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ASSISTANCE TO THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR IN AFRICA
COMPREHENSIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA
Executive Summary

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Background of the Study

1. In the course of preparing the study, it was noted that a core of strategies and related programmes and projects to increase food production in general and animal production in particular were designed and implemented with various degrees of success at national, subregional and regional levels. Also, it was noted that numerous resolutions and recommendations on livestock development were passed by various technical and political meetings, all of which were not translated into concrete actions and measures by way of policy decisions, budget allocation and investment priorities at national as well as at subregional levels. In the light of these observations it was then felt that there was little chance of future strategies, resolutions and recommendations bearing fruit unless the factors which inhibited their successful implementation were identified, analysed and discussed with those dealing with their planning, implementation and financing at national and regional levels. Collective agreements should be reached on the causes of the declining performance and on the measures to alleviate or eliminate them.

2. It is against this background, that the present report entitled: "Progressive development of the livestock sector in Africa" focuses on the evaluation of the progress achieved so far and on devising specific approach for fostering the development of the sector. The perspective studies component of the resolution 463(XVIII) by which the FCA Secretariat was requested by the FCA Conference of Ministers that met in Addis Ababa in 1983, to conduct in close collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), perspective studies on the livestock sector, evaluate progress and workout a specific approach to the development of this sector in order to increase the contribution of the livestock sector to food and agriculture development, was left out for a later phase of the study.

What are the problems of livestock development and how these problems are tackled?

3. The problem of livestock development as seen by the Pastoralist, the Government and the Funding agencies was first conceptualized and attempts were made to analyse the ways the problem was tackled by each of them. The breakdown of the problem between those groups showed clearly that there are often conflicts and divergences between objectives and strategies as regard to livestock development.

4. The pastoralist, whose problem, is to: (a) minimize the offtake rate of animals for meat production subject to satisfying the subsistence requirements of his family members; (b) to satisfy the reconstitution of his stock after catastrophic droughts and diseases and/or other man-made calamities; and (c) to cope with the availability of other scarce resources and services such as range and water, veterinary and marketing services, is increasingly finding difficulties to use some of the traditional techniques such as transhumance and nomadism to cope with the seasonal variation of range resources particularly water and with the problem of drought and diseases. The reconstitution objective, defined in the study as the ways by which the pastoralist keeps animals of different sexes, and various ages and categories in large numbers and distributes some of them among relatives living far away in order to overcome calamities and thus protect his wealth and livelihood, is considered by many livestock policy makers as the main constraint to the objective of

the government. The objective of the government is to maximize the contribution of the livestock sector to the overall socio-economic development of the country through increased quantity of high-quality marketed meat and milk subject to the alleviation and/or elimination of constraints in production and trade faced by the pastoralists and traders as an individual and as a group. Not only the per capita supply of meat is deteriorating but also most governments are increasingly finding difficulties to mobilize resources particularly financial to even maintain the existing water points, health and marketing services. As regard to the problem of funding agencies, many evaluation exercises undertaken particularly in early 1980's concluded that the livestock sector in Africa was performing poorly and that their interventions did not fulfill expectation. Therefore the agencies found themselves in problems conceptualized as how to improve the efficiency of their intervention in the African livestock sector? Many of the agencies, in an attempt to solve their problems individually have designed strategies and framework for interventions in the African livestock sector which sometimes required changes in the practices and administrative structures and relatively significant local counterpart contribution.

5. In the overall, it can be inferred that the ways the individual problem has been tackled so far have had serious shortcomings which justify why the African livestock sector is performing increasingly poorly. Though it is encouraging to note that there is a general awareness of the worrying state of the livestock sector and for the need to reverse the present trend, it would be essential, if we were to produce more marketed meat and milk on a lasting and regular basis, that all partners, namely pastoralists, governments and funding agencies, change policies and attitudes towards the development of the sector and be flexible enough in implementing their policies and strategies.

