

POLICY BRIEF SERIES

October 2021



Policy Brief for South Sudan National Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Strategy and Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

The five year National Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Strategy and Action Plan for the Republic of South Sudan was developed to implement the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The Strategy is aligned with the IGAD Regional SPS strategy and Annex VII of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. This was in response to the challenge of inadequate SPS capacity of IGAD member states hindering access to international trade as well as affecting domestic food and nutritional security.



SPS measures aim to improve human health, animal health and phytosanitary situation while minimizing negative effects on trade and are necessary for exploitation of global market opportunities for agricultural and food products. The measures are defined as including all relevant laws, decrees, regulations, requirements, and procedures including end product criteria; processes and production methods; testing, inspection, certification and

approval procedures; quarantine treatments including relevant requirements associated with the transport of animals or plants or with the materials necessary for their survival during transport; provisions on relevant statistical methods, sampling procedures and methods of risk assessment; and packaging and labelling requirements directly related to food safety. The Strategy will put the country in a position to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area as well as other regional and international trade agreements and opportunities.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The National SPS Strategy and Action Plan was developed after a desk literature review, country field assessment and consultation with stakeholders, and incorporation of comments raised in a stakeholders' workshop. The desk review was done of the WTO SPS Agreement, the AfCFTA Agreement, the IGAD regional SPS strategy, and other relevant global and continental documents on SPS. A list of some recommended reading for stakeholders in animal health, plant health, and food safety official controls was given at the end of the Strategy.

The country field assessment was done using designated focal persons within the Ministries of Animal Resources and Fisheries and Agriculture and Food Security. The assessment reviewed the status of SPS management capacity, and consulted with stakeholders on key SPS issues, inter-sectoral collaboration, existing gaps and suggested solutions. A stakeholders' workshop was facilitated to enrich and validate the Strategy and the stakeholders' comments incorporated in the final document.

LIVESTOCK SITUATION ANALYSIS

South Sudan is said to have the highest livestock per capita holding in Africa. The livestock sub-sector is a major component of agriculture and fishing which overall offer livelihoods to 80% of the population of the country. Estimates done in 2013 using the 'expenditure approach' showed that the sector contributes approximately 14.5% of the agricultural GDP with cattle alone accounting for 13.5% of the country's economy and supplying 65% of red meat. However, the 'production approach' adopted in the 2015 ICPALD study on the contribution of livestock to the South Sudan economy gives a higher estimate of 8.894 Billion SSPs (3.015 Billion USD) calculating to 25.8% of the estimated GDP of 11.67USD.

However, it was reported that the sub-sector faces many challenges such as tribal conflicts, prolonged droughts and seasonal floods, and disease outbreaks. The legal and institutional framework for livestock is also inadequate in terms of incomplete legislation, and lack of inputs and facilities along the value chain including in production, disease control and laboratories, staffing and funding. Livestock marketing is constrained by conflicts, animal diseases, poor marketing and communication infrastructure, lack of slaughter and processing facilities, and inadequate compliance with SPS measures.

CROP SITUATION ANALYSIS

The potential for crop production is high in South Sudan as the country has rich and conducive biodiversity ranging from savanna land, swamps, and rainforests. However, most farmers practice subsistence production which is not adequate for household consumption and national food security and most fiber crops, oil crops and food commodities are imported. Legal and institutional framework for crops is also inadequate in legislation, staffing, funding, plant protection and extension services, stakeholder awareness and SPS enforcement facilities. The country's page in the FAO/IPPC website is devoid of activity showing lack of data collection and reporting on pest control.

FISHERIES SITUATION ANALYSIS

South Sudan has rich fisheries resources consisting of River Nile and its tributaries, the Sudd swamp, lakes and streams. However, fishing in the country is practiced on a subsistence basis by pastoralists to complement their livelihoods when they return to the dry season grazing grounds. The sector lacks adequate infrastructure including research, equipment, landing sites and cold storage, apart from also facing the general constraints in the agricultural sector.

FOOD SAFETY SITUATION

It was reported that some of the major health problems experienced by the people of South Sudan are food-borne illnesses. The country is lacking in surveillance and prevention systems and there are no official records of common diseases. There is also no capacity to implement Good Hygiene Practices (GHPs), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), Food Safety Management Systems (e.g. ISO 22000), or to conduct Risk Analysis. In addition, there appears to be no designated Country Competent Authority responsible for food safety official controls and enforcement.



Photo sourced from the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Policy 2011

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE SPS STRATEGY

The situation analysis and literature review led to the derivation of a set of strategic objectives, which in turn have a range of activities to enable their attainment. The SPS Strategy intends to:

1. Strengthen the enabling legal and regulatory environment.
2. Strengthen institutional capacity of both public and private sectors.
3. Improve productivity, production, welfare and health of animals and crop production and pest control.
4. Improve market access for livestock, crop and fisheries products.
5. Improve food safety and food defense.
6. Improve cross cutting issues that impact on the agricultural value chains.

CONCLUSION

It is understandable for South Sudan being a young nation and coming from a conflict situation that most institutions and policy frameworks are still in the formation stages. However, political goodwill was mentioned as one of the strengths in this strategy and no doubt the strong will of the people as well. Other important opportunities include support from development partners and international organizations; trained manpower in the diaspora; and the R-TGoNU peace era. The huge potential of crop and livestock production if well managed to meet trade requirements of sanitary and phytosanitary standards will yield concomitant benefits for the country in terms of earnings as well as food and nutrition security.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Complete the draft livestock production and health and crop protection bills and develop other policies, acts, strategies, standards and guidelines to enable implementation of SPS measures.
- Build SPS institutional capacity with adequate staffing, funding, training and facilities including establishing necessary competent offices.
- Establish programs to increase productivity, production, welfare and health of animals and crop production and pest control.
- Undertake programs and procedures to implement and facilitate compliance of SPS measures for market access.
- Establish food safety and food defense systems and procedures starting with the Country Competent Authority and legal framework.
- Mitigate against environmental and social factors impacting negatively on livestock, agriculture and food safety mainly the effects of climate change and tribal conflicts.
- Facilitate extension, stakeholder awareness and enforcement of livestock production and health, crop protection and food safety laws, regulations, standards and guidelines with adequate staffing, funding, transport and equipment.



Acknowledgement: The Director IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development appreciates the financial support by FAO & AU-IBAR towards formulation of the SPS Strategy.



PUBLISHED BY IGAD CENTRE FOR PASTORAL AREAS AND LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT
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