

REPORT ON THE FIELD TAGGING EXERCISE IN LAIKIPIA NORTH SUBCOUNTY –LAIKIPIA NORTH

INTRODUCTION

The Kenya veterinary association with the support of KCB FOUNDATION is conducting a Livestock identification and traceability system (LITS) in the 5 counties within the AMAYA triangle namely Laikipia, Samburu, Baringo, Isiolo and West Pokot. The exercise targets at least 50,000 animals in each of the counties.

On 8th January 2018, the Kenya Veterinary association kicked off the 1st phase of the exercise in Laikipia county targeting 10,000 animals within Laikipia North Sub county. The exercise involved installation of electronic(RFID) ear tags on the cattle and being able to trace it to the owner and gathering details that can help add value to the enterprise and stakeholders.

The exercise was carried out by a team of vet surgeons, animal health assistants, enumerators, drivers and community leads drawn from both the private sector and the Laikipia county government. We had 4 teams each covering different areas and occasionally converging where the turnout was overwhelming to handle.



The KVA chairman Dr. Samuel Kahariri addresses the Lits field team on the LITS initiatives in Kenya and the rest of the world. On his left is the Laikipia County Director of Veterinary services Dr. Peterson Njiru.



Lits team pose for a photo shortly after the training in readiness for the exercise.

ACTIVITIES

The exercise began by a half day conference training on 8th in Beisa Hotel- Nanyuki town with the chief guest being the Laikipia County CEC for agriculture ,Dr Lucy Murugi and later a demonstration on Josphat Kibuge's Farm as another team went to Jua kali area. All the team members were able to understand the process and were comfortable handling all the roles that each team member was expected to do. The event was covered by the major media stations namely NTV and KTN aired both on TV and newspapers.

On 9th the teams were dispersed to 4 centres namely Ilingwesi, Mugie, Doldol and kimanju areas. The team worked tirelessly and were able to tag all the animals in a record 6 days as follows;

Date	Team	Crush/site	Animals tagged
09.01.2018	Team 1	Nandanguro	158
	Team 2	Nandanguro	120
	Team 3	Mugogodo	0
	Team 4	Mugie	127
10.01.2018			243
	Team1	Nandanguro	244
	Team2	Nandanguro	220
	Team3	Kimanju	567
	Team 4	Mugie	

	Team 1 Team4 Team 3 Team 2	Mugie Mugie Kimanju Nandanguro	291 603 73 525
12.01.2018	Team1 Team2 Team 3 Team 4	Mpala Mpala mpala mugie	574 800 1100 798
12.01.2018			
13.01.2018	Team1 Team 2 Team 3 Team 4	Mpala Mpala Mpala Mugie	756 803 574 377
14.01.2018	Team1 Team 2 Team3 Team 4	Ol Jogi Oljogi Nandanguro Mugie	341 436 367 0



The Nandanguro crush team leader Dr. Janet Muthusi assigning roles to the team members before they start tagging animals. On the background is a herd of cattle streaming to the site.



LITS team having properly restrained an animal in a crush ready to apply the electronic ear tag . All the tags are scanned using the Blue tooth enabled reader. The information is then relayed to a mobile app and the data can also be downloaded onto a computer

A total of

Challenges

1. The area being covered was wide and with poor infrastructure, the teams would take a lot of time (even up to 2.5 hours) to reach the desired destinations.
2. Poor network coverage in the respective areas delayed transmission of data collected onto the database in real time. The teams had to wait till evening to synchronise all the information they had once they could access reliable networks.
3. The county government vehicles were occasionally re assigned to perform other functions and these compromised on the intended daily work plans.
4. Inadequate sensitization in some areas lead to a low turnout in the 1st and 2nd day especially Kimanju area which recorded almost a zero turn out.

Way forward:

1. To visit the areas at least once a week before the actual field exercise. Previously we had visited the sites 2 months prior.
2. To sign a commitment agreement with the county government to ensure all vehicles assigned to the project remain under the control of the project coordinator until the end of the exercise.
3. To use more of the local persons like chiefs and village heads as community leads to help in mobilisation as opposed to the previous phase where we used the county livestock officers.
4. To provide all the enumerators with Sim cards with data bundles so as to enable them sync the data collected into the app with ease.

Acknowledgements

We sincerely appreciate the Director of veterinary service for his support in ensuring that all the vehicles needed are availed and in proper condition throughout the exercise.

We acknowledge the Laikipia county director of services for his commitment to the exercise and allowing his staff to work with our team harmoniously during the duration and availing a vehicle for this exercise.

The support of KCB foundation both financially and materially in conceptualization and implementation of this project was so immense and we are grateful.

The KVA leadership under the chairmanship of Dr .Samuel Kahariri and the entire LITS steering committee did a commendable job in planning, organising, coordinating and facilitating the entire team.