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PROGRESS REPORT

ON

O.A.U. JOINT CAMPAIGN AGAINST RINDERPEST.



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OAU JOINT CAMPAIGN AGAINST RINDERPEST

The first part of this great campaign against rinderpest which took place in West and Central Africa ended in November 1969. The second part involving the Eastern African Countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan was officially launched in November 1968. This therefore means that this campaign has been going on for over two years.

An important feature about this campaign in Eastern Africa is that two very important cattle diseases in Africa are being tackled during this single vaccination campaign. Simultaneous vaccinations are going on against both CBPP using T₁ broth culture vaccine and Rinderpest using Tissue culture vaccine. This simultaneous vaccination was started as a pilot scheme in certain areas of Kenya and Tanzania where CBPP outbreaks occurred quite often. As a result of the success of this pilot scheme, no outbreaks of CBPP have been reported in these areas after vaccination. With these encouraging results, simultaneous vaccinations are now widely used in most of the East African campaign areas.

In December 1970, the second technical annual review meeting of Rinderpest was held in Kampala, Uganda. Participants to this meeting included delegates from the participating countries, representatives from Donor Agencies, Laboratories, ECA and other International Organizations.

During the meeting, delegates were able to compare notes and learn from the experiences of their colleagues from other countries.

The International Co-ordinating Unit remain in Nairobi and actively co-ordinated the field activities by holding Inter-State border meetings, supervising vaccination programmes etc. etc.

The initial difficulties encountered during the "running-in period" of the campaign were virtually over and the state of "vaccination expulsion" where about 10 million cattle were vaccinated against rinderpest and CBPP, was reached.

Some countries still had a few draw backs in this campaign due to the late arrival of equipments and difficulties of transportation of vaccines and equipment due to very difficult terraine.

During this second year of the campaign, the majority of the countries achieve remarkable results and in some of them active outbreaks of rinderpest were not recorded.

Unfortunately, there was room for alarm in a few proportion of the countries where not as many cattle were vaccinated as was expected, and also the number of active Rinderpest outbreaks reported were on the increase. Prompt action has been taken by the International co-ordinator and field officers have been sent to the countries concerned to remedy the situation.

The entire rinderpest picture now in the Phase 4 area is that rinderpest has now been pushed right up to the northern part of the area. In the countries of the southern part viz. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, the rinderpest situation is so satisfactory that during the annual meeting their delegates were thinking on the lines of how to keep rinderpest permanently out of this area and also declaring it a rinderpest-free zone.

In order to intensify and concentrate the campaign in the northern part of the Phase 4 area, the International Co-ordinator's Unit shall be moved from Nairobi to Addis Ababa by the middle of 1971. Meanwhile, the Deputy International co-ordinator shall remain in Nairobi to complete the programme in the southern part.

This Rinderpest campaign in Eastern African countries continues to enjoy the generosity of Donor Agencies such as USAID, ODM, German Technical Aid, UNDP etc. for which the Executive Secretariat is most grateful.

After the successful completion of this vaccination campaign in Eastern Africa, rinderpest shall be brought under control and eventually, this disease may be completely eradicated. This can only be achieved by the execution of the very important duties of the carrying out of conservatory or follow-up measures.

At the end of the vaccination campaign in every Phase, a detailed agreement is always drawn up by the countries that participated

in the campaign. This agreement states among other things that:-

- (a) Vaccination shall continue for:
 - (i) The new calf crop for two successive years
 - (ii) All animals that were not vaccinated during the campaign.
- (b) Neighbouring countries must be informed of the rinderpest state of affairs in the different countries.
- (c) In case of rinderpest outbreak the accepted control measures are to be implemented.

To ensure the execution of these conservatory measures, the responsibilities were given to IBAR. This is a very difficult task and need the co-operation of all the states concerned to carry it out. This co-operation is mainly in the form of finance. The OAU/STRC is therefore appealing to all member states concerned to improve upon their budget for livestock activities so as to enable their veterinary departments get rid of rinderpest and its related problems once and for all.

The main objective of the OAU livestock policy is to improve the animal protein content of the diet of the African people. In Africa today, beef is one of the cheapest sources of animal protein.

Due to OAU/STRC Joint Project against major cattle diseases, Africa is reaching the stage where animal disease shall no longer be a problem in livestock development activities. True enough, we have still got the problem of CBPP in our hands. The OAU/STRC is taking adequate action to launch a Joint campaign against this disease on similar lines as the Rinderpest Joint Campaign.

It is becoming increasingly important that every African Government should take effective action to concentrate on improving the quality and quantity of their livestock i.e. improve their livestock husbandry. It is only with this type of actions that one can be sure of a constant supply of meat to the African population and even, eventually obtain the very badly needed foreign exchange into this continent.

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Progress report on O.A.U. Joint Campaign against Rinderpest

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