

LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT POLICIES: A TOP - BUT SLOW MOVING - PRIORITY FOR AFRICA

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SUMMARY

Over the last twenty-five years, significant progress has been made to alleviate the main scientific and technical constraints to livestock development. The best evidence is that animal health is no longer listed by most of the African countries as the main limiting factor to animal production. While diseases obviously remain a major constraint, livestock specialists seem increasingly concerned by questions related to feed and water supply and management and, more recently, by the socio-economic and policy environment in which animal production has to grow.

In 1996 and 1997, two regional seminars were organized by the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the Organization of African Unity (OAU-IBAR) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA), to specifically address the questions related to livestock development policies. The first one dealt with 18 countries of West and Central Africa and the second with 22 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa. As a result of these two seminars, the 5th OAU Conference of Ministers Responsible for Animal Resources, which took place in August 1997 in Mbabane, Swaziland, took several major resolutions related to livestock development policies.

The main conclusions and recommendations of these two seminars as well as the resolutions of the OAU Conference are reviewed and the progress made in implementing them is assessed. Considering the moderate results achieved and the continuously increasing demand for livestock products in Africa in a rapidly changing environment, suggestions are then made to accelerate the formulation and implementation of policies that encourage animal production per se and provide an enabling environment at the national, regional and international levels.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable natural resources management are at the heart of the research and development efforts of most developing countries. Livestock production contributes significantly to the first two objectives as livestock makes an essential contribution to the livelihoods of populations in poorer countries. Unfortunately, livestock production is often perceived as having a detrimental effect on the environment.

In sub-Saharan Africa probably more than in any other part of the world, the demand for livestock products is increasing very rapidly owing to a combination of population growth, rising incomes and urbanization. The environmental issue is also of particularly critical importance in this region considering its extensive marginal land and marked climatic instability.

Over the last five years, major efforts have been made to produce evidence that the livestock sector can satisfy future demands while preserving the natural resource base and is a critical element of sustainable agricultural development. An important milestone in this regard is the study on "Livestock and the Environment" (de Haan *et al.*, 1997; Steinfeld *et al.*, 1997) and the international conference which took place in 1997 in Wageningen, The Netherlands (Nell, 1998).

At the time of their publication, these studies had a significant impact and still continue to play a key role of public awareness, in particular for the policy-makers, emphasizing the importance of the livestock sector in the national and regional economies and basically revalorizing the image of animal production in the agricultural production systems.

However, till the mid 90's, the scientific and technical constraints had received much attention, whereas limited concern was expressed for the policies and strategies needed to promote livestock development whilst preserving natural resources. This was the main reason behind the decision of CTA to organize jointly with OAU/IBAR two regional seminars dealing specifically with livestock development policies. The first one took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire for West and Central Africa (CTA, 1997) and the second in Mbabane, Swaziland for Eastern and Southern Africa (CTA, 1998). The conclusions and recommendations of these two seminars were presented to the 5th OAU Conference of Ministers responsible for Animal Resources that took place immediately after the second seminar in Swaziland. A summary report of these three events has been published by CTA (Hoste, 1999).

The first part of this paper highlights some key conclusions and recommendations of these meetings to illustrate the scope and importance of the "policy" dimension for the livestock sector. The second part presents planned or recent initiatives in the livestock sector that may positively impact, directly or indirectly, on livestock development policies. The third part describes a few critical changes that happened recently in the environment in which the livestock sector operates. Finally, a fourth part explores some ways and means to accelerate the formulation and implementation of policies that encourage animal production per se and provide an enabling environment to livestock development at the national, regional and international levels.

Major conclusions and recommendations on livestock development policies

The conclusions and recommendations of the two technical workshops and of the 5th OAU Conference of Ministers responsible for Animal Resources have been summarized in Hoste (1999).

The report of the Conference of Ministers started by mentioning that they are "*aware that there are few livestock development policies and strategies in place in African countries*". Then, their first resolution was that "*each country should develop and implement with the participation of all stakeholders a clearly defined policy... for the development of the livestock sector*" and that, in doing so, they should "*consider the comparative advantages of harmonizing and co-ordinating the national policies under a regional policy framework to be set up as a matter of urgency not only to encourage regional and international trade in livestock and livestock products but also to address the problem of transboundary disease control and information exchange*".

The Conference also called on member states: to "*establish/re-establish a strong central veterinary authority with clear policies...*" (resolution 2); and to "*harmonize livestock production and trade policies*" and to "*create an appropriate policy and institutional environment*" for livestock trade and marketing (resolution 7). Resolution 8 concluded that "*each country should have commitment to research and should develop clear and consistent livestock research policies*".

