



## **African Sustainable Livestock 2050 Regional Launch Opening Session**

**Remarks by USAID Mission Director Leslie Reed**

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**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

*(As delivered)*

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*Indemin ahderachu....a very good morning!*

It is a pleasure to be here on behalf of USAID Ethiopia. Let me start by thanking FAO and the Government of Ethiopia for hosting this gathering and giving you, the experts, the opportunity to come together this week to discuss so many important topics for the future of livestock on the continent. I'm so pleased to see such a great turnout...but really I'm not at all surprised.

We're all here because we know how incredibly important sustainable management of livestock is for all of our countries. As the world's premier development agency, we at USAID recognize this, and it is why we are so keen to continue working with key partners like FAO and the Africa Sustainable Livestock - 2050 governments to chart a smart path forward.

This project will facilitate interaction and coordinated planning for stakeholders within, as well as between, participating countries. It will do this by creating a platform upon which continuous, facilitated dialogue will take place to better plan for the expected increases in livestock numbers.

In addition to serving as a vital source of nutrition, livestock sector is integral to livelihoods in much of Africa and a major contributor to the economies of all of the countries gathered here today.

And, it is your countries which are anticipated to experience some of the most profound changes in the livestock sector. Due to growing populations and economic growth, demand will increase for animal sourced products. The demand for milk, meat and eggs is going to double, triple and even quadruple in some African countries in the coming decades. This is going to cause a revolution in the livestock sector.

With ASL - 2050 we are going to collaborate with governments to work out how to build the foundations for this change, so that African farmers and consumers will be better off. More livestock means more feed is needed, and land use will change. This presents some significant challenges for the environment which we need to start preparing for now. Indeed, the recent drought that is affecting East Africa, from Madagascar to eastern Uganda is a stark reminder of the challenges the sector faces.

Larger animal populations will require increased and smarter use of arid and semi-arid grazing land, the need to manage zoonotic diseases for public health, and to better conserve water resources. Mitigation measures will be required to deal with unintended negative consequences on society.

The overall impact, both positive and negative, will extend well beyond the six countries represented here. The results of increasing animal populations will be seen and felt across Africa. With the recognition that nearly three quarters of emerging infectious diseases originate from wildlife and livestock, the discussions and plans put together here will make a major contribution to mitigate future pandemic threats in Africa, and the world. Therefore, we all have major responsibilities to the entire

African continent to anticipate opportunities and challenges and take actions that show the way forward for a sustainable livestock sector.

Skillful planning of livestock sectors with such diversity and complexity will not be an easy task. On the one end of the spectrum, we have small rural households keeping a few birds, goats, or cattle, while on the other we have larger and more efficient commercial farms. Policy-makers and institutions will have to consider the needs on both sides of that spectrum.

Africa Sustainable Livestock - 2050 aims to build on relationships already forming among farmers, consumers, feed specialists, physicians, economists, veterinarians, ecologists, political scientists and all levels of governments. These relationships have been the basis of a one-health approach, an approach that encourages the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders and disciplines working locally, nationally and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals and the environment.

Just looking around this room, we can see how that is taking place in practice—with representatives from the ministries of livestock, health and environment of six countries, the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources and our friends from PREDICT II, P&R, FAO, ILRI, IGAD, CDC and other partners. We hope that USAID's support to the African Sustainable Livestock 2050 project will help you to effectively facilitate one-health approaches, knowledge sharing, and recognize opportunities and threats associated with the long-term development of livestock. We are committed to finding ways to bring about reforms and encourage investments to create the capacity for livestock sustainability for the foreseeable future.

USAID believes the implementation of Africa Sustainable Livestock - 2050 will help us better focus our livestock sector development and guide us to more effective decisions at all levels.

We must come together as partners with urgency and focus. What we will be able to achieve will depend on how well national and regional governments, as well as international institutions, formulate and implement policies and investments that support the sustainable growth of the sector.

Achieving long-term planning for a sustainable livestock sector is possible, but it will not come easily. We must work together with leadership and commitment to make the goals of improved livelihoods, enhanced income and employment opportunities, greater public health, and mitigated environmental degradation a reality.

We look forward to working with you to achieving these goals.

Thank you, *amasegenalehu!*