



64TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION BY NIGERIA

The following communication, dated 28 September 2015, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Nigeria.

1 PEST AND DISEASE FREE AREAS

1.1 Item 7. (a)

1.1. Members will recall that in March this year, Nigeria notified the Committee on the situation of Avian Influenza in Nigeria in accordance with article 6 of the SPS Agreement on Transparency.¹ We wish to update the Committee on the status of the disease in Nigeria and the measures so far taken to address the problem in the affected states in Nigeria.

2 DISEASE SITUATION

2.1. Nigeria is still experiencing sporadic outbreaks of the disease though the numbers of outbreaks have drastically reduced compared to the situation in March 2015. We had a six weeks break between June and July before we recorded three cases in the Lagos environ. The number of States in Nigeria that have recorded outbreaks now stands at 21 States, up from the 18 States reported in March while the affected Local Government Areas (LGAs) involved are 84 up from the 71 reported at last meeting. So far, the total number of birds depopulated is 1,558,201 in 474 farms and one zoological garden. Investigations conducted through gene sequencing and phylogenetic analysis of the virus isolated from this present outbreak has shown similarities to subtypes of virus strain isolated from a previous infection in China HPAI outbreak. It is therefore very likely that the source of infection of this current resurgence is wild birds but investigation is on-going.

3 ACTIONS TAKEN

3.1. Apart from the notifications made to the International Organizations and initial measures taken to control the disease under the modified stamping-out policy of government, several other interventions were undertaken including public awareness, sensitization of the key stakeholders in the industry and capacity building for the officials of the veterinary, livestock and extension services. In addition, private veterinarians, egg merchants, poultry manure merchants and live bird market operators are being targeted in the current on-going sensitization and capacity building activities. This is consequent on a disease investigation conducted by the Department of Veterinary Services, FMARD which found that the major risk factors responsible for the spread of the current resurgence of the disease are egg merchants, poultry manure merchants and live bird market operators. The inability of the States to effectively enforce movement control of poultry and poultry products despite the movement control regulation signed by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development has also contributed to the spread of the AI virus. Zoning, compartmentalization or regionalization is currently not being implemented in Nigeria.

¹ Document G/SPS/GEN/1397.

3.2. In addition to the above, a total of 137 farmers have been paid a sum of N396,974,226.00 for depopulated birds and destroyed eggs while a sum of N675,778,399.00 is being processed to pay another set of 291 farmers whose birds were depopulated.

4 OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES

4.1. Nigeria hosted a sub-regional meeting on Avian Influenza Control organized and funded by FAO to develop a regional strategy for the control of the Avian Influenza. The meeting attracted stakeholders from the 15 countries in the sub-region and the donor community. Nigeria presented a paper on the efforts being made to contain the Avian Influenza Epidemic.

4.2. Nigeria is also making efforts at reviewing its emergency preparedness and response plan for Avian Influenza based on experience garnered from the on-going Avian Influenza resurgence. A team of experts have been selected to review the current plan in line with international standards and best practice.

5 SUPPORT FROM DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

5.1. The World Bank, FAO, USAID and other partners have been very supportive both financially and technically in our efforts at containing the disease. They have continued to participate at our technical Meetings making valuable contributions to formulation of strategy towards the containment of the disease.

6 CHALLENGES

6.1. The challenges faced include:

- a. Inability to carry out active disease surveillance to determine the extent of spread of the virus before its clinical manifestations in poultry species thereby being ahead of the virus' spread;
- b. Ineffectiveness of on-farm quarantine measures and implementation of containment measures such as movement control of birds;
- c. Low risk perception amongst poultry farmers, poultry attendants, animal health service providers and the general public on the disease in the States;
- d. Inability to effectively control movement of poultry and poultry products; and
- e. Inadequate funding for the containment measures put in place by Ministry and development partners which has also affected the efficacy of the control.

7 FUTURE PLANS

7.1. Plans for the future include the following:

- Dealing with challenges;
- Stepping up Sensitization and Farmer Education;
- Increasing Active Surveillance;
- Enhancing human capacity building;
- Bridging funding gaps;
- Strengthening State Veterinary Services;
- Strengthening regional and international collaboration;
- Increasing the role of NGOs in disease reporting; and
- Developing a National Strategic Plan for Animal Disease Control.

8 CONCLUSION

The resurgence of avian influenza in Nigeria, in Africa is a matter of great concern for the nation, the region and indeed the world. The prevention and control of its spread therefore becomes of great priority to Government and the international community. To avoid possible development of the pandemic more intensive control and surveillance activities are needed. The support of National and Regional Governments as well as international development agencies and private sector is urgently needed.
