

## A Global Challenge Dialogue on Women and Livestock

### **The Challenge**

To invite a group of knowledgeable and influential thinkers and doers around the world to take up the challenge of fighting poverty through women and livestock; to co-create new ways to empower women livestock keepers to further develop themselves, their families, their communities and their nations.

### **Why are livestock so important to women?**

Poverty has a woman's face. Women do two thirds of the world's work, and produce half the world's food, yet earn only a tenth of the world's income and own less than a hundredth of the world's property. Of the 600 million poor livestock keepers in the world, around two thirds are women and most live in rural areas. There is a special relationship between women and livestock. Poor women can own livestock when they are denied land and looking after livestock fits well with their work of running households and raising families. Hundreds of millions of women livestock farmers daily tend sheep, goats and chickens, milk cows, buy and prepare food, plant and harvest crops, weed their plots, look after children, clean their home, fetch and carry water and firewood, prepare every meal for the family, care for the sick and elderly, while often simultaneously running small informal businesses – selling milk, eggs, fruits and vegetables – in market centers and along roadsides. Women are the great unsung heroes of agricultural development. They are the farm and market managers who make agriculture viable, the glue that holds families and communities together, the stewards who safeguard their environments for the generations to come.

### **What can be done to better lives through 'livestock women'?**

Broad change will enable women to get more out of livestock. We need to change the ways governments, NGOs, and researchers support women livestock keepers. We need to change the ways societies value women's work. We need to improve service delivery to women farmers. To alleviate severe poverty, we need to change institutions and to engage women.

### **What can we do?**

For these changes to happen, knowledge and technology is important, but not enough; we must also change ways of working and give poor people the lead in building their future. Together, through collaboration, we have the skills and tools to bring about meaningful changes. This Challenge Dialogue is about deepening our understanding of this challenge, seeking ideas openly and broadly, and reaching alignment on a collaborative strategy and action plan that will realize tangible impacts.

### **How can we do this?**

We are holding a global Challenge Dialogue<sup>TM1</sup> with people like you, who are passionate about poverty, women and/or livestock. Together, we will generate excitement, interest and evidence about how 'livestock women' can improve lives and reduce world poverty. We ask you to join a group of committed people working collaboratively to help poor women and their livestock livelihoods. Together we can start to solve a problem too big for any one of us or our institutions to address separately.

### **Expected outcomes:**

- Better understanding of major opportunities for enhancing women's contribution to livestock development.
- A better understanding of the global value of livestock-keeping by women.
- Identification of research priorities and innovation opportunities.
- Identification of actions aimed at addressing those opportunities.
- A roadmap showing how our joint actions will lead to real improvements to poor women's lives, communities and environments.
- Identification of new partners that could support women and livestock-related interventions for vulnerable families, communities and environments across the developing world.

**We invite you to become part of this. To make a difference.**

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<sup>1</sup> We are using the Challenge Dialogue System<sup>TM</sup> developed by the *Innovation Expedition* to guide this focused Dialogue with people from diverse (private and public sector) organizations and backgrounds from all over the world with a stake in this challenge. CDS is an efficient and effective vehicle for engaging diverse stakeholders and assisting them to collaborate and innovate in order to accomplish a complex task. CDS is a structured but flexible methodology for moving a team of people from ideas to action quickly and effectively (see [www.innovationexpedition.com](http://www.innovationexpedition.com)).

### **Next steps**

This is a highly iterative, learning process for all of us. Attached with the invitation is a *Challenge Paper* with a request for you to submit your comments and suggestions to us by August 15, 2008. It has been sent to roughly 200 others from all over the world and with diverse backgrounds. All the contributions we receive will then be synthesized and integrated into a first *Progress Report* that we will send to you by late September. This synthesis of the feedback received will be used to design a face-to-face workshop with a representative group of participants, to be held in a venue still to be chosen in late 2008 or early 2009, the results of which will be captured in a second Progress Report. All Challenge Dialogue participants will receive these informative reports that capture the ideas of a large and diverse number of people.

### **Organizing Team for this Dialogue**

Sponsor: International Livestock Research Institute

Project Leader: Patti Kristjanson (ILRI)

### **Champions for this Dialogue**

Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University and special adviser to the secretary-general of the United Nations

Jo Luck, CEO, Heifer International

Katherine Sierra, Chair, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

Government of Denmark

### **Theme Champions for this Dialogue and area of expertise:**

Ranjitha Puskur, Harriet Mutsaers, Howard Elliott – Innovation systems, ILRI

Nancy Johnson, Patti Kristjanson – Collective action and poverty, ILRI

Delia Grace – Veterinary epidemiology, community-based animal health, ILRI

Don Peden – Agroecosystems health, water and livestock, ILRI

Robin Reid – Systems Ecology, Centre for Collaborative Conservation, Colorado State University

Jean Hanson – Genebanks for future generations, ILRI

Hanne Hansen – Animal Sciences, University of Copenhagen

Dialogue Facilitator: Keith Jones (Innovation Expedition, IE); Process Mentor: Don Simpson (IE)

Project Administrators: Joyce Wanderi and Julius Nyangaga (ILRI)

Knowledge Integration/Strategic Communicators: Susan MacMillan, Margaret MacDonald-Levy, Clare Kemp, Grace Ndungu (ILRI)