



CapEx in supporting pastoral development

Organisation of pastoralist civil society in Mali

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Key messages

- Improved structuring of policy dialogue has influenced institutional actors (the State and technical and financial partners) in their support to professionals and stakeholders in the livestock sector.
- Successful experiences from the field have been fed into the policy dialogue and have had leverage effects in influencing political and national authorities in drawing up national land policy.
- The professional organisations need to set up a system of continuous monitoring and evaluation to be able to measure progress with a view to consolidating the gains in facilitating livestock marketing and to taking corrective measures.
- It is necessary to harness pastoralists' endogenous knowledge combined with scientific data in order to devise sustainable strategies and early warning systems to be able to anticipate and deal with climate change and variability (including market information) as well as to feed the policy-making process.
- Diversification of risk-management mechanisms (traditional knowledge, scientific information, Insurance, social safety nets, education, training) strengthens the resilience of pastoral systems.
- Strengthening organisations of pastoralists / livestock farmers is a prerequisite for the technical, economic and sociopolitical transformation of the livestock sector.



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CapEx series on pastoralism

Pastoralism is practised on a quarter of the globe's surface and provides a source of food and livelihood for millions of people, especially in areas that are too dry or high for reliable production of food crops. For the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) work in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, pastoralism is a key domain. Having recognised the value of learning from experiences in development cooperation across countries and regions, the Subgroup Pastoralism in the SDC network for Agriculture and Food Security undertook an internal learning process called "Capitalisation of experiences in supporting pastoral development" (CapEx Pastoralism for short). The Subgroup members identified issues about which they wanted to learn more, so as to be more effective in supporting the development of pastoral economies and livelihoods. During the CapEx process, they compiled information and formulated texts on selected topics. This brief is one of a series of briefs that came out of this process. The briefs are intended primarily for SDC and its partners at country and regional level, particularly in West and Eastern Africa, and SDC staff in Switzerland, but also for other development practitioners and donors engaged in pastoral development.

1. Introduction

With more than 10 million cattle and 32.7 million sheep / goats, the livestock sector represents significant economic potential in Mali. This potential has seen the emergence of organisations and associations of professionals in this sector. Public authorities (the Government, national and subregional institutions, bilateral and multilaterals partners) have also supported the organisation of stakeholders involved in livestock value chains. These organisations provide services for their members and represent their interests while influencing national policymaking.

Key terms

Representativeness / legitimacy is commensurate with recognition of an organisation by its members and its being acknowledged by institutional actors (the State, civil society, technical and financial partners).

Advocacy is a strategy for influencing based on communication by means of arguments put forward to convince a target audience to change policies, practices, behaviour, positions or decisions, with a view to improving a given situation.

Lobbying involves representing and defending the rights or interests of those concerned about a cause before target audiences likely to make decisions affecting these rights or interests.

2. Specific cases

Three specific cases are presented here by the SDC Office in Mali. These experiences and the lessons drawn from them have national and regional/international dimensions.

Case 1: Advocacy about road harassment in livestock trade along the major Mali–Senegal and Mali–Côte d'Ivoire routes¹

Livestock is the third most important export commodity in Mali after gold and cotton and is valued at 55–60 billion CFA francs (CHF 100 million) per year. Neighbouring countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal import animals mainly from Mali to make up for their deficit in meat products. Regional community legislation prohibits the levying of taxes and VAT (value added tax) on fresh produce such as livestock. However, informal and illegal taxes levied by security agents (police, customs, military) cut about 15% off the producers' earnings. Moreover, the time wasted at various control posts leads to losses in terms of animal deaths and decreased weight. To deal with this situation, in 2009, the Mali federation of interprofessional groups in the livestock and meat value chain FEBEVIM (Fédération des

¹ Source : SNV (2009) ; « Commerce du bétail : tracas sur la route Bamako/Dakar » (14-minute video made by professional organisations about the road harassment issue).

Organisation of pastoralist civil society in Mali

Groupements Interprofessionnels de la Filière Bétail-Viande) and the West and Central African Observatory on the Livestock and Meat Sector ORBV/AOC (Observatoire Régional de la Filière Bétail-Viande en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre) organised a concerted campaign targeted at different institutions: WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union), Conference of Ministries in West and Central Africa, Senegal Ministers and Customs, and police and administrative authorities in the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) countries. With technical support from some partners (among them, SNV and USAID²), they implemented an advocacy strategy on the consequences of road harassment in livestock trade, targeted at policymakers and the media. The concrete results achieved were: abolishment of the law on administrative charges on national trunk roads – Mali–Kayes, Bamako–Diboli (Senegal border), Niéna–Bamako – and a significant reduction in the informal taxes (75%), and revision of the legal texts to reduce the number of control points from 30 to 3 on the route from Diboli (Mali border) to Dakar in Senegal.

