

WB approves \$80m credit to support livestock development

The World Bank (WB) has approved a credit of \$80 million for the Livestock Sector Innovation Project. The project will support the objectives of the government of Nepal's Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS, 2015) which underpins the role of livestock for sustained agriculture and economic growth, poverty reduction, and improving food and nutrition security.

Around 200,000 livestock producers across 271 municipalities will directly benefit from the project. At least 45 per cent of the primary beneficiaries will be women. In addition, about 500 small and medium-sized agro-enterprises will benefit from production and post production value chains.

Of Nepal's population engaged in agriculture, 70 per cent keep livestock. But productivity remains low. The demand for livestock and livestock products, particularly milk and meat, has outstripped supply. Nepal's average annual imports correspond to a bill of about \$40 million.

The project will channel its support through three main channels that include creating an enabling regulatory and institutional environment; enhancing livestock productivity by improving quality and quantity of livestock services; and strengthening key strategic livestock value chains and improving access to business development services.

"Four in every five Nepalis who work the farms are women," said Takuya Kamata, the World Bank's country manager for Nepal. "But women are often short-changed when it comes to ownership of assets, decision-making and economic gains. This new project will encourage women to participate in all aspects of planning, implementation and monitoring," he said.

The project will also help address poor practices in the livestock sector that lead to high greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts. It will also support an emphasis in the ADS on increased resilience to climate change as a cornerstone for improved productivity of land and labour.

"High animal mortality rates, poor feeding and manure management, inefficient use of water and nutrient loading all contribute to high greenhouse gas emissions," said Purna Bahadur Chhetri, senior agriculture specialist at the World Bank.

Source: The Himalayan Times, 9th December 2017