



## UPDATE ON THE AVIAN INFLUENZA SITUATION

### STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE SIXTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

The following communication, received on 1 March 2016, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Nigeria.

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Members will recall that in October last year, Nigeria presented an update to the Committee on the situation of avian influenza in Nigeria in accordance with article 6 of the SPS Agreement.<sup>1</sup> 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.

#### 1 DISEASE SITUATION

1.1. Nigeria experienced a sharp rise in the number of outbreaks in months of January and February with over 45 outbreaks in January alone. The number of farms affected now stands at 649 compared with 474 farms reported in October 2015. The number of States in Nigeria that have recorded outbreaks now stands at 25 States, up from the 21 States reported in October while the affected LGAs involved are now 117 up from the 84 reported at last meeting. So far, the total number of birds depopulated is now 2,925,524 in 649 farms and one zoological garden compared with 1,558,201 in 474 farms and one zoological garden reported in October 2015. Thirty isolates of the virus is currently undergoing gene sequencing and phylogenetic analysis at the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) to generate more information on the virus.

#### 2 ACTIONS TAKEN

2.1. All outbreaks have been duly notified to the relevant international organizations and measures taken to control the disease under the modified stamping-out policy of the Government. Depopulation and decontamination inputs have been supplied to all the affected States. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development has also signed a regulation to control movement of poultry and poultry products from infected to non-infected States. This is being gazetted by the legal unit. The International development partners have assisted with the supply of depopulation and decontamination inputs for the control of the disease. Out of the 647 farms so far affected, 276 farms have been paid a total N710 million (\$3.55m) as compensation while the remaining the 173 farms with a total of N543 million (\$2,75m) is still outstanding. The National Veterinary Services with the support of the FAO has also reviewed its Emergency Preparedness Plan on Avian Influenza in line with global best practice and to further strengthen the national control strategy for the disease. Zoning, compartmentalization or regionalization is currently not being implemented in Nigeria.

#### 3 OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES

3.1. Nigeria is participating in a World Bank assisted Regional Disease Surveillance and Response Project in West Africa to mitigate the risks posed by infectious and zoonotic diseases (both animal and human) by addressing the weaknesses in the country health systems. The project would address systemic weaknesses within the animal and human health sector that hinder effective

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<sup>1</sup> Documents G/SPS/GEN/1397 and G/SPS/GEN/1441.

disease surveillance and response and ultimately contribute towards significantly reducing the burden of diseases particularly among the poor and vulnerable populations, mitigating the public health and economic risks posed by infectious diseases in humans and animals, and decreasing the threats of future disease outbreaks thereby promoting global health security.

3.2. It is hoped that disease surveillance within the animal health sector which has been a major constraint mitigating against effective control of the avian influenza disease outbreak and other transboundary diseases would ultimately be strengthened under the programme.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

4.1. 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 should be of priority to national governments and the international community, especially the WTO, in view of the trade implications. To avoid possible development of endemic situations in affected countries as well as the possibility of human infection, 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.

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