

Socio-economic benchmarking survey in India and Nigeria by Dr.Leela Prasad

The main objective of the benchmarking socioeconomic survey is to document the status of the livestock/fodder livelihood aspects in the identified pilot sites in India and Nigeria along with the Key partner organisations (KPO). The qualitative and quantitative benchmarks so established would help in identifying key indicators that can be monitored and measured during the course of the project and beyond.

The project is working at five pilot sites, three in India and two in Nigeria. The methodology for the study broadly involves formal sample survey of farm households through structured survey instruments. Prior to the household level surveys, focus group meetings are carried out at the village level involving village officials and cross section of different strata of the village population.

The survey instruments (the village and household level questionnaire schedules) were prepared by the Project staff and fine-tuned by the KPOs through detailed discussions with farmers and key informants. Supervisors with extensive experience in implementing sample surveys have overseen the conduct of work both at village and household levels in India and Nigeria. Respondent farmers representative of the Project villages were selected on the basis of stratified random sampling, for example in India, the land holding size, irrigation status and the caste were the main strata from which sample farmers were randomly picked up. The information collected broadly pertained to the land and livestock holding, irrigation status, type of livestock held and livestock production systems, availability and access to dry and green fodders and other feeds, seasonality of feed availability and management practices, institutional arrangements, problems and perceptions of respondents related to livestock based livelihoods. For village level survey, the information on the pilot site was obtained from the village records and through key informant interviews.

Observations:

India

- The socioeconomic and technical context of Rajasthan appears unique from the Indian point of view with controlled grazing of village commons put in place and managed by community-based organisations in the form of grazing committees. Grazing committees/institutions provide an opportunity for both actor related and technological interventions in the management of fodder from arable lands, fallow lands and village commons
- Puducherry with its rapid urbanisation and consequent pressure on land for non-agricultural use is a contrast with landless women depending on high yielding dairy animals for livelihood. Common grazing lands are non-existent. Addressing fodder shortage to increase the milk production is a challenge. Puducherry dairy along with farmers organisation and government departments is well poised to organise an experiment on fodder marketing system.

- The survey in general provided an excellent interface for the project –KPO interaction and putting them on a common footing with the Project

Nigeria

- In Kano the Fulani are largely cattle farmers and Hausa crop/livestock farmers. Intra and interstate cattle and herder movement is mainly triggered by shortage of fodder at particular time of the year. No farmer is growing cultivated fodders, major focus being dual-purpose crops. The more marginal the farmers 'habitat' the less opportunities and scope for fodder innovation. The state more dominant because of subsidies on inputs
- In Osuna primarily they are subsistence farmers. Youngsters are not interested in agriculture; old people are the ones who need assistance mainly in agriculture. Traditional leadership key in the activities of the village. Fewer fodder markets compared to KANO because of lower livestock populations. Informal sources of information dominate. The state not active in rural areas