



Policy Brief



Livestock Sector Dynamics from Policy Actors' Perspective

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1. INTRODUCTION

The livestock sector employs 90% of the rural population especially in the Arid and Semi-Arid lands (ASALs) of Kenya where about 60% of the livestock is concentrated. It contributes to about 42% of agricultural Gross Domestic product (GDP) and about 10% directly to the overall GDP (GoK, 2008). The sector also accounts for about 30% of the total agricultural products earning the country foreign exchange through the export of live animals, dairy products, hides and skins. With the increase in population, income and urbanization globally, the livestock sector is receiving a boost from an increase in demand for livestock products both in the local and international markets. However, the poverty-reducing potential of the livestock sector remains largely unexploited. This is linked, to some extent, to varying challenges that confront this sector.

2. CHALLENGES IN THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

The livestock sector faces many challenges, these include weak legal frameworks and outdated policies, low investments, low livestock productivity, under-developed infrastructure, poorly developed pilot projects, inadequate technical capacity for disease control, weak delivery of extension services, poor access to local and international markets, and unreliable data and information management in the sector (ASDS, 2010). In addition, the sector is inadequately funded. Overall, since the 1980's, the agricultural sector had been receiving declining budgetary allocation. In 2003, with the signing of the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security

and the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), both of which call for an allocation of an average of 10 % of national budget to the agriculture sector, the budget allocation started to rise. In 2005/2006 the total allocation to Agriculture was 5.7% of the national budget, in 2007/2008 the allocation was 7.8% while in 2010/2011, the allocation was 11%, above the Maputo Declaration mark (GoK, 2011). Despite an increase in allocation for agriculture, the budget allocation to the livestock sector remains low, about 3% of the agriculture budget allocation (GoK, 2011).

The aforementioned challenges, amongst others, were at the centre of an advocacy campaign spearheaded by GALVmed that sought to engage policymakers, soliciting their views on how to revitalize the sector towards improving the lives of young and poor livestock keepers in Kenya (See Box 1).

Box 1: GALVmed in advocating for policy change in livestock sector

The Global Alliance for Livestock and Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed) is an international not-for-profit organization, established in 2005. GALVmed's objective is to make livestock vaccines, medicines and diagnostics available and accessible to farmers and pastoralists who rely on livestock for their livelihood. GALVmed is committed to working with other organizations in partnership and collaboration in order to achieve mutual goals.

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) was commissioned by GALVmed to undertake a study to establish, among other issues, the extent to which Kenyan policy makers recognize the importance of livestock as an engine for growth. This study employed a qualitative analytical process that involved conducting one on one interviews with selected policy makers in various government departments that deal or interact with actors in the livestock sector. An analysis of the views expressed by these policy makers was expected to provide evidence-based recommendations that would impact change in the Kenya's livestock sector.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study involved conducting face to face, semi-structured interviews with selected policy makers seeking to identify a divergence of opinions on particular policy issues, such as legitimizing and enabling the poor, giving the poor a voice in the decision making process and committing to concentrate on feasible pilot projects.

Face to face interviews were designed to maximize interaction. The respondents participating in this survey represented a wide range of opinions on issues surrounding the plight of small scale livestock keepers in Kenya including the youth of the country. A questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the policy makers' intention to support the campaign geared towards creating awareness about challenges facing the sector, as well as a change in attitude and perceptions about issues affecting the livestock sector and how their different institutions could contribute to enabling positive change. Twenty policy makers from the public and private sectors were interviewed over a period of two months, from July to August 2011.

4. FINDINGS

The study sought respondents' perspectives on a number of policy issues that included:

- The importance of the livestock sector in economic development.
- Gaps in the current legislation towards legitimizing and enabling the poor.
- The policy formulation process, and
- The need to concentrate on feasible pilot projects.

Data collected was analyzed and key themes emerged based on how stakeholders perceive the livestock sector and challenges that impact its contribution to poverty alleviation strategies. All the policy makers interviewed agreed that these were pertinent issues that hamper develop-

ment of the livestock sector as a whole, and that practical solutions needed to be developed and implemented. The next section takes us through some of the themes that have been selected from the study, presented in details in order to help us understand the dynamics of the livestock sector in Kenya from a policy maker's perspective.

