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Impact of Darfur Conflict on Animal Health Delivery Systems in North Darfur State, Sudan

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Abstract

The impact of the Darfur conflict on the livestock and animal health services were studied during the year 2008?-2009, in North Darfur. The study area comprised 100 villages of which 20 % were randomly selected. In 14 localities focal group discussions were held and informal personal interviews with groups of 5?-8 persons as well as with traditional leaders. Also a household survey with 10 % of all households in the 20 villages was carried out. Informal interviews with 50% of the former INGOs and veterinary staff were held. Secondary data, official documents, reports of veterinary services, INGOs and UN agencies were studied. The study revealed that the people of Darfur were caught up in a conflict resulting from years of underdevelopment, resource-based disputes over land, water, as well as political and military engagements. Many people have been killed; houses destroyed, animals looted, and basic animal health delivery system disrupted. The situation of the veterinary clinics in the area was highly affected: 45 % stopped functioning, 22 % were looted, 15 % destroyed and only 18 % were still functioning. The study also disclosed that animal health services were confined to the main towns (Elfashir, Kutum, Kebkayia, Malliet and Umkadada). Insecurity prevented veterinary authorities from moving to rural areas to provide veterinary services such as vaccination, treatments and diagnosis. Therefore, the vaccination rates were low: 8.5 % in 2005, 12.3 % in 2006, 7.3 % in 2007 and 22 % in 2008. Many pastoralist groups (22 %) were effectively marooned in one area with very limited mobility due to closed grazing routes, putting pressure on grazing and water resources. As a result the management system was affected: 53 % of the animals were looted, 19 % were forced to sale or slaughter, 14 % were migrated to neighboring countries, and the rest (14%) was maintained in the area. The major constrains to animal productivity were: water and feed shortages (40%), bad marketing structures (30 %), lack of qualified veterinary staff (10%). Most INGOs programs during the conflict included rehabilitation of water supply, improvement of animal health status through provision of fodder, restocking, training of Paravets and free vaccination. This study recommended that interventions should be made in order to improve the animal health delivery systems, restocking of animals, emergency fodder supply, as well as veterinary drug supply. A focus should be put on the training of community animal health workers.

Keywords: Conflicts, Sudan