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## Reaping and Rearing: Exploring the livelihoods of small scale farmers in rural South Africa

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Describe and analyse current knowledge in a selection of policy, scientific and grey literature in relation to gender and livestock farming and its relevance to usage (if at all) related to vaccines and disease management of animals by small-scale farmers in two communities

Identify some behaviour patterns, usage, uptake, knowledge, attitudes among small scale famers in relation to the vaccine usage and disease management

Provide some demographic perspectives in relation to a profile of the small-scale farmers and their households;

Determine experiences in relation to the value of vaccines and its potential benefits related to access, challenges, opportunities and its social and economic benefits in so far as broader contributions to food security and community upliftment

- Increasingly, livestock farming is being considered an important contributor to poverty alleviation and women's empowerment within the international pro-poor development agenda (IFAD, 2010; Herrero et al., 2014).
- The livestock sector is “one of the fastest growing agricultural subsectors, a major contributor to food and nutrition security as well as serving as an important source of livelihood for nearly 1 billion poor people in developing countries” (Munyai, 2012: 3)

BENEFIT	PRODUCTS
Food	Milk; meat; eggs; blood; fish; honey; processed products
Clothing	Wool; hides; skins; leather
Work	Draught power cultivation; transport of goods and people; threshing; milling; pumping water
Monetary	Capital wealth; investment and savings; income from hiring working animals; sale of products and animals
Social	Lobola (bride price); ceremonial; companionship; recreational; status
Manure	Fertiliser (soil amelioration); fuel; flooring
Other benefits	Feathers; bone meal; soap production

Source: Munyai 2012: 24

Livestock is considered a key asset for rural households worldwide and a primary livelihood resource for rural communities: about 752 million of the world's poor keep livestock to produce food, generate cash income, manage risks and build up assets [...] Livestock "widens and sustains three major pathways out of poverty: (1) securing the assets of the poor, (2) improving smallholder and pastoral productivity and (3) increasing market participation by the poor" [...] Especially in rural areas, the development of small-scale livestock enterprises must be seen as a key element of any efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. (FAO, 2013:5)

- The FAO: 95% of South Africans are well-nourished (AFASA, 2014:54)
- 22.7 percent of the population, or 13.8 million people, has insufficient access to food and many households (21 percent) continue to experience difficulty in accessing food (The Presidency, 2014:65).
- General Household Survey (GHS) shows that 11.5% – close to 10 million people – experienced hunger in the 30 days prior to the survey (Hendriks, 2013:2)
- Nutrition questions are notoriously difficult

Qualitative (focus groups and in-depth interviews) Areas covered:

- Perspective on experiences,
- Challenges and attitudes of small-scale farmers
- Knowledge and experience of, and prevention and treatment of animal diseases

Quantitative: A cross-sectional study using questionnaire-based (survey) data collection. Areas covered by the survey:

- Demographic information - education; land ownership and use; socio-economic conditions; asset ownership
- Farming activities and practices - who manages day-to-day activities, land ownership livestock, types of household farming, livestock quantities;
- Sale and consumption of livestock products, record-keeping in relation
- Animal deaths and births
- Knowledge and understandings related to animal diseases - knowledge of diseases, disease treatment and disease prevention, vaccine use and practices
- Training and other assistance needs;
- Household food security and diet



A cross section of 85 small scale farmers were interviewed relatively evenly across the Rhenosterkop (/Siyabuswa) area (Mpumalanga) and Marble Hall areas (Limpopo).

The community households we surveyed in this study we found that:

- 76% male headed- 89% of respondents were household heads
- Median age of respondent 63 years
- Employment status
  - 41% engaged in full time employment off the farm
  - 15% indicating that they were employed on the farm full-time
- Low levels of education levels (47 % of respondents had no formal education; 20 % had some primary education; 25 % secondary education; 3 % tertiary education; education levels in this sample were similar for men and women);



- Most households are poor
  - Median household earnings of between R2000 and R4000 p/m
  - Income mostly used for basic services such as water, electricity, food and education
  - approximately 3/5 of the sample owned basic household assets such as a stove and fridge
- Poor access to animal healthcare services
- Increased vulnerability to stock theft ( Only 38% of households owned a motor vehicle)
- 15% of Adults and 13% of Children went hungry at some point during the previous 12 months because there was not enough to eat.

- Globally livestock sector - one the fastest growing and most economically important of agriculture's sub-sectors
- In the study sites - **livestock connects people to the land and to each other, and is integral to community and social life in ways that extend beyond 'pure' economic considerations, and can therefore be said to be a strong marker of communal and familial identities.**
- Livestock farming is also a major contributor to food and nutrition security, thereby also directly contributing to sustainable livelihoods.

The South African government policy and strategy recognises the significance of agriculture.

- international livestock data - optimistic picture of the future of livestock -> enabling a particular growth, development and poverty alleviation trajectory for the poor,
- In South Africa: agriculture as a sector relatively on the decline in South Africa.
- 19.9% of households involved in agriculture - accounts for 3.5% of women employed and 5.5% of men

Disease is one of the major challenges facing the communities

- Poor knowledge of diseases (causes, treatment and prevention)
- Significant blockages in effective animal health service provision and knowledge transmission
  - high cost of medications
  - transport issues faced
  - government cut-backs in provision of medicines and vaccines
  - mistrust between health practitioners and farmers

- Connection between food security and livestock keeping must continue to feature strongly as a policy programmatic and research issue
  - Ensure future interventions to be based on ongoing understanding of community needs, challenges and scientific developments.
- Animal disease prevention, and particularly vaccination, is central to achieving and maintaining long-term food security
- State intervention required - ensure appropriate and targeted resources, programming and services
  - training needs,
  - knowledge gaps,
  - scientific development to scale up
- Broader problem of poverty needs a multidimensional approach. Training needs to take account of:
  - Enhances skills and information retention
  - The relationship/s between animal health practitioners and farmers
- Need to integrate animal health, food security and gender empowerment in research, policy and programmatic planning