Proceedings of the methodology training workshop for the socioeconomic component of the "Community Action in Integrated and Market Oriented Feed-Livestock Production in Central and South Asia" Project

The workshop was held at "Shodlik Palace" hotel, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 26 to 30 November 2007. A total 20 participants attended the workshop. These included Dr. Raj Gupta, Acting Regional Coordinator of ICARDA-CAC, Dr. Zakir Khalikulov, Deputy Regional Coordinator of ICARDA-CAC, Dr. Barbara Rischkowsky, Project Coordinator, ICARDA, Dr. Aden Aw-Hassan, Research Project Manager on Socioeconomics, ICARDA, National Coordinators from Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, Principal Investigators of Socioeconomics and Livestock productivity components from three Central Asian countries including Kyrgyzstan. In addition to the research team two Master students from the Kazak–Turkish University also attended the workshop.

The main purpose of the workshop was to develop a clear implementation plan for the 2nd stage of the socioeconomic research. The expected workshop outputs included a review of commodity value chains, clarification of the research questions, development of the sampling strategy, identification and understanding of the research methods for market studies and technology evaluation, development of the questionnaire for data collection, sharing and agreement of the data collection and documentation procedures, and elaboration of the clear timeline for activities.

Results from socioeconomic research in Central Asia were presented by Mr. Nariman Nishanov. In his presentation, he emphasised the results of the Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) conducted in the 1st year of the project. This presentation emphasized that in all countries the research covered analysis of rural livelihoods to identify major income sources of smallholders, characterization of the livestock production systems for further comparison with the technologies to be introduced by the biophysical components of the project. Results of the cost benefit analysis for lamb fattening in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and mohair goat production in Tajikistan were also explained in the same presentation. Mr. Nishanov also pointed out that the market studies collected data on the existing markets, marketing channels for livestock products, and constraints for market access of smallholders. It was also stated that the ongoing analysis of the marketing

margins will provide good baseline information for further cross-country comparative analysis of markets in Central Asia.

Results from socioeconomic research in Pakistan were presented by Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan. He described farm typologies and characteristics of feed and livestock production systems at two project sites, one in the rainfed area and the other in the irrigated area. Dr. Azeem Khan also described the value chain analysis conducted for buffalo and cow milk. He also explained the existing livestock production systems and ex-ante analysis of potential impacts of development interventions at irrigated sites was conducted by Mr. Khalid Mahmood, Ph.D. student. These interventions included fodder improvement (lower fodder shortage, 13% higher dairy income, 6% higher farm income), husbandry improvement (20% more milk production with AI and reducing age of calving& calving interval), breed improvement (100% increase in milk yield of cow by cross-breeding), increasing herd size (increase in milk animals from 3-5), higher perceived milk price-Marketing (15% high price cool chain, Nestle etc.)

Principal Investigators on Socioeconomic research from three Central Asian countries presented the information about project site including the number of villages, the number of households, and population. This information was further developed during the workshop. It was suggested to include a table indicating the main income source in households (showing the importance of either livestock or crop production) and degree of lamb / mohair goat production development (see Annex I.).

To identify main research questions participants were divided into three country groups, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. They have discussed possible issues within groups and wrote the result on flipcharts. This session was facilitated by Drs. Aw-Hassan and Azeem Khan. The following research areas were suggested for this group work session:

1. Producer Typologies
2. Production Practices
3. Producer Marketing Strategies
4. Market Performance and Prices

5. On-going participatory evaluation

6. Impact Evaluation

All questions suggested by groups were then discussed by all workshop participants to combine all ideas and elaborate a consolidated list of the research questions (see Annex II).

Above mentioned research questions were then used to develop questions for survey questionnaires. Research team from Kazakhstan was requested to work on questions about producer typologies and production practices, scientists from Kyrgyzstan prepared questionnaire on producers' marketing strategies, while participants from Tajikistan developed the section of the questionnaire on market performance and prices.

It was agreed that there will be two types of questionnaires, one for householders and one for traders. The first questionnaire will consist of three parts including questions on household's characteristics, its production practices, and marketing practices. Upon finalization this questionnaire will be used for formal survey in all three Central Asian countries. The second questionnaire developed for traders is planned to be used only for survey of the mohair markets in Tajikistan (see Annexes III and IV).

During discussion of the survey design there were many questions asked by national collaborators about attitude of local authorities to surveys conducted by various projects. It was then explained by Dr. Aw-Hassan that in order to ensure smooth survey process the project team in each country has to organize a field day for all stakeholders including householders. As a part of the preparation to this meeting with stakeholders the project team should issue project brochures briefly describing the project objectives and project sites in each country. The main objective of the field days will be to explain that this is a survey conducted for research purposes. National collaborators supported the idea of field days and agreed that it would significantly ease the survey process.

Discussion of methodology for technology evaluation was organized as a facilitated discussion on two issues:

1. farmers participation on technology assessment;

2. inter-disciplinary assessment of technologies.

Principal investigators of the "Livestock Productivity" project component provided detailed explanation of the newly introduced livestock production technologies. Particularly, Dr. Ajibekov explained how the decentralized sheep breeding plan will be organized in Kyrgyzstan. Dr. Tuekbasov described the early lambing, early weaning, and sheep milking technologies to be tested in Kazakhstan. Dr. Ikramov provided information on early mating of ewes, early weaning and fattening of lambs in Tajikistan through optimal feeding strategies for lambs and ewes during all physiological stages. Discussion on each intervention was finalized by listing the expected costs and benefits for farmers, researchers, and the project.

Dr. Azeem Khan made one more presentation about socio-economic assessment of feed-livestock technologies. He explained how to use farmers' perceptions for initial assessment of interventions. Dr. Azeem Khan also described partial budget analysis, sensitivity analysis, and profitability analysis. He demonstrated several cases where above mentioned assessment methods had been applied.

Conclusions of the workshop

1. Two types of questionnaires will be used for the socioeconomic survey, one for householders (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) and one for traders (only in Tajikistan).

2. Formal survey in three Central Asian countries should start on 1 February 2008.

3. Baseline data on householders' production practices will be collected during the formal survey to be conducted by the socioeconomic component of the project. These data will be used for comparative analysis of technologic interventions undertaken by the research team on livestock productivity.

4. Inter-disciplinary assessment of technologies will be based on frequent communication between the research teams for each component. Cost-benefit analysis

of the selected technologies will be conducted to measure the impact of interventions on livelihoods of households.

Next steps:

1. Principal Investigators of the socioeconomic research team should send a complete list of households for all villages at the project site to finalize the site description and sampling process.

2. Sampling of households should be undertaken using random sampling or stratified random sampling technique.

3. First draft of the producers' and traders' questionnaires should be submitted to Drs. Rischkowsky and Aw-Hassan by 20 December 2007.

4. All questionnaires should be translated into Russian and sent to the socioeconomic research teams in January 2008.

5. Training of enumerators should be conducted soon after delivery of the questionnaires to the national collaborators in January 2008.

6. Field days should be organized in January 2008 for stakeholders in each Central Asian country participating in the project. The main objective of the field day is to explain to local authorities and householders the main purpose of the survey.

7. Project brochures describing the project objectives and project site in each country should be prepared for the field days by mid-January 2008.