



SPEECH BY HON. JONATHAN MUEKE, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT, DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL VACCINATION OF SHEEP AND GOATS AGAINST PESTE DES PETITS RUMINANTS (PPR) ON 18Th JULY 2024, AT SYOKITHUMBI, KWA MUTONGA, KITUI WEST, KITUI COUNTY

His Excellency Governor, Governor Kitui County

Director Veterinary Services

County Commissioner, Kitui County

**County Executive Committee Member, Agriculture and
Livestock**

Regional Director, VSF Germany

Representative - World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

Senior Government Officers,

Veterinary Professionals

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today, to make official opening remarks during this important launch of the National Mass Vaccination Campaign of sheep and goats against Peste Des Petits Ruminants (PPR) Disease.

Livestock plays an important role in Kenya at both the national and household level and has been identified as critical to overall economic and social development. At the national level, up to 12% of the GDP and 30% of farm gate value of agricultural commodities originate from livestock enterprises and employs 50% of the agricultural labour force. The livestock population is estimated at 22 million cattle, 63 million sheep and goats, 3 million camels and

1.8 million donkeys. The subsector is the main source of livelihood for the rural population. Eighty percent (80%) of the Kenya's land is arid and about 10 million Kenyans living in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) derive their livelihood largely from livestock. The small stock (sheep and goats) subsector plays a crucial role in the Kenyan economy by providing livelihoods, income, employment, and export earnings. Its contributions are essential to both the agricultural sector and the broader economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Livestock sub sector faces a myriad of challenges which include: diseases and pests, unfavorable climatic conditions and lack of markets. Trans boundary diseases cause huge economic losses due to deaths, treatment costs and poor body condition. These diseases include foot and mouth Disease, Rift Valley Fever, PPR (SOTOKA ya mbuzi) and anthrax just to name a few.

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) also known as sotoka ya mbuzi in Kiswahili is a highly contagious trans-boundary viral disease of sheep and goats which causes many deaths and heavy economic losses to livestock thus leading to food and nutritional insecurity.

Some wild animals are also susceptible and therefore present a potential risk to the small ruminants. The first case of this disease in Kenya was in Turkana in 2006 and since then, it has caused devastating outbreaks especially in the Arid and semi-arid regions.

This is one of the globally recognized diseases and a global strategy for the eradication of PPR has been developed which has already been domesticated here in Kenya. This Strategy provides a pathway for the progressive control and eradication of PPR by the year 2027, while emphasizing on reduction of the threat of other priority small ruminant diseases (SRDs).

This disease has a significant impact on the economy, food security and rural livelihoods. Small ruminants act as a short-term savings account which can be rapidly converted into cash to cover for both planned and emergency expenses. Sheep and goats are prolific breeders with a short reproductive cycle of six months to one year hence increase the size and value of the flock within a short time. PPR, therefore, is a threat to food security and livelihoods of most pastoralists who are dependent on livestock. The socio-economic losses associated with PPR mainly result from the high case fatality rates. The annual impact of PPR in all 23 ASAL counties of Kenya for the year 2016 was estimated at Ksh.1.67 billion.

Access of livestock and livestock products to lucrative markets, has been markedly hindered by existence of endemic trade sensitive diseases such as Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) among other transboundary diseases. Trade Restrictions are often imposed on the movement of small ruminants and their products in countries or regions where PPR outbreaks occur to prevent the spread of the disease to unaffected areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the BETA Agenda of the Kenya Kwanza government is to improve the meat value chain. Sheep and goats contribute greatly

to the rural economy through the various Nyama Choma Joints located all over the country.

To protect our sheep and goats, the State Department for Livestock Development will roll out a nationwide vaccination campaign against PPR and has released 700,000 doses of PPR vaccine to Kitui County which will be used to cover all Sheep and goats.

We are gathered here today to protect this industry by launching the nationwide vaccination campaign and continue the journey of eradicating PPR from the face of the earth. This calls for all Kenyans to put their effort together and eradicate this disease

I therefore request all stakeholders to join hands in kicking out PPR out of the Universe by having all sheep and goats vaccinated against this disease. I wish to thank VSF Germany and World organization of Animal Health for their contribution in this noble exercise and call upon all the other development partners to join us in carrying out this noble task.

I now have the pleasure to declare the National Vaccination of sheep and goats against Peste des Petit Ruminants Officially launched.

God Bless you

God Bless Kenya