. This situation is further complicated by the lack of funds for PPR eradication activities in most Member States and for regional coordination by the RECs. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and therefore there is a scarcity of funds from MSs to support the implementation of the Pan-African programme. However, the target date for the Global eradication of PPR remains 2030. We therefore have about 8 years to achieve this objective. It is therefore crucial to assess the progress made towards the implementation of the first 5-year programme to guide and inform the development of the next 5-year implementation programme. I must also emphasize that we need to make concerted and coordinated efforts to be able to secure and sustain funding for implementation of PPR control and eradication activities at the National, Regional, pan-African and Global levels. We therefore need to scale up our efforts on resource mobilisation in a concerted and well-coordinated manner to secure the necessary funding for PPR eradication, globally. **I urge partners to focus attention on this key impediment to the implementation of the Global, Continental, Regional and National PPR programmes.** In particular we need to critically reflect upon and explore modalities for actualising the commitments so far expressed by various countries, development partners, donors, and other organisations into concrete actions to avail the necessary funding for this noble endeavour.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests and Colleagues, the AU-IBAR convened a workshop for the PPR Experts for the past 2 days, to finalise the development of the 2nd phase of the Pan-African PPR Control and Eradication programme, for the period 2022-2026. I am glad to announce that this has been achieved. The meeting made deep reflection on how to enhance resource mobilisation for coordinated, harmonised and phased and regional control and eradication of PPR. The implementation of the program will require shared responsibility at the Global, Pan-African, Regional and National levels, but the responsibility of implementing the interventions in the different countries directly remains with the respective National

Governments. AU-IBAR and AU-PANVAC remain committed to continue coordinating, supporting and providing guidance to the Member States and RECs in their endeavours to develop their Animal Resources Sector.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests and Colleagues, let me inform you that during the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee [STC] on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment that was held on the 13-16 December 2021 made a resolution on the renewed commitment for enhanced progress towards control and eradication of PPR by 2030. The STC urged AU Member States to include PPR control and eradication as a priority in their National Agriculture Investment Plans and in key negotiations with development partners to ensure adequate budgetary allocations and disbursements for the effective and timely implementation of the PPR National Strategies. STC also requested the AU Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs and Member States with the support of FAO, OIE and stakeholders, **to accelerate efforts to mobilize resources** for a continentally coordinated programme for the eradication of PPR from Africa by 2030. Let me take this opportunity to thank the European Union for their consistently dedicated support to AU-IBAR for the Sustainable Development of Livestock for livelihoods (Live2Africa Project) and other AU-IBAR's diverse Animal Resources Sector programs in Africa.

As I finish, let me mention that like the eradication of Rinderpest, the eradication of PPR will be a key step towards the realization of our vision for an Africa in which animal resources contribute significantly to the integration, prosperity and peace of the African Community. To achieve our mission, which is to provide leadership and integrated support services for the development of animal resources in Africa, we have the responsibility of the formulation, validation and dissemination of animal resources continental strategic frameworks. This program is one of such an achievement, for which we are pleased. The AU-IBAR is expected to enhance pan-African coordination, networking and partnerships in Animal Resources development and to provide support to Member States, in terms of technical resources and tools, for an effective implementation of their policies and strategies. Once again, this strategy is one such tool.

Finally, let me once again thank the partners who have continued to support us in these initiatives, including the Member States, the RECs, the International Development Partners,

the Academia, the Animal Users and the Animal owners and handlers. On behalf of AU-IBAR, I assure you that we will continue making every effort to make the Animal Resources in Africa prosper, for the prosperity of the African Community. As we launch this program, we are incentivized by the philosophy that in collaboration is strength, because we are stronger together. Together, we will continue to overcome the inevitable challenges along the journey towards our goal. I therefore urge each one of us to do the best we can, and to encourage other stakeholders to do the best they can, so that we can overcome this horrible disease, for the prosperity of the Continent and Humanity as a whole.

Before I conclude let me take this opportunity to thank the European Union for supporting this activity and for their support over the years. I also take this opportunity, Your Excellences and colleagues for accepting our invitation.

And with these remarks, I thank you for listening to me, and I welcome you to join us to launch this program!

May God Bless You All! May God Bless Africa!

ⁱ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3889233/>