These Ministerial resolutions were based on a set of specific and concrete recommendations formulated by the two regional workshops to address both the national and regional dimensions. These recommendations were classified into five broad categories: 1. General development policies; 2. Research needs; 3. Information needs; 4. Human resources; and 5. Institutional arrangements. Within each category, the recommendations were grouped according to the four following technical themes: i) marketing and trade; ii) livestock production systems; iii) animal health and genetic resources; and iv) information management and communications.

These recommendations made by the participants resulted of a thorough analysis of the situation prevailing in Africa. Annex 1. presents the main sets of issues identified in 1996-1997 as they are still valid and even more critical today than at the time they were formulated.

Planned or recent initiatives in the livestock sector

From the previous paragraph, it is clear that not only the heads and senior managers of animal production and health institutions or departments are more and more convinced of the top priority that livestock development policies should receive but also that the politicians and decision-makers at the highest level are aware of the situation and have accordingly taken important resolutions to improve the situation.

Since the 5th OAU Conference of Ministers responsible for Animal Resources in 1997, only very limited progress has been made by the different countries and concerned regional or international organizations to implement these sets of resolutions and recommendations. This is, in fact, what justifies the title of this paper: "*A top - but slow moving - priority*".

However, some important studies, programs and projects have been recently carried out or launched and provide some reasons for a certain optimism. They do not exclusively deal with livestock development policies but they address important domains which will positively impact on the environment in which the livestock sector operates.

Two important documents have been recently prepared and circulated:

- A study carried out by IFPRI, FAO and ILRI entitled "*Livestock to 2020 - The Next Food Revolution*" (Delgado *et al.*, 1999). In this document, the authors argued that global markets have the ability to supply both cereal and animal products in desired quantities without undue price rises to meet the continued increasing demand for foods of animal origin in the developing countries. Despite this positive picture at the global level, the authors rightly emphasized that "*it is the policy decisions taken for the livestock sector of developing countries which will determine whether this livestock revolution helps or harms the world's poor and malnourished*". This document has been

widely publicized and is having a major impact in terms of public awareness and promotion of the livestock sector.

- The document *"Livestock Strategy for the Next Decades – Current Practice and Future Needs"* prepared by the Rural Development Sector of the World Bank (World Bank, 1999) builds on the previous one and identifies as the first "intervention" the need of *"ensuring an appropriate policy framework"*, elaborating on the financial and the institutional policies. This document is important for the future of the livestock sector in developing countries as it sets the scene for future interventions of one of the major donors in the livestock sector. As such it gives a clear signal and provides strong incentives to the different countries for moving ahead in implementing the priority areas identified, the first one being the development policies.
- More directly action-oriented, three important initiatives have to be mentioned:
- The inter-institutional *"Livestock, Environment and Development (LEAD) Initiative"* with its "Virtual Research and Development Center (VCLEAD)" and its "toolbox" providing, inter alia, technical and policy or institutional development options for enhancing positive or mitigating negative effects of livestock on the natural resource base. Under this initiative, a discussion on "livestock-environment in the policy dialogue" is on-going (Steinfeld, personal communication).
- The *"PACE (Programme Pan-Africain de Contrôle des Epizooties) Program"* financed by the European Commission at the level of EUR 72 millions has recently been launched. This program builds on the results of the PARC (Pan-African Rinderpest Campaign) program. In providing an adequate framework for animal health control and improvement at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, the program will significantly contribute to the development of the livestock sector. Animal health policies and regulations are an important component of this program.
- The *"Global Initiative on Livestock Service Delivery"* is a multi-stakeholder initiative which aims to "increase knowledge, strengthen communication links and improve the policy dialogue, planning and resources mobilisation, at the global level, between the agencies, and actors involved in the delivery of livestock services to the poor". IFAD, some bilateral agencies, NGOs and private service providers intend to finance the first phase of the project to prepare a *"State of the Arts"* study of the delivery of poverty focused livestock services.

As mentioned earlier, these documents and programs clearly address the policy dimension of the livestock sector and are important elements for building a more favorable environment for livestock development.

The changing environment in which the livestock sector operates

Key changes are taking place in four main dimensions that are leading to a transformation of the way the livestock sector will have to operate to contribute to a sustainable and equitable development. These are: the socio-economic situation; the process of globalization; the knowledge or science context; and the institutional context.

