



Livestock Research for Food Security and Poverty Reduction: Opportunities and Challenges for Ethiopia

Report on a Stakeholder Consultation, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
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Welcome and introductions

The objective of this half-day meeting was to share key elements of ILRI's strategy 2013-2022 whilst at the same time providing an opportunity for key stakeholders in Ethiopia to discuss ILRI's role in livestock research for development in Ethiopia. 24 participants (Appendix 1) attended, from various research, government and non-governmental organizations.

Iain Wright, ILRI's representative in Ethiopia, welcomed participants, explaining the aims of the meeting: to introduce ILRI's new strategy and provide an opportunity to discuss ways to operationalize it in light of national priorities. He recognized the range of participants (from CGIAR partners, regional research institutes, civil society, private sector and development projects).

ILRI in Ethiopia today

Iain Wright gave an introduction to ILRI activities in Ethiopia (see <http://www.slideshare.net/ILRI/ilri-ethiopia-wrightjun2013>). His presentation was organized around key themes in ILRI's new strategy and covered the LIVES, Africa RISING, Nile BDC and safe food fair food projects as working on livestock in 'strong growth' scenarios; he highlighted ILRI's work on livestock insurance (IBLI) as an example where ILRI is working more 'fragile' growth scenarios. ILRI's current support to the national livestock masterplan process was showcased as an example of ILRI working to 'influence' national agendas; while LIVES was cited as an example of strong capacity development.

Questions from participants asked just how 'new' some of these strategic elements are, about the gender aspects of ILRI's work, whether 'fragile growth' systems equate with 'pastoral' systems, and about whether ILRI explicitly considered youth in its strategy.

ILRI strategy

Participants were introduced to the **strategy development process, strategic issues and overview of key elements** and invited to comment on the extent to which the changes and issues resonate in Ethiopia, and what may be initial opportunities for ILRI to engage. Related materials are available at www.ilri.org/mission

To what extent do these changes resonate in Ethiopia?

Participants reflected on the initial presentation by Shirley Tarawali and have a wide range of useful feedback:

ILRI strategy is impressive: emphasis on outcomes; good that it recognized the bads of livestock production and the opportunity to address this.

Outcomes and impacts: People asked is this really new? Big difference today is that CGIAR centres have to work together and there is a focus on development outcomes. It's a challenge as it goes beyond ILRI and CGIAR – so how to measure. Good, but challenging to operationalize.

New: impact, partners (including private sector), outreach, linkage of small-large scale, outcomes-impacts. This is really good (and relates to why ILRI does research). ILRI needs to make sure these are applied.

The long term focus is new. Can be with countries, partners, but should be also with donors – who often have a short term funding cycle.

Partnerships were raised repeatedly. ILRI is never stand alone and must take this seriously if outcomes are to be achieved. National system has especially important roles. ILRI needs to work more proactively. How much are we really listening to partners? It is important to balance the mix, especially private sector. Include public interest issues.

Is the strategy too ambitious? As a small organization with global mandate it depends on how effective partnership is used.

What about synergy with national government and other actors? There are many new projects with similar objectives. How can these be brought together and who should take the initiative for that to happen? ILRI has a key role to play in this regard – it can play that convening role.

Livestock development in the country – which strategy is being followed? Can it be to increase productivity and reduce the number of animals (may include mechanization)? ILRI needs to be involved here. At a macro level this could be informing policy makers, making sure government is aware of the number of cattle. Could there be pilot studies? Animals recorded to monitor and set criteria?

Intensification – this is a crucial element. Especially for Ethiopia where there are so many animals.

On goods and bads – one group found that Ethiopia should not focus on bads. Environment can be part of the discussion. Increasing efficiency will really help to address this anyway. Focus on the goods and intensification of the farming systems.

There seems to be a tension between recognizing the livestock bads or considering them unimportant - sustainable intensification will 'solve' this. Note: ILRI operates in a global environment in many cases livestock have a bad image. Donor program officers may have a hard time persuading people to make investments. There is a lack of nuance for different parts of the world. We have to tackle this head on. And make sure that those making decisions are appropriately informed.

Policy engagement – it is not policy analysis, it is real engagement. This is new for ILRI at least.

Nutrition is a key issue that may deserve more attention in Ethiopia.

People asked the question why research results were not successfully disseminated? One way to address this might be: allocate 80% of resources on what is required to scale out existing solutions (research topic); 20% on new science. Adoption and uptake of knowledge and technologies is a main research area for IFPRI, also groups like GFRAS. It's important to go beyond analysis... to get knowledge products to inform design of advisory services, extension etc. Note: ILRI does not work directly with smallholders. There are others where ILRI's knowledge are received. Better to have a design on how to engage direct clients to take technology down to the farmers.

Capacity building is essential at different levels and in many different areas. Does ILRI only respond – or can it lead capacity? It should do both.

Scaling up and out – how do we do that? It's being raised by many, but no real practical ways of doing this. Can ILRI do something? Adapting to context is important here. The group appreciates comment of challenges of scaling out. How can ILRI collaborate with other partners to make this happen? Having a broader view is challenging. Often it's not deliberate that this integration is overlooked.

Food security...what about FEED security? It is related to the productivity of animals.

Make sure that gender is not overlooked – Don't just mention it.

ILRI needs to work beyond just technologies; it is also about social research etc.

Priorities for ILRI engagement in Ethiopia

Participants formed groups and discussed:

- What are national and regional priorities in terms of major livestock challenges?
- Who are some key partners that ILRI could work with to deliver these objectives?
- What critical steps should ILRI take to extend the impacts of its research?

