

Objective

The overall aim of the project is to enhance income-generating opportunities for households raising goats in Laos through the development of productive, environmentally sustainable, socially acceptable and gender sensitive production systems, and accessing high-demand Vietnamese markets.

The objectives are to:

- Evaluate goat production systems in Laos to develop technical, social and economic benchmarks against which improvements can be assessed.
- Assess major constraints and identify and evaluate potential solutions.
- Reduce market risk and increase marketing opportunities through improved understanding of the factors affecting demand and pricing of goats in Laos and Vietnam, and of the associated value chains.
- Build capacity for goat production research and development in Laos, and initiate scaling out of project findings.

Expected scientific results

- Benchmarking of goat production systems in Laos.
- Analysis of goat herd ranging and mixing behaviour, population structure and probable inbreeding depression in village goat production systems.
- Improved understanding of mortality rates and disease in Lao goats.
- A demand/supply analysis and forecast for Lao goats and goat meat.
- Understanding and analysis of goat value chains between Laos and Vietnam.
- Increased understanding of the social and economic constraints, and opportunities for improved goat production systems.

Expected impact/outcomes

- Improved understanding of the role of goats in Lao farming systems, their potential to enhance farming incomes over the long term and any risks associated with this.
- Increased use of measurement, recording and assessment against benchmarks as a tool for farmers and advisors to improve productivity and profitability of goat production systems.
- Clarification of the impacts of inbreeding, gastrointestinal nematode infection and other animal health problems on productivity.
- Understanding of Lao domestic and export goat market chains and their constraints, risks and opportunities.
- Knowledge and understanding of the factors influencing consumer preferences for goats in Vietnam, particularly those that underpin the premium for Lao goat, and use of compiled market information to increase profitability, manage risk and shape future planning.
- Establishment of a National Learning Alliance in Laos to continue the improvement and application of knowledge and skills on goat production and marketing.
- Improved knowledge and application of gender sensitive approaches by project participants.