The socio-economic situation

Despite the important technological advances of the past century, including those of the Green Revolution, the world is still facing the increasing challenge of poverty, both urban and rural. The figures are well known and staggering. The potential contributions of the livestock sector have been well identified and analyzed in the document *"Livestock to 2020 – The Next Food Revolution (Delgado et al., 1999)* briefly presented above.

The process of globalization

Globalization has clearly changed the way financial markets and the economics operate. In agriculture, its impact is not limited to large and export-oriented producers. It also increasingly affects the small farmer, given the increasing importance of the global context for his everyday life and wellbeing.

Another important aspect of the impact of globalization is that poverty, food security and environment deterioration in developing countries are no longer an issue of concern only to those countries. Given the increasing interdependence of the world, these questions are rapidly becoming global issues.

Finally, the scientific community faces a paradox, observing that globalization takes place in terms of trade and economics while, at the same time, the knowledge flows and technology transfer are increasingly constrained due to the increasing importance of proprietary technology.

The knowledge or science context

Agriculture production is becoming increasingly knowledge-based and science-intensive. New strategic research areas have emerged and developed, with profound effects on our capacity to produce food and manage natural resources and the environment. Three new key areas of knowledge may play a critical role in potentializing or empowering our capacity to respond to the challenges of poverty, food security and natural resources degradation: (i) biotechnology and its various applications; (ii) research on sustainable agriculture; and (iii) information and communication technologies (ICT).

These new areas of science, and the enabling technologies they generate, represent a great potential in terms of increasing the capacity to respond to the social and economic challenges. At the same time, there is a clear possibility of widening technology gaps between developed and developing countries, due to differential research capacities and to the increasing limitations of accessing these technologies given their nature of proprietary technologies.

The challenge is to develop a framework or an environment that may facilitate strategic alliances and joint ventures between the various actors involved in these research efforts, in particular the public and the private sectors.

The institutional aspects

A more diversified institutional structure of stakeholders has developed in recent years in the area of agriculture research and development and natural resource management, both at the national and global levels. These are the Farmers' Organizations, the NGOs and the private sector. The first one because the farmers are becoming more organized. The second as they have often complemented the role of the State or filled a gap generated by the weakness of public institutions. The third one because biological research and the technology generated by it has become more privatized as a result of the incentive to invest in it.

This evolving institutional environment has to be taken into consideration in the process of strengthening science and technology for sustainable agriculture, and in developing new approaches to cooperation in this area through strategic alliances and research partnerships.

Ways and means to accelerate the formulation and implementation of policies providing an enabling environment to livestock development

In order to identify ways and means to accelerate the formulation and implementation of policies providing an enabling environment to livestock development, the first task is to identify the priority policies to be developed. The second task will be to identify the critical bottlenecks that limit the formulation and implementation of such policies. The last task will then be to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the new environment in which the livestock development operates as defined above.

The priority policies

The participants to the two regional conferences have identified the following priorities that are still fully relevant today:

- At the production level: increasing productivity (through improved supply of inputs, animal health services, infrastructure, etc.) to create a sustainable marketable surplus; improving product quality (through extension, market information, etc.); and empowering the negotiation capacity of producers (through creation or strengthening of farmers associations, cooperatives, etc.) to guarantee them a fair price.
- At the national level: formulation of national policies related to marketing infrastructure; market information; financing arrangements; grades and standards; and processing.
- At the regional and international levels, the basic objective of the policies to be formulated is to address hindrances to trade and to adhere to rules of regional and international trade.

The critical bottlenecks

The three critical bottlenecks to the formulation and implementation of livestock development policies are in the fields of: i) research; ii) information and communication; and iii) capacity-building.

i) Research on livestock production systems and on animal health and genetic resources will obviously continue to be key to the development of the livestock sector. However, the list of priorities clearly illustrates a critical deficit in terms of research on macro and micro policies, in social sciences and on marketing and trade.

ii) The lack of reliable data and information has always been a major constraint of the livestock sector. As important, the communication gap between the different levels of the production chain is the other

dimension of the problem due probably to a combination of real technical difficulties and a lack of trust between the different actors precluding the share of data.

iii) Well-trained human resources, highly motivated, in sufficient numbers, in the needed disciplines, are the third major and complex limitation that has to be addressed.

The opportunities

There is no magic solution but major opportunities and breakthroughs may come from the emergence of what is now called a "global knowledge system for agricultural research for development (ARD)". A significant step towards the establishment of this global system was made by the ARD community in October 1996 with the launching of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR). However, GFAR became really operational only in mid-1998.

