



Australian Government

Australian Centre for  
International Agricultural Research

Livestock

# Improving smallholder dairy and beef profitability by enhancing farm production and value chain management in Pakistan



## Overview

**Smallholder dairy farms are a vital component of Pakistan's mixed crop-livestock farming systems and the national economy. Milk is the primary product, but male calves and old cows are a key source of meat.**

Demand for high quality meat and milk is rapidly increasing in Pakistan's urban and regional centres. It is creating significant opportunities for smallholder dairy farming families, of which only a small proportion currently make any profit from their dairy enterprise.

Increasing profit from the meat component of dairy farms is critical to address the economic viability and competitive advantage of dairy smallholder farms and the households they support.

Partnerships with dairy extension and development stakeholder organisations are an important step, as is increased capacity of Pakistani collaborators (particularly women) to take ownership of research and farmer engagement.

Opportunities to boost beef returns through on-farm efficiency improvements and linking smallholder farmer families with beef markets will be investigated as part of this project. Beef value chains will be analysed to identify opportunities and constraints for smallholder farmers, and farmer business groups will be created and supported to enable smallholders to access more profitable beef markets.

## KEY FACTS

**ACIAR Project No.** LPS/2016/011

**Duration:** April 2017 to September 2021 (4.5 years)

**Target areas:** Pakistan

**Budget:** A\$2,923,563

### