



Livestock Thematic Papers

Tools for project design

Overview

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is an international financial institution and a specialized United Nations agency dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in the rural areas of developing countries. Working with poor rural people, governments, donors, non-governmental organizations and other partners, IFAD is one of the largest sources of development financing for agriculture and rural development in many developing countries.

Activities related to livestock development – such as the transfer of technology, training, credit for restocking, animal health services delivery, feed and breed improvement, and best husbandry practices – are considered core aspects of the majority of IFAD programmes and projects.¹

Since starting operations in 1978, IFAD has provided some US\$690 million for livestock development activities. The primary beneficiaries are poor livestock keepers, particularly those who are economically or socially at risk and politically marginalized. This includes rural women, youth, landless poor people and people for whom animals such as poultry and small ruminants provide, at most, subsistence or a minimum augmentation of daily nutrition requirements.

Investing in livestock development for poverty reduction

Driven by population increases, urbanization and economic growth, livestock production is one of the fastest-growing agricultural subsectors in developing countries, accounting for 30 per cent of the agricultural GDP² and spurring a demand for animal-source food products that is likely to double in the next 20 years.³

Livestock production contributes to the sustainable livelihoods and security of more than 800 million poor smallholders. It provides natural capital such as meat, milk, wool, hide, rangeland and pasture; financial capital such as cash, savings, credit, insurance, gifts and remittances; and social capital such as traditions, wealth, prestige, identity, respect, friendship, marriage dowries and festivities. It also provides traction for about 50 per cent of the world's farmers and is a source of organic fertilizer for most of the world's croplands, converting waste products into inputs to the production of high-value food.

Even though livestock keeping offers promising opportunities to combat poverty, there is a significant risk that livestock sector development will exclude smallholder farmers. Access to the



Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

1 IFAD. 2008. Livestock strategy paper. Rome: IFAD.

2 World Bank. 2009. Minding the stock: bringing public policy to bear on livestock sector development. Washington: The World Bank.

3 Delgado, C. et al. 1999. Livestock to 2020: the next food revolution. Washington/Rome/Nairobi: IFPRI/FAO/ILRI.

fast-growing and more remunerative markets for meat and milk products is dependent on meeting higher quality and safety standards, which can add value and generate employment along the supply chain. But meeting these standards also involves higher costs and tends to favour large-scale production, excluding smallholder farmers. If smallholder farmers are to be able to take advantage of emerging market demand, they will require access to basic services, assets and technologies such as veterinary care, roads and grazing lands, as well as the support of development projects and policies that take their needs into account.

Livestock Thematic Papers

The Livestock and Farming System Team has created the present kit – Livestock Thematic Papers: Tools for Project Design – as a practical tool for development practitioners, with the expectation that it will be useful to IFAD country programme managers, and will lead project designers and policymakers to define appropriate livestock development interventions. We hope that it will enhance IFAD's comparative advantage with respect to rural poverty reduction and livestock-related issues.

The kit contains the following papers:

1. IFAD's Livestock Position Paper
2. Emergency livestock interventions in crisis and post-crisis situations
3. Gender and livestock
4. Integrated crop-livestock farming systems
5. Livestock and climate change
6. Livestock and land
7. Livestock and pastoralists
8. Livestock and rural finance
9. Value chains, linking producers to the markets.

The overall purpose of the papers is to help bring livestock interventions to the forefront of development operations, as a key instrument for poverty reduction, for the economic growth of

developing countries and for the social well-being of poor people at both the individual and the village level.

The specific objective of the thematic papers is to focus the efforts of development projects and policies on poor livestock keepers, men and women, with the aim of helping them to:

- secure assets
- improve the productivity and competitiveness of livestock products with an efficient and sustainable use of natural resources
- take advantage of market opportunities
- mitigate the effects of volatile food prices
- create enabling conditions for stable incomes and sustainable livelihoods so they can gain control of their own social and economic development.

The papers provide recommendations for project design on critical issues for rural development and also possible responses and actions to encourage the socio-economic empowerment of poor livestock keepers. They reflect IFAD's commitment to developing a sustainable livestock sector in which poor farmers and herders might have higher incomes, and better access to assets, services, technologies and markets.

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These materials can be found on IFAD's website at www.ifad.org/lrkm/index.htm

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