Lessons learnt: i) By highlighting the links between informal taxes and the costs of production or investment, professional organisations were able to show Governments the dynamic connection between a reduction in taxes and poverty alleviation; ii) For the lack of a continuous monitoring of the actions taken, the vices have resumed once again; iii) Greater involvement of the regional organisations (ROPPA, APESS, RBM³) could make the results obtained more sustainable.



ANOPER Bénin meeting in 2014 (Photo: Georges Djohy)



Pastoralist group meeting in eastern Ethiopia (Photo: Wolfgang Bayer)

Case 2: Advocacy on the pastoral crisis of 2014–15 in northern Mali⁴

The Mali branch of RBM (Réseau Billital Maroobé, a network of pastoralist organisations in West Africa) operates an early-warning monitoring system to prepare stakeholders – pastoralists, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), government bodies, financial and technical partners – to respond to emergencies. This surveillance focuses on the state of pasture and water sources, animal diseases, animal movements, trends in livestock market prices and various events (conflicts, harassment, locusts ...) affecting pastoralists and agropastoralists. This system made it possible to predict that the 2015 lean season (May–July) could have serious consequences for pastoral activities in central and northern Mali. With this warning, the Mali RBM branch started an advocacy campaign supported by SNV to prevent the effects of the crisis that was threatening pastoral areas at the onset of the 2015 lean season. After collecting and analysing information on the indicators of the crisis, an advocacy plan was developed that involved the following actions: mobilisation of livestock farmers / pastoralists; informing public opinion by holding information meetings in the regional capitals and in Bamako; producing audiovisuals that were shared and broadcast by national television (ORTM); sending messages via local radio stations, newspapers and Internet; meetings with members of the

² SNV: Dutch Development Organisation; USAID: United States Agency for International Development

³ ROPPA: Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Farmer and Producer Organisations in West Africa); APESS: Association pour la Promotion de l'Élevage au Sahel et en Savane; (Association for Promoting Animal Husbandry in the Sahel and Savanna); RBM: Réseau Billital Maroobe (Billital Maroobe Network)

⁴ Source : ORTM (2015) ; ACTED (2014) ; AVSF (2014) ; SAP/FEWS Net/PAM/VAM (2015)

National Assembly of Mali; and making requests to the State and to technical and financial partners. By the end of the campaign, concrete results could be seen in the areas under threat. The Government through the Food Security Office reviewed the National Response Plan for the period and commissioned: i) subsidies and free distribution of feed for the herds; ii) free food distribution to the most needy households; and iii) rehabilitation and construction of new waterpoints. Thanks to these efforts, the consequences of the pastoral crisis could be mitigated. Indeed, initial analyses made by RBM members indicate that the intervention helped to: i) mobilise public opinion and limit direct effects on pastoralist households; ii) reduce livestock mortality rates; iii) reduce conflicts between indigenous and transhumant herders in areas with high concentration of stock; and iv) strengthen the recognition of pastoralists as actors in the pastoral early-warning and crisis prevention system as well as in managing pastoral crises.

One of the strengths of the process was the unprecedented mobilisation of members of pastoralist organisations represented in the areas particularly affected by the pastoral crisis. At national level, the advocacy campaign resulted in the creation of a "Livestock Feed Commission" linked to the National Response Plan.

Lessons learnt: i) Responses to crises and other shocks in pastoral areas require more sustainable solutions and strategies that go beyond emergency responses while leveraging on endogenous knowledge in order to enhance the policy formulation process; ii) To further improve RBM's pastoral monitoring system, it should be linked with scientific data (e.g. satellite images) to contribute better to advocacy and to provide information for pastoralists in areas at risk.

Case 3: Livestock corridors to prevent conflicts⁵

The Sikasso Region (southern Mali), the ecological zone in the country that is most suitable for arable farming, has also become an area for livestock rearing and transhumance. With human population growth and an increasing demand for food, resources in the region are in high demand and their development is a growing challenge for the country. The concentration in productive areas and the divergent interests of different users of natural resources lead all too often to conflicts, especially between pastoralists and crop farmers. The challenges in pacifying relations between the different users and making access to resources more equitable are priorities for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) which initiated the AVAL (Planning and peaceful development of agricultural areas and land in Sikasso Region) programme, which was implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation in 2010–13. This programme facilitated discussions between different actors and supported the local administration in preventing and managing conflicts. Demarcation of livestock corridors is a tool that provides a regulatory framework for resource use and establishes the rights and obligations of each party through negotiation. To this end, the AVAL programme facilitated consultations between local authorities, farmer organisations, the Chamber of Agriculture and professional organisations of livestock farmers/ pastoralists. The consultations resulted in agreements on access and use, based on the customs and practices and on the history of the different areas concerned. Then, these areas were validated by securing administrative approval to give them land protection and legal status and were marked with signs.

The main impacts were related to: i) secured mobility of herds thanks to the marking of 350 km of pastoral corridors and provision of support infrastructure; ii) notable reduction in conflicts between different users in the region (in 2013, 75% reduction in conflicts between farmers and pastoralists – 19 conflicts resolved); iii) ownership of the process by all regional and local stakeholders concerned; iv) adoption and dissemination of conciliation reports by the legal services.

