

ENABLING POLICIES FOR LIVESTOCK SECTORS IN ETHIOPIA

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Ethiopia is said to have the largest numbers of livestock in the whole of Africa. Cattle, goats, sheep and camels are certainly ubiquitous in this vast and ecologically diverse country, and remain central to people's livelihoods, health and social identity. Sustainable development of livestock systems is thus an important conduit for increasing rural incomes and productivity, reducing poverty, and improving nutrition among women and children through the consumption of animal-source foods. Policy-making is, however, a complex and messy business, where actors face tradeoffs between contrasting policy objectives, in the presence of multiple financial, institutional and human constraints. As lead faculty for the Enabling Policy Area of Inquiry of the USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems at UF, I set out this past summer to examine the policy environment for livestock sectors in Ethiopia. The aim of the Innovation Lab is to identify the conditions for leveraging more effective interventions

within livestock systems for enhancing the well-being of small livestock-holding families, increasing women's empowerment, and improving nutrition, especially among young children.

Our team traveled to Ethiopia in July 2018 to conduct semi-structured interviews with about twenty representatives from the government, NGOs, and development partners with the purpose to capture actors' own perspectives about the key challenges facing the sector, the main policy trade-offs and the accomplishment from recent interventions. Furthermore, data collected through an online survey administered to a broader set of livestock stakeholders were used to derive a map of the livestock actors' network, and to visually analyze the structure of the network, the main areas of collaboration between given actors, and the relative weights accorded to competing priorities. Finally, the team took part and contributed to a two-day scenario workshop led by the Future System team at the Innovation Lab (Greg Kiker as well as

colleagues from International Livestock Research Institute). A study report is now completed and will be shortly shared with the partners within the Innovation Lab as well as the policy stakeholders in Ethiopia to receive feedbacks on the analysis as well as to contribute to generate further discussion about livestock policies and priorities.

My team included Lacey Harris-Coble, who graduated from the UF Master in Development Practice in 2017 and is currently project and research assistant for the UF Innovation Lab, and three of my undergraduate students, whose travel was funded by the Research Tutorial Abroad initiative of the Center for African Studies. The three students are Alex Dickerson (Economics and pre-med), Estefania Torres (Economics and Philosophy) and Grant Gergen (Economics and Political Science). Exposing undergraduate students to research experience in Africa was a major accomplishment of the trip. Besides an intensive work schedule, the team had the opportunity to enjoy local culture, food and music at venues around the town, including both traditional music and Ethiopian Jazz.

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