It is important to emphasize from the start that "agriculture" is taken in its broad sense, including the livestock sub-sector, and that GFAR brings together all agricultural stakeholders, not only the "traditional" research institutions but also the farmers' organizations, the NGOs, the private sector and the donor community.

The second major precision is that GFAR is a stakeholder-led initiative adopting a bottom-up approach with the developing country "NARS" (National Agricultural Research Systems) and their sub-regional and regional fora as the cornerstones of the global system that GFAR aims to create.

The four lines of action of GFAR are:

1. Development of a Global Vision and of a Global Agenda on Strategic ARD Issues;
2. Promotion of innovative research partnerships in
 - Genetic Resources Management and Biotechnology
 - Natural Resources Management and Agro-ecology
 - Development of Commodity Chains for market/cash crops and underutilized species
 - Policy Management and Institutional Development
3. Improving Information and Knowledge Flows among stakeholders
4. Strengthening NARS and their Regional/Sub-Regional Fora

In sub-Saharan Africa, GFAR relies on three sub-regional organizations: WECARD / CORAF for West and Central Africa, ASARECA for Eastern and Central Africa and SACCAR for Southern Africa. These three organizations have recently launched FARA, the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa. There is another regional forum for the West Asia – North Africa (WANA) region called AARINENA, the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa.

What is very encouraging and promising is to see these regional and sub-regional organizations gaining rapidly in visibility and credibility, broadening progressively their memberships to involve all agricultural stakeholders and being able of attracting funds to develop regional and sub-regional collaboration.

The first priority of all these regional and sub-regional mechanisms is to develop what is now called a RAIS, Regional (or sub-regional) Agricultural Information System. This is done in involving all the partners from the region but also all global information providers such as FAO/WAICENT, the IARCs, CABI, CTA, etc.... Clearly there is a strong willingness of those involved in the establishment of the RAIS and of their national components, the NAIS, to address the needs of the different end-users. All information needed for the elaboration of livestock development policies should therefore become more easily accessible if all partners accept to "own" the system and to regularly feed it.

A second dimension of the RAIS is the information on human resources and therefore the expertise available in the region and sub-regions. This would be a first step towards a better match between the needs of the livestock sector and the education and training opportunities available in the region. A better integration of livestock research and higher education at national and regional levels is still badly needed (Hoste, 1995).

These regional and sub-regional organizations also encourage the organization and the strengthening of their different constituencies. In West Africa a network of small and medium size enterprises (SME) in agri-business has recently been established. In addition, they have launched and/or monitor several agricultural research networks, including some on policies, such as REPA, the "Réseau d'Expertise et des Politiques Agricoles" in West Africa and ECAPAPA, the Eastern and Central Africa Programme for Agricultural Policy Analysis, in Eastern and Central Africa. A greater involvement of all livestock stakeholders in these networks will be highly and mutually beneficial.

Finally, during the first GFAR Conference in May 2000, a "Global Initiative for the Application of Biotechnology to the Improvement of Livestock Productivity through the Control of Trypanosomosis" has been launched and is led by a consortium composed of ILRI, CIRAD/EMVT and

WECARD/CORAF. Two other global and one regional initiatives on policies have been presented and discussed during the same conference: i) "Agricultural policies, rural poverty and competitiveness: re-thinking agricultural policies"; ii) "Creation of a research partnership between farmers' organizations like the European farmers Coordination, Via Campesina and researchers in agricultural economy and policies"; iii) "Improved participation of Farmers' organizations in the development policy dialogue in West Africa".

More information on GFAR and its programme of work, the regional and sub-regional fora and the regional agricultural information systems are available at: www.cgfar.org.

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ANNE 1

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE PARTICIPANTS
TO THE TWO REGIONAL WORKSHOPS**
(extract from Hoste, 1999)

General policies

The participants at both seminars expressed their serious concern about the overall decline in agricultural sector performance in sub-Saharan Africa often resulting from what Viegas and Dale called in Mbabane *discredited policies and institutions*. It was also acknowledged that livestock policies could not be studied in isolation as they are strongly influenced by other policies related to agriculture, environment and natural resource management (including wildlife), land tenure, marketing and trade, transport, human resource development and institutional capacity building, public health and food processing, regional and international cooperation.