4.1 Awareness and attitude change

The respondents expressed concern that livestock sector has been largely neglected since independence in 1963 as the government has focused on industrialization as the key engine for economic growth. They noted that there was a need to start acknowledging livestock as a *potential* engine for economic growth as a pathway out of poverty and food security. They argued that the livestock sector continued to be sidelined in favor of crop farming in the agricultural sector as evidenced by low budgetary allocations, low human resource capacity, and poor infrastructure in livestock producing areas. Some respondents equated this phenomenon to a mining venture where '... people only take from it but do not plough back into it...!', while others felt that for a long time this sector '... had been left for nature to take its course...while expecting to reap from it without investing in it...'. It emerged that knowledge on challenges facing the livestock sector was high amongst the respondents, most of who work in the livestock sector itself or in sectors related to livestock. They noted that some of the issues raised were already being discussed amongst policy communities in the sector. The respondents however felt that the study had provoked them to think about:

- *Getting solutions to some of the challenges and also to start thinking of innovative ways of attracting young people, not only to the agricultural sector but also to the livestock sector. They noted that this sector had the potential to provide*

opportunities for young people with reasonable livelihoods both in the rural and urban areas. In addition, they argued that youth involvement in this sector would not only help in curbing un-employment, rural-urban migration and the vulnerabilities that come with these challenges, including drug abuse, crime and congestion, but also help to improve rural economies.

- *How their departments could start engaging more with other stakeholders in their work in order to attract investment, both locally and internationally. The study also reminded them of the need to build linkages continually with more stakeholders beyond what is provided in the current platforms like the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Programme (NALEP) and the Agriculture Sector Coordinating Unit (ASCU). (See Box 2).*

Box 2: Examples of platforms for actors engagement in the Agriculture & Livestock sectors

ASCU is an inter-ministerial committee comprising ten ministries facilitating the implementation of the Strategy for Revitalisation of Agriculture (SRA) through a sector-wide approach. The committee was established to address the fragmentation of responsibilities between several agriculture and rural-development related ministries, mandated with implementing the SRA. NALEP is a programme jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Livestock Development (MoLD) with the aim of providing and facilitating pluralistic and efficient extension services for increased production, food security, higher incomes and an improved environment.

4.2 The uncontested role of livestock as an economic driver

It was unanimous that growth in the livestock sector could greatly contribute to stimulating local economies, increasing food security and di-

rectly impacting the social stability of a country. It was argued that the sector has an undisputed economic multiplier effect in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors and would thus boost investments in these sectors. This policy issue called upon policy makers to look into creating an economically inclusive methodology – an ‘African Economics’ that includes the very poor through starting to work on ways of creating an economic argument for the contribution that poor livestock keepers could make to the economy. The policy makers thought that this could only be possible through quantifying the economic potential of the sector through proper data collection on:

- *The percentage that livestock contributes to agricultural GDP (AgGDP) and national GDP including all other economic benefits and contributions of livestock including manure, labour provided in ox-ploughing etc. It was noted that livestock data remains ambiguous as a livestock census was first conducted in 1966 and the results for the last and most recent census, held in 1999, have not been released (GoK, 2008).*
- *The potential investment options of the ASALS, for example as potential zones for export of live animals and processed livestock products. This could attract infrastructural investments to these regions in the form of improved road networks, industries and other social amenities.*

4.3 An enabling policy environment

The majority of the respondents noted that there was a need to review the policy and legal environment in this sector as many laws were outdated and difficult to implement in the current status. Most respondents agreed that it was imperative to make deliberate policy changes in order to address issues that affect the very poor and in the livestock sector in order to serve their interests. Some key pointers to address include:

- *The need to harmonize existing laws to avoid duplication of mandates across different government departments. Examples cited include the regulation of veterinary drugs by the Pharmacy and Poisons’ Board, Ministry of Health and the meat inspection mandates by the Kenya Meat Commission and the Ministry of Public Health.*
- *The need to accelerate the review and parliamentary approval of many bills that are in draft form. It was noted that the government has done much in the last five years to review agricultural, livestock and related policies including the development of novel policies to reflect current practices and the national goals of Vision 2030, for example the new Poultry Policy. However, many draft bills are still awaiting cabinet approval. Some reasons cited as slowing down the process include an absence of stakeholder engagement and immobility through varying and conflicting, vested interests.*
- *The need for more participation by more actors. It was unanimous that more stakeholders including non governmental agencies eg. GALVmed should put their weight behind the ongoing processes and join the existing network of stakeholders in putting pressure to bear on the government to accelerate the review of requisite policies.*

