

Blog Text

Role and Contribution of Livestock in the Economic Development of SSA and SA

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A herd of small ruminants in a fenced area, Tunisia (Photo credit: Zied Idoudi, ICARDA)

Livestock sector has globally achieved the greatest growth in production over the last three decades, and it is expected to continue growing faster than all other agricultural subsectors in the coming decade. The growth tendency and the scope of possible livestock investments that can stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries is depending on the existing structural characteristics of this sector. Livestock structure is in turn depending on different economic, institutional, environmental and agroecological conditions including, agroclimatic conditions, type of available biomass in dominant agroecology of the country, accumulated knowledge (including traditional knowledge), among other.

A typology analysis of 43 developing countries from Sub Sahara Africa and Asia, conducted under the [CRP Livestock](#) and [CRP PIM](#) foresight clusters, has revealed that structural differences of “livestock sectors”, do exist across countries with different levels of economic development. In fact, low- and middle-income countries, which are structurally different based on their macroeconomic characteristics and aggregates, do also have different “structural characteristics” of their livestock sectors. Livestock production and consumption patterns are proved to be linked to the level of economic development. This means that livestock development investments need to be targeted according to countries income classifications as this would result in enhanced economic, and social impacts and returns.

It was also found that livestock GDP is positively and significantly influencing employment growth in these low- and middle-income countries. This further highlights the indirect relationship between livestock sectors and food security, channeled through macroeconomic relationships, especially in relation to employment generation in the whole economy, as illustrated in this study. These Results help donor and policy makers in terms of foresight for better targeting of livestock investments and policy tailored to the economic conditions in a given country, in addition to forecasting livestock structural transformations which may happen in parallel to the economic transition a country may have.

More can be found in: Frija Aymen, Dolapo Enahoro, Ameer Wafa, Ouerghemmi Hassen. (Forthcoming). Contributions of livestock to agricultural development and employment growth in a set of low- and middle-income countries. [Submitted – Under review at “Global Food Security” Journal].