As a consequence, the participants considered as a top priority the review of all existing agriculture-related policies in order to highlight and correct those which are inappropriate or which have a negative effect on agriculture and its livestock sub-sector. These include, for example, subsidies, taxation on agricultural inputs, price controls that favor consumers, non-sustainable services such as free dipping, total reliance on importation in livestock and livestock products, communal land ownership. Amongst these "counterproductive" policies, land tenure policies were identified as probably the biggest constraint as they could inhibit human and financial investments in the livestock sub-sector.

At the same time, specific policies have to be formulated and put in force to encourage animal production per se and to provide an enabling environment at the national, regional and international levels. .../...

The participants also mentioned that policy formulation and planning is usually done in the Ministry of Finance or Ministry of Planning and they came to the conclusion that there is a need for close association with such ministries in the agriculture policy formulation process.

Livestock policies

The participants realized that very few sub-Saharan countries have clear, detailed and coherent livestock development and research policies. In fact, for most countries, livestock development policies are only mentioned in the general agriculture sectoral policy document; very few specific national livestock policy documents exist. This lacuna is even more true for livestock research policies; national agricultural research masterplans are scarcer than national development policy documents and, when they do exist, the livestock sub-sector is usually under estimated.

Public and private sector roles

The participants recognized that there was an inevitable shift in responsibility for livestock research and development from the public to the private sector. However, they were concerned that the transfer of functions from the State to the private sector is not being done gradually and smoothly. This was explained by several factors amongst which is an inadequate legal framework to deal with new trends in the livestock sector. It is fully recognized that the private sector will take over only when an enabling policy environment (i.e. one that addresses institutional arrangement, financial capacity, and economic feasibility) is in place. Finally, the participants clearly noted that many areas in the livestock sector may still not fully support private enterprises (e.g. animal health services or extension services) or must remain under the governmental responsibility (e.g. quality of animal health services, public health, disease control, food quality control).

Policy analysis capability

There is a serious lack of national expertise and reliable livestock information in sub-Saharan African countries, needed to support the necessary livestock policy analysis and formulation. The livestock industry should train more livestock economists, environmental economists, production systems analysts and business engineers and both the public and the private sectors have a role to play in this. The need to take into account non-monetary values of the livestock activities in all economic analyses was also underlined as an additional livestock-specific difficulty. Another consensus that emerged, on human resources, was the need to adjust the curricula of the veterinary schools to make them more responsive to the emerging challenges and to standardize and harmonize them in order to facilitate technical regional cooperation.

The other major condition identified for formulating sound policies was building or strengthening capacity in information management and communication, as almost all countries are suffering from a deficit of information and from poor communication systems. The top priorities identified are to establish market (national and regional) information systems, to disseminate new or improved technologies, especially those related to processing and preserving animal products and, in more general terms, to establish an inventory of livestock resources, production and utilization.

Research policies and role

It was agreed that research has a key role to play, but of particular concern are the heavy dependence of the national research programs on donor funding (and the long-term non-sustainability of this mechanism) and the shrinking of funding per scientist. The participants identified the need to develop research policies consistent with agricultural and livestock development policies and to re-examine seriously all organizational, managerial and programmatic aspects of the national agricultural research institutions. They specifically suggested that consideration should be given to adding a policy research dimension to their programs. They also reaffirmed the national responsibilities in setting out research priorities in the newly emerging global system and the consequent need to improve coordination of their research efforts at the sub-regional and regional levels. Regional research organizations or associations such as ASARECA, CORAF and SACCAR and the newly-established FARA have a key role to play in coordinating livestock research in sub-Saharan Africa and deserve stronger support from national governments as well as from the international community.

Institutional and donor support

On this issue of institutional support, the participants noted that international and regional institutions do not usually provide adequate support to national institutions and explained this fact by a competition for funds amongst institutions, poor coordination of their activities and by an insufficient level of representation of the African institutions in regional and international organizations. They also consider that donors should improve coordination of their support and standardize their approaches to livestock development policies (e.g. from free drug delivery to full cost recovery and, in between, different levels of subsidies).

Regional policies

Finally, participants at both seminars recognized that tremendous efforts towards regional cooperation and collaboration have been made recently but there is still much to be done. The top priority remains to establish sectoral policies on harmonization of import, export and standards. A second key condition is a free flow of information among countries, in particular for development and promotion of trade. This is particularly critical for the control of livestock movements, quarantine enforcement and epidemiological surveillance, for better understanding of the markets and for the characterization and conservation of animal genetic resources. In addition, this free flow of information will help to break isolation among professionals in the various countries.