4.4 Revitalizing the sector through policy development

The respondents noted that the sector lacked the capacity to improve it, altogether and hence called on stakeholders from different disciplines to work together to contribute towards the desired improvement. This policy issue called for increased energy and commitment to be given to policy development that was focused on the very poor and young people and the life-line that livestock could bring. The policymakers who were interviewed cited the need for:

- *Cross-ministerial and cross-disciplinary consultations in pro-poor policy development and implemen-*

tation processes. It was noted that existing policy platforms like ASCU, were an indication of a changing political landscape and of a changing political will by the government to start working across departments and disciplines. However, this notion was challenged by some respondents who felt that the government preferred to work with 'those that they knew' in the private sector and amongst non-governmental institutions, hence locking out potential, partner institutions and expertise.

- *Building the capacity of stakeholders to engage with the government.* Some respondents argued that linkages between institutions were hampered by a lack of capacity by civil society to participate in the implementation of government policies and inappropriate regulatory and legal frameworks that did not support the participation of private sector-led interventions.
- *Rebuilding the links between academia and industry.* It was unanimous that tertiary institutions no longer had an extension arm for their research to translate into practice and the links between policy makers and other stakeholders, including educational and religious institutions and the communities also remained weak.
- *Rethink and revitalize linkages between non state actors and policy makers as pathways to influence policy and practice.* It was noted that formal and informal interactions should be encouraged and that trust and legitimacy remain key ingredients to creating linkages that would, in turn, affect policy change.
- *Credible and consistent research that provides policy solutions.* There was a call for non-governmental actors and institutions to ensure that their research work was credible and consistent in order for them to gain recognition by 'policy communities'. There was a need for them to start providing practical solutions to problems and to participate in seizing opportunities to influence the policy-making process between actors who know each other and interact with each other.

4.5 The distribution of funds towards community needs

According to the respondents, the way pilot projects are selected and funds allocated to them seems not to be aligned to the needs of stakeholders. This policy issue called for the need to start work on properly constructed pilot programmes that would increase livestock production amongst different groups including smallholders, the youth in cities and among mixed farmers wishing to diversify their portfolio in favour of livestock. There was unanimity on the need to eliminate the 'one size fits all mentality'. Thus, there was a call for:

- *Appropriate and well informed pilot programmes which influence research and generate data that inform policy makers.*
- *Small, targeted and context specific pilot projects that can generate credible information on 'best practices' and also act as vehicles for expanding the impacts of the initiative.* Some respondents noted that certain projects, especially government-led pilot projects, tend to be broader than recommended due to interference from politicians who insist on projects being implemented in their constituencies for political gain.
- *Inclusion of vulnerable groups within communities while ensuring accountability and transparency.* Some respondents noted that pilot projects need to target particular vulnerable groups within communities, who would be key beneficiaries for these programmes. This would help in eliminating power struggles and discrimination against the most disadvantaged, for example, widows, orphans and old people. Some respondents argued that identifying needy people is only possible through having clear criteria for participation and developing mechanisms to ensure accountability, transparency and participation.

- *The need to work closely with target communities to develop pilot programmes that are not influenced by governments or foreign development agencies.* Respondents reiterated the urgent call for all stakeholders in all sectors to eliminate the ‘one size fits all mentality’ and become ‘sensitive’ when planning pilot programmes.

4.6 The government’s under spending on the livestock sector

The study solicited views concerning why the livestock sector was perceived to be largely underfunded. Some of the reasons cited included:

- *The fact that food security in Kenya is equated to food crops including maize, wheat and other cereals hence excluding animal products which are also highly nutritious.* Some respondents cited the need to raise awareness about the need to diversify feeding patterns amongst Kenyans. This would increase local demand for animal products and hence boost the livestock sector.
- *The potential for livestock to be a driver of the economy has not been acknowledged.* Therefore, the sector does not receive as much attention as its counterpart in crop production in terms of funding for research and extension. It was further argued that if the country as a whole and decision makers in particular can acknowledge the potential that lies in livestock rearing, then pushing for investment would not be a challenge.

