Transiting smallholder livestock value chains into sustainable solutions for poverty reduction and food security

Key messages

- Promoting transition: An integrated value chain approach is required for research to provide technologies and institutional innovations that go to scale and promote inclusive and sustainable transition of smallholder livestock keeping and informal market systems for animal-source food to more productive, efficient and professional small-scale businesses that ensure increased availability and accessibility of these critical sources of high-value nutrition.
- Integrated approach: Rather than expecting individual innovations to drive value chain transformation, this approach focuses research to understand priority constraints and leverage points within the value chain, test relevant best-bet components and design integrated interventions from a practical systems perspective – all focused on specific animal-source food commodities in specific value chains and countries.
- Focus, focus, focus: Committing to work in specific commodity value chains in specific countries allows international research to work closely with regional and national research and development partners and to be accountable for accelerating learning into measurable impact, while appropriately orienting longer-term basic research.
- Why Significant? This approach is showing promise as a better model for organizing international research efforts to generate meaningful change where progress has generally been disappointing to date.

Livestock-based solutions

- Integrated solutions need to take into account the three, oft-interdependent productivity drivers of health, genetics and feeds, while giving due attention to the environment and social-economic and policy considerations, particularly gender
- Livestock Genetics: assessing existing genetic resources for use, conservation and improvement, strategic breed improvement using both big data and within national programs, techniques and strategies for delivery of genetic progress to base populations
- Livestock Health: assessing the constraints that matter to the poor, developing herd health strategies supported by better diagnostics and vaccines, and ensuring delivery of livestock healthcare and products
- Feeds and forages: Improving assessment of feed resources and needs, making better use of existing feed resources, developing novel feeds and forages, strategies for ensuring better feed resources are available to farmers
- Livestock & the Environment: assessing sustainability and adaptability of livestock systems, optimizing natural resource use and better provision of ecosystem services, better institutions and mechanisms for environmental solutions
- Livestock Livelihoods and Agri-Food Systems: systems analysis for priority setting, improving gender and social equity, enhancing human nutrition, optimizing livestock systems for productivity and resilience, promoting enabling policies, market and institutions
- Livestock and gender: Ensuring solutions are gender equitable, so that both men and women benefit and are responsible for a vibrant livestock sector.
- Strategic capacity development: Identifying the appropriate entry points for research to support capacity development among our research and development partners to support taking interventions to scale and continuing to ensure their ability to adapt.

Results and evidence

- Momentum established in implementing approach in East Africa, with engagement of broad range of partners at national level, better understanding of the context and opportunities through initial assessments, and testing of best-bet components to improve value chains well underway in the Ethiopia small ruminant, Uganda smallholder pig and Tanzania smallholder dairy value chains
- Striking example in Uganda where smallholder pig systems were absent from government priorities, and now through evidence and national multi-stakeholder platform, achieving visibility and recognition as target for investment
- Evaluations have provided critical but positive reviews of the approach and the progress achieved
- Increased understanding and awareness of the diverse gender roles and issues through gender specific and analysis, leading to an improvement of targeting of interventions
- Best-bets tested have been shown to increase livestock and farm-level productivity, and incomes; and reduce environmental impacts, and disease losses and public health risks
- CRP annual reports cite a wide range of results that have been published.

Multiplier effects

- Central to the approach is for international research to serve a catalytic role in mobilizing a range of research and development stakeholders at national and local level.
- Establishment of Dairy Development Forum in Tanzania offered the opportunity to promote inclusive strategies with both public and private sector stakeholders. In Uganda, stakeholder platforms emerged in other regions, creating demand for pig value chain capacity development and technologies.
- Multi-stakeholder platforms have created opportunities for like-minded private sector interests to invest in new businesses to support inclusive value chain activities.
- Identifying gender capacity gaps in key partners and targeting training emerging as key component of approach to recognize that including women in the solutions allows for greater reach and impact.

Partners

Ethiopia: National Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Regional Agricultural Research Institute, Animal Health Diagnostic and Investigation Centre, Haramaya, Hawassa, Jimma and Addis Ababa Universities; Ministries of Livestock and Fisheries and of Agriculture; Agriculture Transformation Agency; IFAD, FAO, National Network for Gender Equity in Agriculture in Ethiopia; sheep and goat breeding former cooperatives, FAO- and CGIAR-funded development projects.

Tanzania: Tanzania Dairy Board which manages the Dairy Development Forum and supports Marawi Dairy (More MK) campaign, Tanga Fresh Ltd., AGS Dairy Ltd. Helier Project International, UNW, Ministry of Livestock and Local Government Authorities; Tanzania AIDS, GIZ/Afplan Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGGTC) program; Moralesse milk traders group; Sokone University of Agriculture.

Uganda: Greater Masaka Pig Union; SNU, Makerere University; Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries; Ministry of Health, Oxfam Nutrition, National Agricultural Research Organization; VEDCO; Buloba Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (BUZARD); AARII-CRF, ITB & CRF; Beads, Feeds and Meats Ltd., Pig Production and Marketing Uganda (PPM Ltd.).

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