Performance of the Livestock sector over the last fifteen years

6. The achievements of the livestock sector over the last fifteen years were reviewed by analysing the livestock economy and the trends in production, consumption and trade. From these analyses it was shown that the whole pattern of the production systems are affected by the occurrence of drought and diseases which are key variables in the risk aversion equation of the pastoralist. Though Africa possesses a large population of livestock (150 million livestock units in 1982) which remained largely underdeveloped in most major producing countries, yet all subregions, except Eastern and Southern Africa, had an unfavourable balance of trade in 1982. This was estimated at US\$21 billion in 1982 against a little less than US\$1 billion in 1970 and was increasing at an annual average rate of 27 per cent over the period under review. If the trends of the past are to persist, the future deficits will be of the order of 180 billions and 1970 billions at the times when the African Common Market and the African Economic Community are planned to become operational. The impact of livestock sector on the balance-of-payment is therefore clear to all.

What are the basic constraints hindering livestock development?

7. Considerable efforts, particularly since the beginning of the 1970's, have been directed toward overcoming the technical constraints that have hampered the sector. However, given the development concepts and approaches adopted, these efforts were not commensurate to the magnitude of the problem and the potential of the livestock industry. Therefore the results have been disappointing. Also it

is increasingly recognized that the output of these efforts was below expectations mainly because of the failure to take fully into account the motivations, objectives, aspirations and strategies of pastoralists when designing and implementing projects and to create the appropriate framework for mobilizing the pastoralist resources particularly financial ones, for their own development. In analysing the constraints hindering the development of livestock sector in Africa, it was found that the policy issues are at the heart of the problem. These constraints include misunderstanding of pastoralists' problem and misconception about project aims when planning livestock development, inappropriate land tenure policies, marketing, pricing and animal diseases control and eradication policies. Also the behaviour of the producers taken as a group constitutes a major constraint to the goal assigned to the livestock sector by the society.

8. It may look strange to the readers that drought per se is not cited as the first and foremost constraint to livestock development particularly in arid zones where the bulk of production takes place in Africa. However it should be recalled that in many African countries, pasture land resources are communally owned and exploited and are presenting important and difficult allocation and development problems to the users in arid zone. Therefore it is assumed in the study that some of the impacts and causes of drought i.e. degradation of range resources and desertification raised mainly because of the failure to enforce an appropriate land tenure policy by which the pastoralists will be motivated enough to maintain and/or to adopt improved techniques for the development of range resources in arid zone.

Proposed actions and measures for alleviating or eliminating the constraints

9. The study emphasises that unless radical measures are taken and policy adjustments are made at national, subregional and regional levels to reverse the unfavourable trends, the performance of the livestock sector would even worsen. These actions and measures should be centred at national level on the evolvement of policies which will induce and ensure the progressive and active participation of pastoralists in their own development and will narrow the difference of the objectives and strategies of pastoralists and governments vis-à-vis livestock development. These will include the design of an appropriate land tenure policy, the design and enforcement of regulations which will ensure a proper balance between livestock and land; the provision of the required services either by private individuals, companies, co-operatives and/or by public sector, and the provision of economic incentives for the fattening of young feeders and culled animals before entering the slaughterhouses.

10. In order to facilitate the integration of production and marketing activities at subregional and regional levels the following measures and actions are suggested:

(a) the organization of workshops at subregional level with a view to evaluating livestock development policies and strategies and to proposing practical solutions to the problem of livestock development at national and subregional levels; and

(b) the development of appropriate institutions and mechanisms at the same level to support national efforts and to ensure that the policies and programmes of member States support one another so as to avoid obstruction or conflict of interests and wastage of the scarce resources of the subregion. These may include;

- (i) the organization of conference on livestock research and development in Africa say every five years to review progress and to plan for the future;
- (ii) the creation of a joint Livestock Development Fund (LDF);
- (iii) the development of an effective programming capability of the livestock sector;
- (iv) the harmonization of pricing policies including the establishment of a co-ordinated price systems and a marketing information system;
- (v) the harmonization and co-ordination of research through regional networks of scientists working on common problems and of training policies; and
- (vi) the harmonization and enforcement of veterinary regulation and controls to facilitate subregional intra-trade.

Also there is a need for developing arrangements between member countries in period of calamities by which the countries not affected by a drought would supply feeds to the affected countries and those which have processing facilities would process the emaciated animals of the drought affected countries. Other arrangements should be on pooling and mobilizing to the full the manpower, equipments, infrastructure and other resources of the subregion for combating killer diseases such as rinderpest in a single or groups of affected countries and on assisting each other in replacing herds depleted by drought or diseases.