



THE GLOBAL PLAN OF **ACTION** FOR ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

SAVES

Local livestock breeds: pledge of livelihood

PRIORITIES

Local livestock breeds produce sustainable, eco-friendly and healthier yield in tune with very low input production systems. They rely on scarce feed and water resources in hard and harsh environmental conditions. The keepers of these precious livestock breeds are the stewards of traditional animal cultures and genes. Local livestock keepers are not only the guardians, but also the flag bearers of breed development. The most important priority at present is the establishment of long-term sustainable and people-centred livestock development through research, acknowledgment of livestock keepers' rights, capacity building and human-resource development.



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CHARACTERIZATION, INVENTORY AND MONITORING OF TRENDS AND ASSOCIATED RISKS

Characterization of breeds at country level, including the perspectives of livestock keepers and documentation of special traits, is the best means to investigate current breeding goals and the value of breeds. Careful inventory and monitoring of breeds are priorities. Descriptions of breed characteristics should be accompanied by descriptions of indigenous knowledge and traditional breeding institutions.



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SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Dedicated and enthusiastic livestock keepers maintain breeds *in situ* in their local landscapes and ecologies, exposed to natural, cultural and consumer-choice driven selection. They use very few inputs and consume each and every product of the animal. Cultural ties with animal genetic resources provide a concrete foundation for sustainable use and development of these resources.



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CONSERVATION

Utilization is the best conservation. Rangelands are valuable sources of feed, and their management and development can support low-input livestock production. Identifying niche markets for value-added products from threatened breeds is another means of promoting conservation. Involvement of local livestock breeders in developing and implementing national breeding policies can help make conservation sustainable.



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POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Livestock keepers must be given a voice. Traditional livestock breeders are the key institutions for local breeds. Capacity building and human-resource development among livestock keepers is important in enabling traditional livestock production systems to develop in tune with global realities.

