



MALABO  
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PANEL

SUMMARY

# MEAT, MILK AND MORE:

Policy innovations to shepherd  
inclusive and sustainable livestock  
systems in Africa



A Malabo Montpellier Panel Report

2020

**P**rolonged economic growth, a growing population, urbanization, and shifting dietary patterns in Africa have sparked demand for more animal-sourced foods, such as dairy, eggs, and meat. By 2050, when Africa's population is projected to hit 2.2 billion, it is expected that the average African will consume 26 kg of meat and 64 kg of milk.<sup>1,2,3</sup> While domestic supply has been growing steadily to meet national demand, imports still form a significant stop-gap in several African countries.

Livestock forms the basis of the livelihoods of millions of people in Africa, providing health and nutrition benefits, draught power, transport and soil nutrient production. For the rural and urban poor, livestock is also a critical asset providing an important source of income, insurance and coping strategy against socioeconomic and climatic shocks.<sup>4,5</sup> The sector generates much-needed employment opportunities – especially for women and young people – in research and development, production, product processing and transformation, as well as marketing and trade. For several African economies, the livestock sector contributes between 30 and 80 percent to their agricultural GDP.<sup>6</sup>

However, these developments are occurring against a backdrop of climate change, growing stresses on land and water resources, conflicts and a global pandemic.<sup>7</sup> This report was written as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded across the globe (January–June 2020). Its impact on Africa's livestock sector could be significant, with reduced access to inputs and services, diminished slaughter and processing capacity, and falling incomes reflected in a contraction in consumption. As governments respond to the consequences of the pandemic, aspects of animal and human health will gain prominence along with the opportunity to transform the African livestock sector positively.

Investments in the livestock sector, particularly in value chain development, can help to kickstart slow economies, creating inclusive and sustainable growth. Although there has been progress towards improving feed for livestock, access to high-quality feed remains a significant challenge to increasing livestock productivity. In addition, limited technology adoption, low yielding breeds, and stringent

biosecurity standards for human and animal health continue to present a challenge for many small livestock keepers and pastoralists and are obstacles to market participation and trade. Sustainable livestock sector policies in Africa must hence be designed in a way to address the multiple and combined challenges mentioned above. In turn, Africa's livestock sector can provide a major opportunity to boost economic growth, improve livelihoods and advance progress toward broader national, continental, and global development targets.

The necessary government institutions and support infrastructure need to be in place to livestock producers and keepers. In addition to commitment at the highest level, a solid regulatory framework that governs animal and human health and food safety standards, access to financial services, technology adoption, as well as access to and availability of reliable data are key ingredients that contribute to a thriving livestock sector.

Important lessons can be learned from successful government actions taken across the continent. By replicating, contextualizing and scaling up those policy and institutional innovations and programmatic interventions that have shown to be successful on the ground, other African governments can develop country-specific strategies to sustainably grow their livestock sectors. The examples of the four case studies in this report have shown that success has been most effective where governments have provided supporting infrastructure, increased capacity building in animal health systems and introduced fiscal incentives. In many cases these interventions were combined with a growing role for the private sector in the dissemination of modern technologies to increase productivity and enable the commercialization of livestock production.

The Malabo Montpellier Panel has identified a set of actions summarized below that, if brought to scale, could have a significant impact on livelihoods, food and nutrition security and the overall sustainable growth and transformation of Africa's livestock sector.

# Recommendations

## Creating an enabling environment

- 1** Design an overarching policy framework that guides interventions and supports the development of an inclusive, holistic, productive, profitable and sustainable livestock sector.
- 2** Develop a nimble but clear and health conscious regulatory environment for input and output markets to promote livestock activities.
- 3** Facilitate private sector-led investments in the livestock sector, including in infrastructure and the commercialization of livestock products and inputs.
- 4** Design financial services, including insurance, to meet the special requirements of livestock producers.
- 5** Ensure that livestock products meet international quality and food safety and animal health standards to strengthen intra-African and global livestock trade.
- 6** Address the urgent need to increase the availability and access to comprehensive and good quality information and data on all aspects of the livestock sector for sound policy design.
- 7** Apply a holistic approach to tackle the root causes of conflicts between pastoralists and crop farmers.

## Sectoral interventions

- 8** Promote the transition of large ruminant keepers to producers with context-specific, supportive strategies and incentive structures.
- 9** Leverage employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the poultry sub-sector particularly for the benefit for women and young people.
- 10** Mobilize investments in the dairy industry for countries to specialize in dairy production and to strengthen intra-African trade.
- 11** Promote value addition and increase productivity of the pork sub-sector by adopting improved technologies and better husbandry practices.

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3 Ritchie, H., Roser, M., 2017. Meat and Dairy Production. Our World in Data. URL <https://ourworldindata.org/meat-production>

4 Njuki, J., Sanginga, P.C. (Eds.), 2013. Women, livestock ownership, and markets: bridging the gender gap in Eastern and Southern Africa. Routledge ; International Development Research Centre, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York : Ottawa.

5 Herrero, M., Grace, D., Njuki, J., Johnson, N., Enahoro, D., Silvestri, S., Rufino, M.C., 2013. The roles of livestock in developing countries. Animal 7, 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175173112001954>

6 AU-IBAR, 2015. The Livestock Development Strategy for Africa 2015-2035. Nairobi, Kenya.

7 Lowder, S.K., Skoet, J., Raney, T., 2016. The Number, Size, and Distribution of Farms, Smallholder Farms, and Family Farms Worldwide. World Development 87, 16-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.041>