Group 1 focused on 'strong growth' systems and considered issues of productivity, market access and inclusion. The saw the primary challenge being to 'provide compelling evidence' with two main steps: assembling the evidence and adopting a 'sales and marketing' approach to get it used.

Group 2 looked at the evidence generation role of ILRI; main points from the discussion were.

- The baseline data needs to be right. Since everyone has different data, ILRI could really play a key role to make sure accurate data is used in a harmonized way.
- Links to existing initiatives. ILRI should do and organize research on existing initiatives to ensure independent evidence – eg monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives.
- Traditional ILRI was 'hard' science based (animal diseases etc); now moved to situational analyses – softer side, socio economic etc. Which of these is most important? Can these be managed within one institute?
- ILRI's role in pastoral research, should it be a major focus or just added to the list.
- Institutes remain over time with institutional connections and continuity. This is advantageous over those who are project focused. It can also influence choice of partners. Projects may need independent evidence. How can ILRI link to shorter term interventions – and also use this for continuity of research, for a longer agenda that builds evidence?

Group 3 identified national priorities, some key partners and ways to extend the impact of livestock research in Ethiopia. Priorities are: food security, needs assessment in regional bodies (zones and woredas), and generating/supporting regional-level evidence based in specific areas. In terms of partners, government remains key while private sector needs to be more important than now. Extending impact requires that research finding should be written in clear language, different forms of

case studies could be prepared in specific areas, and the private sector needs encouragement and training.

Group 4 looked at 'fragile growth' systems. Major priorities in these are:

- Food security;
- Resilience building (human, infrastructure, market access, NRM ...);
- Sedentarization – how to tackle this? Bring empirical evidence to inform;
- Export – huge demand from some pastoral areas (\$1BN by 2015); issues of health (esp camels) and feed are critical;
- The climate resilient green economy (CRGE) policy of government. This needs reasonable and reliable information on how to implement this and consider different ecologies, especially if CRGE would be focused in pastoral areas (or should there be other priorities for livestock within this policy?).

Key partners mentioned were research systems, ministries, trade ministry, NGOs, donors (who require evidence), private sector and universities. Critical steps for ILRI to take include:

- Capacity – do sufficient analysis to build on what others also have
- Joint identification and planning research – this is a different way of doing things
- PR and communication for marketing of research results

Some of these issues were further discussed, suggesting areas for ILRI to focus on:

- Priority setting for research. In Ethiopia, someone (ILRI?) needs to assemble information on what partners are doing, what is on the ground and bring this to bear on what donors are planning eg before the country assistance strategy comes to bear. ILRI synthesizes on what works/does not and implications for strategy.
- Also, further 'down' with partners who are implementing projects. What is the research evidence? That would help in decision making for such partners to prioritize and monitor their work
- Packaging evidence to influence to give desired outcome. 'sales and marketing approach' – not advocacy. We need innovative ways to package outputs for different target audiences. More to be done here. Partnership is also a key dimension of this. The right partners (beyond the traditional)
- Champions: who are the champions who will ensure that best practices will go out? Is it government (who?) NGOs, etc? This is linked to 'sales and marketing' approach
- Coordination amongst stakeholders – ILRI has a role here.
- National priority: food for humans and feed for animals
- Regional (within Ethiopia) priorities need to be nuanced according to ecology, culture etc. The wider regional East Africa and Horn of Africa) also needs to be considered.
- Private sector needs to be more prominent in ILRI engagement – and it was asked just 'who' the private sector really is (all farmers?)

Some critical steps leading towards impact are:

- Lack of understanding of research findings – they are not translated to be useful for users. There needs to be action to put into local language so findings can be used. Example: don't need 15 years school to understand! If results are to be communicated, its ILRI's job to communicate to clients. Sell it.....(IPMS commodity briefs for example)

- Private sector again has a role here, and may often contribute through training.

Take home messages

At the end of the meeting, participants shared some 'take home' messages. There was general support for the general directions. Works is needed to translate ideas into practical implementation. People are interested to continue to engage in discussions.

ILRI needs to have different implementation plans for Ethiopia in particular. Engagement with partners is important, however ILRI needs to be strategic in this regard – it cannot work with everyone. It needs to make choices at institutional and project levels.

ILRI needs to market its information and knowledge to a range of different audiences – both content and language. This is part of a broader agenda in terms of ILRI becoming more business-like: Communication, marketing, delivering.

ILRI needs to balance its business between hard and soft science. It needs to recognize the need to strengthen hard science – new science including bioscience such as genomics etc. This must also be linked to systems and outcomes. ILRI also needs to balance supply and demand, looking at what is needed now and further ahead and what it can deliver.

Appendix 1: Participants

Name	Title	Organization	e-mail address
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Appendix 2: Agenda

**Livestock Research for Food Security and Poverty Reduction: Opportunities and Challenges
for Ethiopia
ILRI campus, Addis Ababa
Tuesday 25 June 2013
0900 – 1300hrs**

0900	Welcome, introductions, meeting agenda ILRI strategy 2013-2022 (part 1)	<i>Iain Wright, ILRI Peter Ballantyne, Facilitator</i> <i>Shirley Tarawali, ILRI</i>
0945	Discussion and feedback on 'What's new?' in ILRI's strategy	<i>Table group discussions</i>
1015	ILRI strategy 2013-2022 (part 2)	<i>Shirley Tarawali</i>
1030	Coffee	
1100	Presentation on ILRI in Ethiopia today	<i>Iain Wright</i>
1115	Discussion on ideas and issues arising in the strategy	<i>Table group discussions.</i>
1200	Feedback plenary discussion	<i>Facilitator</i>
1230	"take home" messages Closing	<i>Iain Wright and Shirley Tarawali</i>
1300	Lunch will be provided	