

**Analysis of existing policies and
schemes for development of Small
Ruminants**

September 2007

Current situation

- An estimated 440 million livestock distributed over a 100m households across 0.6 million villages form an important livelihood activity supporting agriculture in the form of critical inputs like draught power and manure, contributing to food security of the household, supplementing incomes, offering employment opportunities, and finally a dependable “bank on hooves” during adverse situations.

In Indian context, livestock production and agriculture are intrinsically linked.

Current situation

- India holds about 182 million small ruminants (120 m goats and 62 m sheep) mainly for meat. Further, milk from goats, fiber from sheep, and manure from both contribute to the economic value
- The aggregate economic value, employment, decentralized production pattern conclusively proves in-built socio-economic character of small ruminants in India

However, the system still suffers from number of bottlenecks which discounts the optimum utilization of resources.

Current situation

- Goats are widely distributed across all agro-climatic regions of the country. Concentration of goats is mainly in the states of West Bengal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.
- Sheep population is found in the arid and semi-arid areas of Western India, Deccan Plateau and western Himalyas.
- About 60% of sheep population in the country is found concentrated in five states of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir and Maharashtra.

Goats density is highest in the irrigated ecosystem followed by hill and mountain ecosystem.

Sheep density is the highest in the arid eco-system and least in the irrigated system.

How important is SRD ?

- Small ruminants make an important contribution to the sustenance of small and marginal farmers and landless rural populace of India.
- They also make substantial contribution, Rs.24,000 millions every year to the rural economy.
- At the national level, small ruminants account for 14% meat out put, 4% of the milk out put and 15% of skins and hide production in country and contribute 10% of total value of livestock sector.

Paradoxically it receives only a paltry 2.5% of the public spending on livestock sector.

How important is SRD ?

- Small ruminants are considered to be efficient and uncomplicated livestock in terms of their economics and management in the rural livelihood systems.
- A number of micro studies concluded that the small ruminants have great social and economic relevance in poverty reduction and social equity.

Considerable bias exists against small ruminants, they are perceived as inimical to the ecosystem

How important is SRD ?

- There were many government initiatives for development of small ruminants.
- Several cross breeding trials were attempted in sheep to evolve new breeds for wool quality , particularly apparel variety using exotic breeds for wool quality
- In goats cross breeding to improve milk yield or to improve Mohair too, have not yet provided any conclusive results.

Attempts at crossbreeding of Indian breeds of sheep and goats with exotic breeds have not served the Indian livestock Industry, in any manner and were mostly of academic interest

***Critical issues
and
Approaches***

Issues

Poor awareness on the importance of small ruminants in the livelihood system

Approaches

- Facilitation of Knowledge sharing platforms
- Promoting value based changes for key service providers
- Creation of knowledge on women's participation in small ruminant rearing and production

Issues

**Absence/lack of
active rearer
organizations**

Approaches

- Human Development through focused training and extension
- Develop pilots to promote equity based representation of women in the rearer Organizations

Issues

Absence/lack of active rearer organizations

Approaches

- Institutional building
 - Mobilizing the rearers & organize them in to rearers groups/associations/co-ops.
 - Strengthening already existing groups
- Identifying an outside agency (local) like NGO's that can initially play role in bringing synergies/convergence and empowering the rearers

Issues

Pressure of fodder resource base

-Decline area of CPR's

-Qualitative decline of CPR's.

Due to introduction of credit facilities, many new entrants came in to SRD programmes who has little awareness on rotation grazing, therefore leading to the increased dependency on CPR's and resultant degradation effect of grazing lands

Approaches

- Release of CPR for development
- Development of CPR and sustainable management
- Identifying civil societies with NRM and extend support in orientation for community participation
- Feed supplementation and regeneration activities
- Emphasized propagation of multi purpose fodder trees and not limited to 'greening' of the land.

Issues

**Pressure of
Fodder resource
base**

Approaches

- Developing feed supplements
- Village committees must be empowered in managing the land and civil society (like GO) can facilitate the process.
- Develop mechanisms to enable the community to ensure a balance between stocking rate and CPR and the biomass availability.
- Long-term sustainability of CPR by balancing cost and benefit/income.
- Provide environmental consciousness and services among the community on land usage change that can address the issue of preventing global warming.

Issues

Inadequate
veterinary health
services

Lack of adequate
focus on the
genetic
improvement

Approaches

- Disease Prevention
- Effective, speedy and accessible Diagnostic services Field level Services for animals on migration
- Training to Community based para-vet workers

- Promoting selective breeding policy
- Encouraging Women to spearhead selective breeding helps in meeting the demand of rearers for superior breed rams/bucks in the village flocks
- Ram lamb rearing is lucrative and hence forms as part of a livelihood option (for women rearers families that have knowledge, skill and experience.)

Issues

Reduced access
to credit and
insurance

Approaches

- Linking individual rearers groups with institutional credit and insurance
- Credit can be linked with insurance for covering the risk of loss of production and life
- Facilitating short term credit facility to the small ruminant sector.

Issues

Reduced access
to credit and
insurance

Approaches

- Bank loans to establish pastures and growing fodder trees on their lands.
- “Community insurance” through SHG’s (Rearer groups) can be implemented where compensation is paid to claimant from funds generated out of the premium paid by the members.

Issues

Lack of efficient marketing mechanisms

- Absence of direct market access*
- Absence of market information*
- Lack of rearer organizations*
- No prescribed market standards and specifications.*

Approaches

- Establishment of strong Gender Balanced Rearer organizations.
- Pooling & Dissemination of Market information
- Lobbying Govt to implement effective disease prevention and eradication measures to open global markets
- Setting market standards and specifications by rearers, rearer organizations, NGO's and Govt bodies
- Sale based on body weight basis

Issues

Lack of efficient marketing mechanisms

Approaches

- Setting rural abattoirs for higher price to the rearers and hygienic meat for the consumers.
- Establishment of market yards and facilitation for direct sale by the rearers
- Others marketing approaches include planning to avoid glut, grading and specifications or animal and animal products for market
- Distribution to different markets, negotiating for long term price and supply contracts Processing and marketing, Market oriented production

Issues

Approaches

Poor inter-departmental coordination

- Inter-departmental committee of key stakeholders can be formed for a better understanding of related depts. to explore the areas of synergy
- Inter-state Coordination interventions can be initiated where there are larger migratory population to set up the norms of migration, fixing migratory routes, codes of conduct, services during migration and other related issues faced by the reares during the course of migration.

Issues

Poor inter-departmental coordination

Approaches

- Focussed approach can be achieved by setting active Small ruminant cell in AH Dept.
- Developing small ruminant policy at state level and evolve national level policy at central level (through Dept. AH dept)

Issues

Poor inter-departmental coordination

Approaches

- Govt to enhance small ruminant infrastructure facilities.
- Public-Private partnership to relate forward and backward linkages like procurement, distribution, marketing, supply of inputs (feed, vaccination and disease control)

Recommendations

- Small ruminant development is an important intervention in poverty reduction
- Development of a multi-stakeholder platforms for knowledge sharing and inter-departmental coordination
- Promotion of gender balanced small ruminant rearer organizations
- Capacity building of rear groups through value based changes

Recommendations

- Mechanisms to improve veterinary health services
- Institutional arrangements to improve access to credit and insurance
- Selective breeding for breed improvement
- Effective systems to improve access to remunerative market

Thank You