Low absorption capacity and underutilization of allocated budgets. It emerged that the sector remains underfunded because funds allocated to the ministry are perennially returned to the Treasury as unutilized funds, with under- expenditure supposedly resulting from under-performance. Since the signing of the Maputo Declaration in 2003, the government has been increasing allocations to the agricultural sector. However, despite the increase in allocation, the overall level of ab-

sorption of expenditure has been declining, with the Ministry of Livestock being one of the most notable in agriculture (IEA, 2008) and more so in the veterinary services department (Gamba et. al., 2010). It was noted that under-utilization of funds may be resulting from a number of factors, including bottlenecks in procurement procedures, delayed disbursement of funds and lack of capacity in the workforce, both in numbers and skills.

4.7 Inadequate capacity to lobby and articulate challenges

Respondents also agreed that the livestock sector does not lobby enough for an increase in the allocation of funds. This was further hampered by:

- *Lack of capacity within pastoralist communities in terms of illiteracy and lack of access to information on national and global issues hindering them from putting pressure to bear on their parliamentary representatives for their issues to be addressed* (Livingstone, 2005; Morton et.al, 2007).
- *Lack of capacity amongst Pastoralist Parliamentary Groups (PPGs).* The respondents noted that, in extreme instances, pastoralist representatives may lack the confidence to present issues in parliament owing to lack of knowledge about parliamentary procedures and language barriers. The representatives may also lack the capacity to navigate through the power struggles and party politics present in the parliament.
- *Lack of engagement with other stakeholders and parliamentary committees.* Some respondents noted that there was a need for capacity of these parliamentary groups to be built in order for them to effectively represent their constituents and also enable them to effectively engage with other parliamentary committees which may provide them with opportunities to present their issues informally, for example, finance, planning or trade committees. Most respondents thought that interactions of the PPG with other stakeholders including academic, research and

the civil society would be useful in facilitating and in building the capacity of these groups.

- *Internal disagreements amongst pastoralist representatives* resulting from inter-ethnic conflicts from their local constituents, including: conflicts resulting from cattle-rustling and banditry and competition for watering holes and grazing land.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The livestock sector in Kenya faces many challenges including outdated legislation and legal frameworks, under-funding and lack of infrastructure, amongst others. The study was thus an eye-opener for the decision-makers and provided an opportunity for stakeholders in the livestock sector to start engaging with policy makers to tackle some of the challenges. The study reminded policy makers of the need to start thinking more critically about how their departments could engage more with other stakeholders beyond the existing platforms of engagement, in order to improve the sector. The study successfully gained the support of policy makers to champion policy agendas to improve the livelihoods of the poor livestock keepers in Kenya. It was noted that the challenges in the sector were already being discussed in different policy circles and this study contributed to their thinking about novel solutions. With the increase in funding for agriculture, it is imperative that all stakeholders should work together to facilitate in building the capacity of the sector so as to ensure that it is not left behind. The devolved system of government under the new constitutional dispensation which seeks to decentralize government institutions and to take services closer to the people provides an opportunity through which stakeholders in this sector could lobby and deliberate on the challenges affecting them (Werner et.al, 2011).

Some of the recommendations emerging from this study include:

- The respective government departments should consider engaging in developing capacity building programmes for actors involved in the livestock sector on the need for them to create linkages and networks for working together and sharing information to improve the sector.
- The capacities of the stakeholders in the livestock sector to lobby and influence policy processes need to be built. This is one of the areas where government could partner with nongovernmental organizations like GALVmed.
- Those involved should embrace and engage in the emerging policy opportunities under the new political dispensation, for example the multi-ministerial agriculture coordination committee ASCU, NALEP, amongst others.
- With the new devolved system of government and the decentralization of services and resources under the new constitution, development agencies need to start strategizing on ways to engage with the County government in addition to the national government to push for issues affecting poor livestock keepers, especially in North Eastern Province and other livestock dependant areas in Kenya.
- Actors (e.g. community based organizations and livestock groups) interested in influencing the budget processes need to start engaging directly with parliamentary committees, more specifically with the Parliamentary Budget Committee. Article 221 of the new constitution reduces the power of the Treasury and increases the power of parliament to decide how to spend government funds. This is different from the old constitution where the budget was prepared by the Treasury in a very opaque process and then read out to the public by the finance minister on budget day.

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