



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Cattle rustling is on the rise beginning from February to March in most parts of South Sudan and is likely to cause food insecurity for pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.
- Disruptions to traditional migration routes by cattle raiding and related violence will likely affect delivery of animal health services and increase the spreading of diseases.
- Desert locusts continue to move deeper into South Sudan and the invasion is likely to result in significant damage to pastures leading to food insecurity among the affected livestock keeping communities.
- FAO and partners disposed 2 320 carcasses by on-site burning around Lekuangole and along the Lekuangole-Pibor road in Pibor County. The animals' deaths were related to recent cattle raiding events.

BACKGROUND

Livestock play a critical role in the food security and overall well-being of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in South Sudan by providing milk, meat, blood, income, and as draught power in farms. However, livestock related conflict and violence has significantly affected livestock mobility to trading locations and disrupted traditional migration routes and patterns – the most critical element of any pastoral production system. Furthermore, these disruptions are limiting access to livestock-saving vaccination and treatment services and facilitating the spreading of animal diseases.

Even with the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity in March 2020, the vulnerability of pastoralists to increased cattle raiding remains high. Livestock-keeping communities are engaging in atypical migration that is largely driven by the need to save lives and livelihoods, particularly in Jonglei (Pibor), Lakes (Rumbek Centre, Rumbek North and Cueibet), Warrap (Tonj South and East) and Western Bahr el Ghazal (Jur River).

ANIMAL HEALTH



The body condition of most animals is reported to be good due to presence of water and pastures in the dry season grazing areas. Between January and February 2020, FAO and partners vaccinated 311 114 animals against diseases such as haemorrhagic septicaemia, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, contagious caprine pleuropneumonia, *Peste des Petits Ruminants* and anthrax among others. 78 132 livestock were treated in order to safeguard the food security of the affected households. FAO and partners facilitated disposal of 2 320 carcasses resulting from recent cattle raiding around Lekuangole and along the Lekuangole-Pibor road in Pibor County, Jonglei State.

In January 2020, FAO in partnership with USAID and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries experts conducted a training session in necropsy and laboratory diagnostic techniques at the Central Veterinary Lab in Juba for 19 technical staff. In March 2020, FAO and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries conducted another workshop on participatory disease search for 21 participants comprised of local veterinarians, technicians, and animal health workers was held in March 2020. The current COVID-19 pandemic will likely slow down the delivery of animal health services due to restriction of movement with some impact on food security.

LIVESTOCK MARKETS

Livestock trading increased significantly within the reporting period, with most of the livestock slaughtered in urban centers coming from the rural areas. Most livestock sold in Juba market came from Kapoeta and Pibor as well as Uganda. Kapoeta alone supplies an estimated 1 000 - 1 500 cattle every two weeks. This level of trade ensures that pastoralist households are able to earn income to purchase food and meet other household needs, thus reducing their food insecurity. However, taxation on multiple check points along the routes from the production areas to the markets are constraining the livestock marketing activities.



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LIVESTOCK SHOW



In January 2020, FAO in partnership with USAID and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries organized a two-day livestock show and agricultural exhibition in Torit, the third of its kind ever organized in South Sudan, to promote animal production and food security.

The purpose of the livestock show was to promote commercialization of the livestock sector with a focus on the quality rather than the number of animals presented and to highlight how livestock can play a pivotal role in the growth of South Sudan's economy. Livestock shows also serve to promote peaceful interaction between agro-pastoralist communities in the region.

CHALLENGES FACING THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- An estimated 210 people are reported to have been killed, 247 wounded, 8 150 displaced (s media and government reports Jan – March 2020) and an unknown number of livestock looted in multiple attacks in South Sudan, including in the Abyei Administrative Area, Jonglei, Lakes, Warrap and Western Bahr el Ghazal. Due to the increased number of incidents of cattle raiding and related violence, thousands of people have been displaced from their homes, a situation that is likely to worsen their food insecurity.
- The outbreak of desert locusts in South Sudan is most likely to affect the availability of pastures and consequently increase the vulnerability of livestock keepers in affected counties in Eastern Equatoria and parts of Jonglei state.
- Livestock diseases will persist in areas affected by increased cattle raiding incidents and related violence because delivery of animal health services has been hampered and spreading of diseases due the movement of animals.
- Carcasses are still littered in some areas that were affected by floods last year. This is according to the post-flood assessment report for Akobo, Ayod, Duk, Nyirol and Pibor counties in Jonglei State. FAO is working with partners, local authorities and community animal health workers in those areas to dispose and raise awareness on safe disposal of carcasses.
- The COVID-19 pandemic will increasingly cause disruptions to planned field activities as movement restrictions are implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Early prepositioning of veterinary inputs ahead of the impending COVID-19 related total movement restrictions and the rainy season in order to reduce livestock deaths, particularly among conflict-affected communities whose livestock might have been missed during the vaccination campaigns.
- As cattle-related conflict may likely escalate in the areas of Jonglei, Lakes, Unity and Warrap states, it is important to mitigate this through conflict resolution efforts otherwise, it will result in abnormal movement of livestock and may lead to spread of diseases which will negatively impact on food security.
- Improved and continuous disease surveillance including sero-surveillance must be intensified now that there is a functional Central Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Juba.
- While the situation allows, and before total restrictions of field missions, campaigns for increased awareness of safe disposal of carcasses must be stepped up.
- Communities need to be sensitized on how to report the presence of desert locusts in their respective areas as a means of supporting the national strategies of surveillance and control.

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