



**African Union**

**Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources**

# **LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING IN AFRICA**

## **CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS**



# Background

- Animal identification has long been associated with ownership and records of animals in Africa
- Until recently, identification and recording has not been directly linked to livestock health, trade or marketing





# Background

- Generally, global trade, disease, traceability, intensification of production systems and increased demand for safe animal products by consumers and food processors has increased need for livestock identification and recording





# **AU-IBAR: Rationale for interest in Animal Identification, Recording & Traceability**

**AU-IBAR is the African body charged with the responsibility of animal resources development on the continent**

**Consultations with Member States/RECs highlighted the need for recording, identification and ultimately traceability in the various regions, for example:**

- Southern Africa highlighted need for developing/harmonizing tools for identification and recording of AnGR



## **AU-IBAR: Rationale for interest in Animal Identification, Recording & Traceability**

- North Africa noted that the constant movement of animals across borders will necessitate breed characterization and animal recording for a traceability system
- Eastern Africa noted characterization of AnGR, mapping and spatial distribution; conservation; livestock recording and performance testing
- West and Central Africa are regions with a rich tradition of transhumance with issuance of “International Transhumance Certificates”



## **AU-IBAR: Rationale for interest in Animal Identification, Recording & Traceability**

- The Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDeSa) process has also highlighted livestock identification and traceability as an important issue which requires addressing
- General lack of supportive policy and regulatory frameworks for animal identification and recording



- **Individual animal identification and recording allows livestock owners to:**
  - **Conduct performance evaluation**
  - **Improve breeding through better genetic evaluation**
  - **Keep proper health records**
  - **Accurately measure production**
  - **Perform other important functions required for effective and productive herd or flock management**
  - **Take advantage of higher prices offered for traceable products**



- **However, level of adoption and implementation of identification and recording in Africa is highly variable**
- **Southern Africa with a history of exporting livestock products to developed countries has generally more advanced identification, recording and traceability systems in place compared with other African regions**





- **Current systems in use in this region include:**
  - **Ear-tagging, branding, tattooing, ear-notching, boluses, micro-chipping**
- **Identification and recording systems applied to other livestock species, such as the poultry, is less documented and mostly privately managed**



- **Type of livestock production systems**

*Communal, pastoral, ranching, intensive, and others*

- **Smallholder farmers**

*Can the benefits of animal recording and identification be incentive enough to encourage them?*

- **Breeders and Breeders Associations**

*As custodians of important breeds what role do they play in animal identification and recording?*



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **Cost of identification and recording systems**

*What practical, simple and cheap forms of identification and recording systems can be adopted? ICT infrastructure?*

- **Use of traditional methods**

*Can these be incorporated into modern-day systems?*



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **“Proprietary” rights due to identification, recording**  
*Are there any implications on access and benefit sharing (ABS) of AnGR, intellectual property rights (IPR)?*
- **Lack of awareness on the importance of identification and recording systems**



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **What are the impacts of identification and recording systems on AnGR?**

*Impacts of trade on breed distribution and/or dilution?*

*Rustling/stocktheft*



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **Trans-boundary AnGR**

*How do we harmonize approaches and understanding of trans-boundary breeds and identification and recording systems?*

*How do we deal with animal movement?*

*Comparisons between same breeds across borders (different production systems, management, environments etc); issue of different names for the “same” breeds; origins of breeds? Benchmarking?*



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **Political impediments**

*Are there any cultural and political impediments impinging on identification and recording systems?*

- **The introduction of numerous breeds into Africa which has produced many crossbreeds/composite breeds - highlighting need for proper identification and recording systems**

*How do we set benchmarks for the available genetic pool?*



# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

- **Learn from functional systems:**

*South Africa's Integrated Registration and Genetic Information System (INTERGIS) could be adopted in other regions as an approach to identification and traceability systems*

*Adoption or integration of traditional identification methods into modern systems?*

*Learn from other regions of the world? India, Australia, Ireland*





- **It is within AU-IBARs mandate to promote the adoption of appropriate, low-cost and harmonized identification and recording systems in Africa**
- **However, AU-IBAR is aware of the high variability between countries and regions in adoption and utilization of identification and recording systems in Africa**
- **This makes standardization of systems difficult**



- 1. AU-IBAR proposes to create a common platform/ position in the development of a continental framework on identification and recording**
- 2. The proposed framework could guide and encourage policy and regulatory support for animal identification and recording**



- 3. AU-IBAR will support increased awareness, advocacy, understanding and technical capacity in Africa to address the constraints related to identification and recording, which are negatively impacting on the competitiveness of animal products from Africa**



- 5. AU- IBAR will garner consensus from its leadership- the African Union - to support and implement livestock identification and recording systems that are both compliant with international standards and meeting national and regional requirements**
- 6. AU-IBAR in collaboration with stakeholders will assist African countries and RECs to develop system(s) for livestock identification and recording, backed by harmonized regulatory frameworks at national and regional levels**



- 7. AU-IBAR will encourage individual countries' and RECs' efforts to establish sustainable identification and recording systems suitable for different livestock and production systems**
- 8. AU-IBAR will champion the voice of Africa with respect to identification and recording at international forums**

# Thank You



**AU-IBAR: Providing leadership in the development of animal resources for Africa**