



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Fighting Animal Trypanosomiasis

AUC and FAO sign agreement to work together



Addis Ababa, 11 July 2012 - The African Union Commission and the Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations today signed a memorandum of understanding to work together in the fight against tsetse and the animal trypanosomiasis.

Speaking at the ceremony H.E Rhoda Tumusiime -Commissioner for Rural Economy And Agriculture, African Union Commission - noted the importance of all stakeholders working together to create sustainable tsetse

and trypanosomiasis free areas in the countries affected. She also noted the economic importance this disease has in Africa. "Almost a third of the food in the continent can be attributed to the livestock sector. The fact that this disease affects livestock, then you can only imagine its impact on the food chain," she said. Currently, USD 4.5 million is spent on trypanosomiasis yearly.

In this agreement the AU and FAO have agreed to work together in mobilizing and coordinating activities aimed at increasing the control of animal African trypanosomiasis. This agreement is an important step forward in consolidating the gains made in the Pan African Tsetse and trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (PATTEC). The main goal of the PATTEC campaign is to eliminate tsetse flies from the continent and, with them, to eliminate most animal trypanosomes that bring the disease.



Dr. Castro Camarada - FAO Representative to the Africa Union – stressed that the memorandum of understanding was a great step forward in the implementation of PATTEC initiative. "This agreement strengthens our collaboration and paves the way for our increased cooperation while providing a solid basis for joint actions," he said. FAO, he added, had over 50 years experience in animal trypanosomiasis and tsetse control and therefore brought with it a wealth of knowledge in this partnership.

Animal trypanosomiasis is a parasitic disease that causes serious economic losses in livestock from anemia, loss of condition and emaciation. Many untreated cases are fatal. Trypanosomiasis threatens human and livestock health and agricultural production, and, thereby, rural development and poverty alleviation in sub-Saharan Africa.