



June, 2019

Improving smallholder dairy & beef profitability by enhancing farm production & value chain management

Overview

Pakistan is one of the major milk and meat producing countries in the world. Over 8 million families are directly involved with dairy farming with more than 80% keeping animals using traditional farming practices. This project aims to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farming households in Pakistan (Punjab & Sindh) through on-farm efficiency gains and development of dairy and beef market opportunities. Livestock farmers in Pakistan face a number of challenges when rearing animals for milk and meat, often struggling to make any profit. These challenges are underpinned by a general lack of information about animal production and marketing. It is a well-known fact that traditional system of meat production and marketing are no longer able to meet this growing demand of quality meat. The most realistic way to meet this growing demand is to increase the productivity and efficiency of smallholder farmers.

The project team has developed a whole-family extension approach (WFEA) and shown that it can be used to effectively transfer specialist knowledge, promote skills and empower farmers to improve productivity and livelihoods. The WFEA aims to identify the needs of smallholder dairy/beef farming families and provide appropriate capacity building and support within the extension system to address them. This program is being expanded through strategic collaborations with public and private organisations engaged in livestock extension. This will provide a chance for collaborators to explore the potential lessons and synergies in adapting the WFEA to their own extension implementation plans, subsequently leading to increase knowledge-transfer and on-farm practice change.

ACIAR project number	LPS/2016/011
Start date and duration	1 April 2017 to 30 September 2021 and 4.5 years
Location	Pakistan
Budget	2,923,562 (Aus \$)
Project leader and Commissioned Organisation	Dr. David McGill University of Melbourne, Australia david.mcgill@unimelb.edu.au
Partner country Project leaders and their institutions	Prof. Dr. Talat Naseer Pasha, Vice Chancellor, University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore tnpasha@uvas.edu.pk
ACIAR Research Program Manager	Warner Stur werner.stur@aciarc.gov.au
ACIAR Country Manager	Munawar Raza Kazmi, PhD munawar.kazmi@aciarc.gov.au



Picture: David McGill initiating discussion about extension services within various organisational set ups during “Community of Practice” workshop (February, 2019).

Research

The project aims to address some of these challenges by carrying out research on the following objectives:

1. Investigate the support necessary to integrate the whole-family extension approach within the current dairy-beef value chain and evaluate the impacts on smallholder farmers.
2. Analyse the current beef industry structure in Punjab and Sindh with a focus on identifying market opportunities for smallholder farmers.
3. Evaluate alternative enterprise combinations which have the potential to improve on-farm efficiency and profitability.
4. Support smallholder dairy-beef farmers to engage in more profitable value chain opportunities.



Picture: Michael Campbell (CSU) showcasing beef products along the value-chain in Australia (April, 2019).

Achievements

1. The project has successfully engaged 50 field staff from 23 extension organizations across the country for integrating the WFEA into their own field activities. We have completed four training workshops to help provide a creative and engaging learning environment for sharing our experiences as well as providing participants with the opportunity to share and learn from each other. In February 2019, we organized a community of practice (COP) workshop for the management of our collaborative organisations, demonstrating the impacts and institutional learning developed through this project. On-going mentoring and field follow-ups has provided evidence for a number of positive changes, including some groups hiring female farm advisors for implementing the WFEA within their extension programs.

2. The project has investigated opportunities for increasing the profit from the beef component of dairy farms through on-farm efficiency improvements, increasing the market value of product and linking

smallholder farmers with profitable beef markets. The identified opportunities will support farm business groups to enable smallholders to identify and access more profitable beef markets through value creation and collective actions. Focus group discussions with male and female farmers has started with needs assessments, followed by advisory meetings to fulfill the identified gaps.

3. Research partners are working on different experiments addressing on-farm challenges. This includes field studies assessing feed resources for smallholder farmer and the impact of ground water quality on animal health & performance. Both of the studies are being conducted in collaboration with University of Agriculture (UAF), Faisalabad.

4. The team continues to build their capacity, particularly on gender mainstreaming and value chain research. An exposure visit to Australia focused on these two components, with key activities including walking the beef chain (in Wagga Wagga, lead by CSU) and attending the "Seeds of Change" conference (Canberra, April 2019). This conference provided an array of ideas about approaches to and capturing impact on, reach, access, resources and women empowerment.

The learning experiences from Australia came at a critical time, as the team now enters the major data collection component of the project starting to assess the impact of their own work and their collaborators.



Picture: Anam Afzal and Humera Iqbal conducting need base assessment activity for calf fattening with female farmers in village 45GD, Okara (April, 2019).

