

GL-CRSP LIVESTOCK WORKSHOP

May 17-19, 2008 • Kabul, Afghanistan

INTRODUCTION

On May 17-19, 2008 representatives from various international and Afghan implementing agencies attended a GL-CRSP-sponsored Afghan Livestock Workshop organized by the Advancing Afghan Agriculture Alliance (A4). The workshop focused on harnessing the collective experiences of the different organizations to identify key priorities in their activities, explore possibilities for program collaboration, and to develop strategies for raising livestock awareness at the producer, ministerial and donor levels.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations included an overview of: (1) The state of Afghanistan's livestock sector, emphasizing its potential contribution to economy-wide growth and obstacles to achieving growth; (2) Livestock health services, highlighting challenges related to delivery, quality, disease surveillance and control, and policy; and, (3) The distribution and variety of program activity that has occurred to date within the livestock sector.

Several main points were apparent from the presentations.

- There is a need for comprehensive, systematic, and accurate information for investment decisions and policy-formulation.
- Advisory services on animal husbandry, management and nutrition have lagged behind the provision of animal health services and require further attention.
- Market development and capacity building are primary challenges that confront sector growth.

TARGETS FOR PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Participants identified four program areas that offer opportunities to raise livestock sector growth: (1) capacity building; (2) information for analysis, decision-making, and policies; and (3) value-chain development, (4) advocacy - to raise the profile of livestock production in Afghanistan as a critical economic activity affecting the livelihoods of most rural families.

CAPACITY BUILDING

This involves the education and training of livestock sector participants, from the producer-level to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). Developing educational institutions (university, vocational schools), training public sector staff (veterinary services, disease management, animal production and management), and educating producers are fundamental to livestock's short and long-term growth. Long-term investment in higher education and vocational institutions, in particular, will be the primary means to develop a broad-based core of professional, scientific, technical, and administrative workforce and leadership.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Frequent, accurate, and often location-specific data are needed. Data needs identified included animal counts, prices, volumes, markets, small scale farm economics, service delivery economics, economics of supplementary feeding for maintenance and production, breed characteristics, genetics, as well as more general data on weather, geography, and macroeconomic indicators. The data would serve to guide producers, investors, and policy makers in determining where, when, and how to direct their efforts and activities. The lack of such information limits both sector development as well as public strategic planning.

VALUE-CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

This includes the sequence of inputs in production, processing, and marketing that add value to a final good. Inputs identified include: improved feed, fodder and nutrition, disease prevention and control, finance activities, breed improvement, processing of animal products, and final markets. Value chain development presents an area for collaboration between current livestock projects within Afghanistan because few projects address complete value chains.

ADVOCACY

Workshop participants agreed that elevating the importance of the livestock sector among producers, investors, public sector officials, and donors is critical for the country's economic stability. Development of an education and advocacy campaign designed to reach all actors related to the livestock sector is required. Efforts include the commitment of workshop participants to: enhance their collaborations, strengthen the voice of producers, engage the public sector to understand, respond more fully to the livestock's needs, and communicate to donors the value of livestock to Afghanistan's economic development and political stability.

A WAY FORWARD

It was agreed that a committee be formed to provide leadership in engaging all actors in the livestock sector in a collaborative effort to encourage more efficient use of available resources, to engage senior planners in MAIL in becoming committed to putting policies and prioritized strategies into practice, and to communicate the results of the livestock workshop to create awareness of and gain support for this integrated approach (see Figure 1) to livestock sector

development. Initial committee activities will include presentation to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, appropriate parliament committees, and donors.

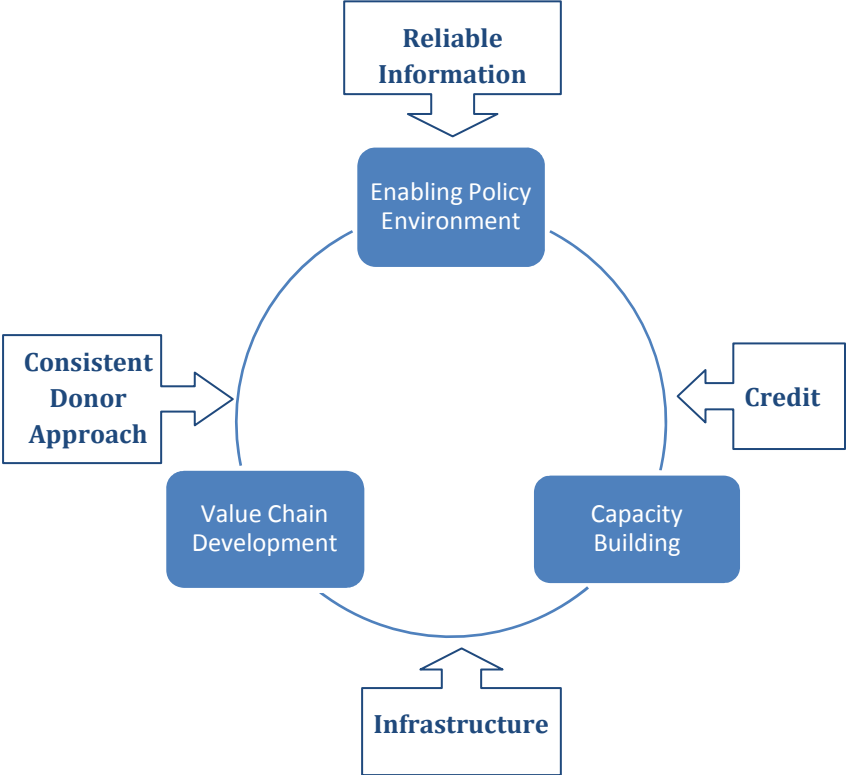


Figure 1. Integrated Livestock Development Approach