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**The role of livestock for ACP countries: Challenges and opportunities ahead**

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**Trends and driving forces in livestock production and trade in Sub Saharan Africa**

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***Executive Summary***

Livestock constitute a key part of the agricultural sector of Sub Saharan Africa comprising between 30 and 50 % of the agricultural GDP of individual countries. Livestock are found in mixed crop livestock systems and in pastoral systems with landless industrial production playing a growing role particularly for poultry and to a lesser extent pork. Livestock play a diversity of roles in these systems including production of animal origin foods, animal traction, manure for nutrient, wealth accumulation, risk buffer, central feature of the culture of many societies, etc

Major drivers of change are population, urbanization and incomes growth, increasing environmental limitations, growing zoonotic disease and food safety concerns shaping value chains.

Pastoral systems are under significant resource pressure and there are challenges to this livelihood. Development thinking is focusing on comprehensive approaches to diversify livelihoods via environmental services, non-agricultural incomes etc. Vulnerability is a major issue.

Mixed crop livestock systems harbor the majority of the poor people and the livestock. Livestock feed is based largely on crop byproducts (stover, straw) as a feed resource. These systems are largely rain-fed and population pressure is driving the expansion of these systems into increasingly more marginal lands bringing about evolving challenges such as water availability, evolving pest and disease patterns, etc.

Domestic and regional markets are keys to the development of the SSA livestock sector, with exports to international markets being a niche opportunity.

There is increasing recognition of the need to tackle livestock development in comprehensive manner including public, private and civil society actors and bundling services to achieve improved competitiveness of the whole value chains.

Climate change is an additional driver with livestock both a source of greenhouse gases and itself affected by climate change. Mitigation via carbon sequestration in the rangelands and mixed systems and sustainable intensification of production in crop livestock systems are seen as potentially important mitigation factors. Adaptation of livestock production to climate change will involve a range of interventions in the fields of animal health, nutrition and breeding leading to systems evolution. Livestock production may in some settings increase in importance as a mechanism for coping with increased climatic variability.

In summary, the SSA livestock sector will continue to rely for the medium term on the sustainable intensification of smallholder mixed crop-livestock systems to respond to the demand growth coming mainly from national and regional markets. Climate change will increase the urgency of having access to appropriate technologies, policies and institutions for adaptive management within these systems.