



Brussels Rural Development Briefings
A series of meetings on ACP-EU development issues

Briefing session n° 12:
The role of livestock for ACP countries: Challenges and opportunities ahead

1st July 2009

Thinking differently about livestock

European Network on Livestock - ELIDEV

Executive Summary

In a context of crisis (diseases outbreaks but also food insecurity, ODA contraction) and poor attention paid to the Livestock sector in Development policies and strategies, the ELIDEV Group launched an initiative in 2008 aiming at focusing on advocacy for the animal production sector in order to raise awareness on Livestock issues among decision makers and balance the negative perception of the sector. According to its mandate, the Group decided to produce communication tools to be considered as passport (i) to improve links with other organisations (ii) to contribute to the Global debate on Food security but also Climate Change and (iii) to propose strategic options for development. These tools are presented and discussed during the session, inviting attendees to **think differently about Livestock**.

Recognizing that diverse food sources are needed to feed a diverse and growing world population as it faces climate change, that consumption of meat levels in the North are neither sustainable nor healthy, it is essential when shaping policies, to balance the demands of developed countries with the needs of developing countries. Therefore, key advocacy objectives are to (i) **engage** policymakers in a debate on how to limit the environmental impact and footprint of industrial livestock farming without reducing poor people's capacity to feed themselves (ii) **place** livestock systems at the heart of the international climate change agenda (iii) **secure** funding from food security programmes to harness livestock's role as a key source of nutrition and pathway out of poverty (iv) **invest** in research and development for sustainable ways of optimising livestock production in emerging economies to respond to the demands of a growing population (v) **shift** the focus of livestock production from quantity to quality for healthy and balanced diets (vi) **support** pastoralist animal keepers in unique ecosystems to manage natural resources and preserve biodiversity (vii) **encourage** cooperation between different professional sectors to integrate environmental management with medicine, veterinary and social sciences, urban planning and public health.