



Piloting an improved animal identification and registration system in Mongolia

This pilot project aimed to evaluate the technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of an improved Animal Identification and Registration System (AIRS) in Mongolia. The system is essential for exporting livestock and related products, and the management of animal health issues (zoonoses).

Mongolian government representatives and FAO organized a two-day workshop on 07-08 Oct 2021 to present the results, lessons and recommendations to this pilot project in Mongolia. More information on the event can be accessed [here](#).

STDF/PG/534

Status

Completed

Start Date

15/05/2019

Project Value (US\$)

\$522,098

STDF Contribution (US\$)

\$384,783

Beneficiaries

Mongolia

Implementing Entities

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Partners

Embassy of France, Mongolia

Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, Mongolia (MoFALI)

Trade Related Assistance for Mongolia Project, European Union (EU TRAM)

French Livestock Institute (IDELE)

Background

Mongolia's livestock sector accounts for more than 15% of its GDP and provides livelihoods for almost half the country's population. Since 2010, exports of animal products were declining due to an outdated AIRS system. This meant that information on the health or origin of exported or imported animals was unavailable, which negatively impacted exports.

In 2009, the Mongolian government, with support from donors, sought to set up a new animal identification system. However, they faced significant challenges, including: a lack of trained veterinarians, disease outbreaks including foot-and-mouth disease,

an overly complex system that was not financially sustainable, lack of standard operating procedures and inadequate financial resources.

The government recognized AIRS as the building block to overcome these challenges. Through this pilot project, the AIRS system was tested to understand the prerequisites for a feasible and sustainable system. The AIRS will also contribute to improving public veterinary services, surveillance and control of contagious disease by strengthening reliability of veterinary export certificates. As a result, positive impacts on economic development and the environment are anticipated.

Results

Developed an efficient and reliable AIRS

- A new AIRS was developed and is ready to be scaled up nationwide. The system includes a national database, a mobile application to scan ear tags and standard operating procedures. It provides a foundation to improve animal disease control and support export certification procedures; and is expected to contribute to better breeding programs, strengthen efforts to curb animal theft and increase domestic food safety.
- At the completion of the project, 195,000 animals had been registered on the new database. Regulations required for animal identification, registration and ear tagging were updated and approved by ministerial decree. Adjustments are to be introduced based on the pilot's experiences.
- The AIRS was developed in close co-operation with the private sector, including private veterinarians and herders. It is designed to enable use by rural registrars who have limited Internet access. Registrars can store data on their mobile phones while offline and upload it to the server when they have access to the Internet.

Enhanced SPS capacity

- More than 400 agricultural officers, veterinarians and herders were trained to use the new AIRS, including to ear-tag small ruminants. The new system is expected to improve disease control and export certification; and contribute to better breeding programs, improved rangeland management and reduced animal theft.

Recommendations

Implementing AIRS is a long-term investment that requires buy-in from the public and private sectors. In Mongolia, good collaboration across central government departments, sub-national stakeholders and development partners was key to connect and learn from related work, promote coherence and link up various information systems.

Enabling legislation, clarity on roles and effective coordination are essential for an effective AIRS. Incentives must be in place to ensure that AIRS delivers value to herders and the industry in the short term and can be scaled up in the long term. IT platforms must ensure interoperability so that databases used by different stakeholders speak the same language and are able to understand and exchange data.