ILRI in Tanzania

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) first worked in Tanzania in 1997 following its creation three years earlier in 1994 from a merger of the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA) and the International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases (ILRAD). Since then, ILRI worked on livestock issues including: market mechanisms, food safety and livestock policy.

Today, ILRI research in Tanzania focuses on sustainable intensification of mixed crop–livestock systems through increasing productivity and value chain development. ILRI also works on improving the nutrition and health of poor people by exploiting and enhancing the synergies between agriculture, nutrition, and health. ILRI’s focus in this area is on control of agriculture-associated diseases within the same value chains.

ILRI focuses on these two areas because it is critically important to shape the trajectory of Tanzania’s livestock development in the coming years in ways that maximize benefits (e.g., food and nutrition security, employment and livelihoods, asset building) and minimize harms (e.g., illness due to consuming unsafe meat, milk or eggs, environmental destruction, or the spread of zoonotic diseases).

In Tanzania, ILRI works with national organizations to achieve the aims of the government’s National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty’ (MKUKUTA) and the ‘Agricultural Sector Development Strategy’ (ASDS). These national partners include national ministries and research institutes, universities, local government authorities, NGOs, the private sector, local communities and their representatives as well as development projects.

Most CGIAR research for development activities are now financed through a series of multi-partner ‘CGIAR Research Programs’ and these set the direction, institutional partnerships and opportunities for most of our research. ILRI is actively involved in several of these research programs – livestock and fish, agriculture for nutrition and health, dryland systems, water land and ecosystems, humid tropics, genebanks, climate change, and policy institutions and markets. Tanzania is one of the focus countries of the ILRI-led research program on livestock and fish, working on smallholder dairy value chains.
ILRI projects in Tanzania

More milk by and for the poor: Adapting dairy market hubs for pro-poor smallholder value chains in Tanzania
This project aims to improve rural based livelihoods through milk. Resource-poor smallholder farmers have little access to adequate feeding, breeding, animal health and credit services (only 4% of poor livestock keepers currently have access to credit and only 1.4% of marketed milk is processed). Producing a marketable surplus remains a fundamental challenge, indicating need for organizational change, such as adapted hub approaches.

What’s killing my cow? Re-assessing diseases hurting smallholder dairying in Tanzania
The project aims to re-evaluate diseases of dairy cows in Tanzania by broadening the range of diseases investigated and better understanding the links between farm management practices and disease risk.

Safe food, fair food
This project is testing ‘best bets’ to improve food safety along the dairy value chain. It aims to protect the health of poor consumers and safeguard livestock-based livelihoods of poor livestock keepers and other value chain actors.

Enhancing dairy-based livelihoods in India and Tanzania through feed innovation and value chain development approaches
This project aims to improve dairy-derived livelihoods in India and Tanzania through intensification of smallholder production by way of enhanced feeds and feeding practices.

Improving the productivity of indigenous chicken through better nutrition and management in mixed crop-livestock farming systems
Part of the Africa RISING program, this project aims to develop feeding and management strategies that will help increase the overall productivity of rural poultry production in Babati District.

Rapid assessment of potential benefits to human health and nutrition from research on livestock and fish market chains
This project is using value chains to examine agricultural impact pathways to enhance nutrition and mitigate human health risks. Preliminary results suggest that animal-source foods are highly important to human health; that little is known of the hazards they present in informal markets; that biological hazards likely have the greatest impacts on human health; that animal disease is an important constraint to the availability of animal-source foods; and that gender plays an important role in determining participation in, and benefits derived from, value chains.

Healthy futures
This project studies the impacts of environmental and climate changes on the incidence and distribution of Rift Valley fever (RVF) and other water-related diseases. It is developing decision-support frameworks that can guide present and future interventions against these diseases.

Comprehensive Livestock Environmental Assessment for Improved Nutrition, a Secured Environment and Sustainable Development along Value Chains
This project is piloting a framework for rapid environmental assessment of existing, and planned livestock production. The framework will assess the impact of livestock production on land health, water, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions, for an area of interest. The initial piloting phase is assessing sites from ‘More milk by and for the poor’ in Tanzania.
Fodder and feed as a key opportunity to drive sustainable intensification of crop livestock systems
Part of the Africa RISING program, this project aims to integrate improved forages into existing mixed crop-livestock systems and enhance forage seed supply as well as to enhance use of crop residues through feed processing technologies.

Dairy goat and root crop production
This project seeks to improve food security and human nutrition through an integrated program of dairy goat cross-breeding and goat milk production coupled with use of dual-purpose cassava and sweet potato varieties for animal feed as well as human food.

East Africa dairy development
The second phase of this project facilitates a network of profitable, farmer-managed milk aggregation hubs that offer essential inputs, extension and business services to draw smallholder farmers into the more commercial sector. EADD works to transform the lives of resource-poor farming families with improved market access to a wealth-creating, robust dairy value chain that benefits all industry stakeholders.

Livestock data innovation in Africa
This project improves the quality of data on livestock in Africa to enhance the understanding of the roles of livestock in poverty reduction. It is conducting reviews, collections and analyses of livestock data in selected African countries to better guide better decision-making and investments for improving smallholder livestock livelihoods.

Agricultural policy analysis and coordination in Tanzania
The Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System for Eastern and Central Africa is supporting Tanzania’s Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives to establish a Platform for Agricultural Policy Analysis and Coordination in Tanzania to achieve better coordination and harmonization of policy analysis and capacity building.

Feed the Future innovation lab on small-scale irrigation
Led by Texas A&M University, this five-year project aims at benefiting the region’s farmers by improving effective use of scarce water supplies through interventions in small-scale irrigation.

Dairy genetics East Africa
Led by the University of New England, the second phase of this project aims to identify needs and deliver solutions to dairy cattle genetic supply for smallholder dairy systems in Tanzania, Ethiopia and Rwanda. It will help determine which dairy cow breed compositions work best for smallholder farmers in various production environments.

Evaluation of breed composition, productivity and fitness of smallholder dairy cattle
This project seeks to apply next generation sequencing technologies to characterize the breed composition of smallholder dairy cattle in Tanzania. The project will recommend most appropriate cattle genotypes for use in smallholder production environments.
The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works with partners worldwide to:

- develop, test, adapt and promote science-based practices that—being sustainable and scalable—achieve better lives through livestock.
- provide compelling scientific evidence in ways that persuade decision-makers—from farms to boardrooms and parliaments—that smarter policies and bigger livestock investments can deliver significant socio-economic, health and environmental dividends to both poor nations and households.
- increase capacity among ILRI’s key stakeholders to make better use of livestock science and investments for better lives through livestock.

ILRI is a member of the CGIAR Consortium within which it leads the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock and Fish, leads a component of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health and contributes to seven other CGIAR research programs. ILRI hosts and manages the Biosciences eastern and central Africa (BecA)-ILRI Hub and provides the secretariat of the Technical Consortium for Building Resilience in the Horn of Africa.

Partners
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