

Design and development of an electronic identification and traceability system for cattle under pastoral production systems: A case for Kenya.

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Date: 2010

Abstract

Traceability systems offer strong incentives to livestock and meat exporting countries by altering their productive and industrial processes in order to access premium meat markets globally.

Kenya, whilst acknowledged as one of the countries within the horn of Africa with a reasonably credible veterinary service, has very limited access to beef and livestock markets in importing countries due to perceived risk or suspicions of presence of trans-boundary animal diseases (TADs) such as Rift Valley Fever (RVF) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), lack of capacity to prove the absence of TADs and absence of an effective traceability system that acts as proxy for quality assurance. The objective of this study was to report on the processes through which a model traceability system was designed for pastoral production systems of Northeastern Kenya. The study reports that industry-wide consultation is a critical ingredient in the design process that encompassed simple drop down menus, low price and phased process of implementation. The use of a single central database reduced considerably the cost of implementation and minimized response time for impact analysis.