



IMPLEMENTING POLITICALLY FEASIBLE PRO-POOR LIVESTOCK POLICIES IN SENEGAL

Political and macro-economic constraints frequently limit livestock's potential contribution to improving rural livelihoods. Understanding these political frameworks is key to creating successful policies and projects in the sector. In Senegal, approximately one-third of all households depend on livestock for some portion of their livelihood. Yet, the sector has not received significant state or private investment, nor has it received a significant amount of bi-lateral and international assistance. Poor producers in the sector remain relatively unorganised and disadvantaged in the policy-formation process. Macro-economic forces and the distribution of political influence focus state attention on the concerns of large-scale producers and importers of dairy and poultry products rather than on the concerns of poor producers.

● Policy Formation Process

State administrative bodies, which dominate policy formulation in the livestock sector, unfortunately lack consultative forums for non-state actors to voice their concerns. Livestock producers are rarely able to successfully organize to influence policy formation. Nonetheless, possibilities do exist for improving producers' representation in the policy-making process and for advancing pro-poor policies.

In August 2003, a government restructuring resulted in the creation of a Ministry of Livestock. This innovation offers opportunities for the institutionalisation of a consultative body at the level of the ministry in which non-state stakeholders could voice their opinion on policy matters. Donors involved in other administrative restructuring, such as the World Bank, are well situated to use their influence to advocate this type of organizational innovation.

In addition, independent livestock producers' organizations are beginning to fill important roles in rural areas;

however, they often lack the funding and organizational capacity necessary to expand. Offering support for these local-level, independent organizations may help to rejuvenate organizational capacity of livestock producers.

Traditionally, livestock producers have had few politically influential advocates. The unexpected alliance between human rights organizations, some of the most active public pressure groups in Senegal today, and livestock producers during *l'affaire du Doli* demonstrates the potential for new issue linkages to strengthen the political position of livestock producers. Interventions that seek to facilitate these issue linkages may help to raise public awareness of the difficulties facing livestock producers and the importance of supporting them.

● The Meat Sector

The meat sector in Senegal suffers from unduly high transaction costs. Livestock producers often have to sell their animals on credit, as intermediaries cannot pay cash up front; this limits producers' ability to shop around for the best purchase price as they must conduct transactions with trusted intermediaries. In addition, animals pass through a long series of intermediaries, each requiring a percentage of the final sale value of the animal, before reaching market. This drives up the final price while lowering the actual amount the producer receives. Finally, the sector lacks organizational support and much of its infrastructure is in disarray.

Considering the current state of the sector, several possible interventions for improving poor producers' position in the sector exist. Securing credit for intermediaries in the sector so that they can pay in cash, upfront for livestock at all points would allow for competition between traders at the producer level, likely resulting in higher prices for the animals. Producers could make economic



choices based on price, instead of always concerning themselves with relationships of trust and regularized exchange. Assisting rural producers to enter the Dakar market may allow producers to play a more active role in the market. If they become more implicated in the urban market this could give them negotiating power vis-à-vis the state.

- **The Dairy Sector**

Imported milk powder from Europe dominates Senegal's dairy sector. Local milk production is limited. Distribution systems are restricted to individual networks of market women and a few experimental programs. Local producers, excepting urban intensive producers, are highly unorganized, while powdered milk importers have much political influence. Political dynamics in the sector make it almost impossible to directly address the difficulties posed by powdered milk imports. Nonetheless, two important interventions in the sector may help local producers to overcome the negative effects of massive milk importation.

Structural support from non-governmental organizations and donors can make a difference for local distribution systems. Supporting and facilitating collection systems in rural areas around Senegal's secondary cities has been shown to help rural producers reach urban markets and secure some profits from milk. Senegalese producers need to be able to take advantage of the higher value accorded to fresh milk by many consumers. Currently this is limited by misleading advertising on powdered-milk based products. If labelling were regulated or if a means of "branding" local milk products was developed that would allow consumers to make an educated decision about the milk products they were buying, local milk products could gain a competitive edge because of the nutrition and quality values associated with them. This labelling, branding or certification does not necessarily have to be undertaken by government. Respected non-governmental organizations, donor organizations, or religious organizations might, for example, develop a system of certifying and labelling local products.

- **The Poultry Sector**

Imported poultry parts increasingly dominate the poultry sector. As in the

dairy sector, those involved in importation have much political weight making it difficult to address the problem directly. Instead other interventions must be sought to improve the position of poor producers in the sector. It may be possible to work with administrative bodies such as the Direction de l'Élevage to increase their capacity to impose quality controls on imported livestock products, particularly assured maintenance of the cold chain. In addition, local poultry products could be made more competitive if feed were available at lower prices. Encouraging research and dissemination of local alternatives to corn feed is one way to lower feed costs. In addition, supporting the creation and maintenance of a nationwide vaccination and medical provision system might help local producers to be more competitive.

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http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/projects/en/pplpi/project_docs.html