

POLICY ADVOCACY AND GAINING POLITICAL SUPPORT: BEST PRACTICES IN TANZANIA

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INTERACTION BETWEEN TECHNICAL SERVICES AND THE POLITICAL SCENE

- There's an existing 2 way interaction between the technical services, the Parliament and the Cabinet.
- The Ministry of Livestock Development and Fisheries (MLDF) is a Central Government technical Ministry responsible for coordinating and regulating the Livestock sector in the country
- The Minister responsible, is the political leader and advocate of the sector in the Parliament and Government structure.

- The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, is the chief technocrat coordinating day to day technical and administrative affairs.
- Technically there are eight (8) directorates headed by directors, answerable to the Permanent Secretary.
- However there are four (4) directorates which are crucial in sanitary issues.

These are:-

- Directorate of Veterinary Services,
- Pastoral Development and Range Management,
- Identification and Traceability and
- The Veterinary Council of Tanzania.

Communication between the Ministry & Cabinet

- For communication purposes, the Permanent Secretary usually meets with all directors of the Ministry every Monday of the week for technical issues.
- The Minister meets all the directors once every 3 months to discuss any matter of importance.
- Further up the Permanent Secretaries of all URT meet once, every Wednesday of the week in what is known as the *Inter Ministerial Technical Committee* where the *Chief Secretary* is the *Chairman*.

- **Anything significant emanating from this meeting is taken to the cabinet for further discussion and the chairman during cabinet meetings is the President of URT.**
- **With such meetings emergency funds can be sought and approved as exemplified by the outbreaks of RVF and PPR recently.**
- **And also during such sittings budgetary outcries can be expressed.**

- During the normal parliamentary sessions the technical services is permanently represented by a resident officer
- The officer is supposed to record anything being queried on the livestock sector and liaise with Hqs for clarification.
- During the budget sessions the technical service is always sufficiently represented by a score of officers from all directorates
- The attendance is full time from the beginning of the session up to the end.
- Although they don't participate in actual debates (because they are not members of the parliament), they however attend as observers, closely following whatever is being queried and where possible offer instant answers to the Minister

- However under normal circumstances, parliamentary questions/queries are usually brought to the Ministry in advance, where Ministerial technicians prepare answers which are read out in the Parliament by the Minister or his/her Deputy.

THE SPREAD OF TECHNICAL ADVISE TO STAKE HOLDERS

Technical issues from the technical MLDF at the Central Government level are sent down to stake holders through a variety of ways:

- The main way is through the livestock field extension personnel who are wide spread down to the village level
- Following decentralisation they belong to Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government,
- They are the actual implementers at the grass root.

Other communication tools being used, depending on circumstances, by both the technical Ministry and the Local Govt. Ministry include the use of:

- Local Media, Radio and Television
- For broadcasting interviews, seminars, conferences, drama performances and press releases on sanitary and other livestock issues.
- The use of cinemas vans, campaigns, participation in agricultural and trade shows, coverage of important livestock events
- Publication and distribution of leaflets, booklets, posters and placards.

- The Ministry has also a web site www.mifugo.go.tz where further information about livestock activities can be sourced
- Sometimes for maximum impact the use of politicians and other influential community leaders has often proven successful in sending extension packages to the livestock keepers and other stake holders.

FURTHERING OF VETERINARY SERVICES INTERESTS

- Veterinarians both (public and private) are solidly united under a powerful non governmental Ass. Tanzania Veterinary Association (TVA) with about 500 members.
- Apart from preserving, nurturing and promoting the veterinary profession
- Defend and protect the rights and personal well being of veterinarians.
- For the past 20 years after conferences- Ass. Has been at forefront in offering advice to the technical Ministry on how to deal with various issues such as diseases control.

- The Association has tirelessly urged about the importance of controlling TADs, Zoonotic infections, Parasitic diseases etc
- Has often called for the control of livestock movement as a way of curbing disease spread

TVA and Advocacy

Appreciating the importance of Advocacy, the TVA during all its scientific conferences has always been inviting:

- influential political figures, ranging from Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers
- International delegates to either officially open and close its conferences.
- During the occasions the media (News papers, Radio and Television) is fully being utilized.

- To coin it all, the current patron of the Association is one of the retired president who had been so even before his retirement
- TVA is a strong pressure group to the Govt in fighting for the welfare of veterinarians
- Of late has managed to convince the Govt to raise salaries of vets to be somewhat equivalent to those of medics on the human side.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND BUDGETARY PRIORITIES

- Ministries formulate budget requests but due to financial constraints each Ministry is given a ceiling.
- Lobbying plays an important role because the ceiling can be changed if it can be argued convincingly.
- Formulated budgets requests must pass through what are known as *Ministries' Parliamentary Committees*.
- Committees scrutinize and challenge critically the different proposals before they are tabled in the Parliament.