Lessons learnt: i) Inclusion of all stakeholders (local authorities, government technical services, organisations of livestock farmers/pastoralists and of crop farmers, traditional authorities etc) helps prevent and better manage conflicts related to access and use of natural resources; ii) The securing of routes has positively influenced the national level in terms of managing cross-border conflicts (case of the land-use conflicts between the people of Yanfolila and Guinea) and the implementation of laws on transhumance and the registration of corridors in other places. This experience has shown that it was possible to influence national land policy in Mali by feeding experiences from the field into policy

⁵ Source : HSI (2013); Local conventions on managing natural resources; pastoral plans.

dialogue on land; iii) The sustainability of pastoral plans depends on provision of support infrastructure and appropriate legislation.

3. Lessons for development cooperation

3.1 Analysing the situation

Pastoralist organisations face the following challenges: disruption of transhumance routes and livestock marketing, declining income, conflicts over access to pastoral resources (water, pasture, markets), pastoral crisis (poor rainfall and lack of pasture and waterpoints for their animals), low public investment in the sector, poor access to credit and technical expertise, weak implementation of pastoral policies, low political recognition of the specificity of livestock mobility in local authorities' development and management plans, and insecurity in central and northern Mali. Moreover, they are struggling to strengthen governance among themselves and to become more empowered.

To address these constraints, the organisations are trying to influence policy and practice by engaging – to varying degrees of success – in advocacy activities on certain critical issues and challenges: provision of inputs, drafting of and compliance with laws related to the sector, early warning/prevention and support during crises and disasters. In addition, they are involved in organising, informing and training their members in order to improve the quality of livestock products and to be competitive on the markets.

Through projects and programmes, several development-cooperation organisations and structures support professional organisations to develop their own visions and strategies, to negotiate and influence policy, to provide services to their members and to represent their members and be accountable to them. The main technical and financial partners with whom partnerships for cooperation, knowledge exchange and learning could be established are: Belgian Technical Cooperation, USAID, Netherlands Development Cooperation, Danish International Development Agency, African Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and FAO. Partnerships could also be established with certain international NGOs: AVSF (*Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières/ Agronomists and Veterinarians Without Borders*), VSF (*Vétérinaires Sans Frontières/ Veterinarians Without Borders*) Belgium, VSF Suisse, SNV, CISV (*Comunità Impegno Servizio Volontariato/ Voluntary Community Engagement Service*) Italy and research institutes such as the *Institut du Sahel* (Sahel Institute) and the *Institut d'Économie Rurale* (Institute of Rural Economy) in Mali. At the subregional level, partners could be WAEMU, CILSS⁶ and ECOWAS.

3.2 Identifying entry points for development cooperation

To develop livestock value chains and strengthen the resilience of pastoral peoples, some actions / issues to be addressed are: i) organisational and institutional strengthening through direct support to pastoralist organisations (livestock farmers broadly defined); ii) strengthening mechanisms for preventing and managing risks related to pastoralism by linking pastoralists' traditional knowledge with scientific information (e.g. meteorological data) and considering other mechanisms (insurance, social safety nets, education, training) to strengthen this resilience; iii) promoting livestock product value chains; iv) taking into account the regional dimension of herd mobility and market access; v) supporting State and regional bodies at institutional level to draft and implement policies and strategies.

The (agro)pastoralists organised in local umbrella, national and regional organisations should benefit from the interventions of the different partners (Government, development agencies, regional institutions).

3.3 Interacting with policy processes

In the case of Mali, development-cooperation agencies should engage at two levels:

- Supporting the Government in strengthening the resilience of pastoralism in particular and modernisation of the livestock sector in general, through investment programmes, sector funds,

⁶ CILSS: Comité permanent Inter-États de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)

better dissemination and implementation of legal texts (the Pastoral Charter, among others) and improved support mechanisms for pastoral systems;

- Continuing the policy dialogue started between technical and financial partners, on the one hand, and pastoralist and livestock umbrella organisations, on the other, in order to better address the issues and challenges as well as the actions needed to develop the different value chains: this process will enable technical and financial partners to broaden the dialogue with professional organisations and to better target support initiatives such as in preventing and managing pastoral crises, structuring the umbrella organisations, developing leadership and good governance within pastoralist organisations, empowerment, representativeness and development of skills (education and training) and knowledge of the organisations.

3.4 Key principles to guide the development-cooperation process

The key principles for success in development cooperation should be based on the following factors: representativeness, fairness, accountability, leadership, innovation, good governance and empowerment, negotiation/mediation skills, inter- and intra-organisational consultations involving all categories of pastoralists and respecting equity (women and youth). Actions/measures that can have a leverage effect include advocacy based on proven and documented facts from scientific data and research.

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⁷ EMMA : Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis

⁸ APEL : Programme d'appui à la promotion de l'économie locale