- The support by these committees is very important.
- Thus being in good terms with a respective committee is very crucial.
- Together with other efforts the Ministerial parliamentary committee it played a vital role in succeeding to raise the Ministry's budget for 2009/2010 by 53% from Tshillings 47 billion to about 67 billion compared to past the financial year 2008/2009.

- Another aspects of lobbying involve the co-option of important stakeholders.
- In 2008 the Ministry held a meeting involving political leaders, influential livestock keepers and technocrats from livestock keeping regions.
- Business people with interest in livestock farming, marketing and processing
- Livestock experts from the University
- Prime Minister was a guest of honour.
- The media (Press, Radio, TV) was also invited.

- Brain storming resulted in a number of resolutions of how to prop the livestock sector
- That meeting definitely contributed to the recent budget increase.
- By same token in October 2009 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister another similar meeting is planned which will deliberate on the progress made so far
- A request for budget increase will be high on the agenda .

EFFECTS OF POLITICS, PUBLIC OUTCRIES, PRESS CAMPAIGNS VERSUS TECHNICAL SERVICES COMPLIANCE

- There is no doubt the fact that pressures mounted by politicians, public and the press do influence positive or negative changes that to some extent do touch the technical services
- We have vivid examples on hand.

Political pressure

- In 2006 the Government ordered movement of livestock keepers and their animals out of the catchment area called Ihefu in Usangu valley, in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania
- To move to specified regions, where it was thought there was enough space to absorb them,
- Deadline was a spell of 3 months between April and June 2006
- This arose as a result of water scarcity in the electricity generating dams at Kidatu Hydro power station further downstream, the Great Ruaha river.
- Alleged that livestock grazing was responsible for environment degradation that led to continued diminishing of water in the catchment area.
- Further more to avoid more degradation the animals were to be transported in lorries.

The problem is that the technical (veterinary) services was not consulted in terms of:

- Infrastructural arrangements such as stock routes, holding grounds, water and dip facilities.
- No vaccinations were carried prior to moving out
- Nor were grazing land demarcations done in the regions of destination.

- As a result, social economic problems occurred.
- The cost for Vehicles used for transporting animals were very high
- As a result animals were sold at throw-away prices.
- Mortalities of animals especially calves were very high and there was emaciation of animals. while en-route.
- Conflicts between livestock keepers and farmers arose due land use problem in the destined regions occurred.

Media /press campaigns

- Affected livestock keepers formed committees which presented their problem to the Government.
- Local members of Parliament and human right groups mounted pressure to the Govt to stop the exercise crying foul of the whole operation.
- The whole saga was strongly and widely reported through the public media (Press, Radio and TV) expressing public out cry.

Government response

- As a result of mounted pressure which was building up in the Parliament, the Prime Minister's office stopped the whole exercise
- Called for proper preparations including land demarcation and infrastructure development in the regions of destination.
- The Government formed a special committee to evaluate the exercise.
- Recommended that, though the exercise was in good intention but it was improperly implemented
- Called for stringent legal actions against officials involved. This resulted amongst other actions, demotions and dismissal of some personnel

Technical (veterinary) Services involvement

Due to pressures measures taken include:

- The use of technical experts who were sent to affected areas to make arrangements for infrastructural developments,
- These included construction of dip tanks and charcoal dams,
- Demarcation of grazing lands,
- Establishments of holding grounds /quarantine station in the regions of destinations
- Instructions that livestock movement control should be based on movement permits were stipulated.

VET SERVICES UNDER PRESSURE TO WATER DOWN CERTAIN TECHNICAL ISSUES

- This question is true to some extent.
- Because of decentralisation, nearly all the technical staff of all ministries are answerable to the respective councils,
- Administratively they are answerable to the respective councils,
- That system can cause some delays in implementing some technical activities as instructed from the central technical ministry.

- For example imposing and enforcing of quarantines can be a problem when such a measure interfere with the interests of a certain council.
- It has happened before whereby certain sanitary measures to certain councils such as threat to close abattoirs and slaughter houses due unhygienic conditions have to be imposed from the centre because the local veterinarian fails to implement such a measure due to conflict of interest.

- Sometimes it's a problem for the Centre to engage a vet at the local council, because they can be engaged in a different activity by the respective council when you want them.
- Sometimes the activity being conducted may be on a completely different aspect in relation to livestock activities.

Remedial measures

Some of the mitigation steps include:

- Educating the local councils by sometimes quoting laws and regulations,
- Holding joint meetings with various councils and getting to understand each others' mandates.
- The co-option of the Local Govt. Ministry, which is the custodian of the Local councils to come in for help is sometimes imperative if felt something is seriously amiss.

Thank you for your attention

Ahsanteni sana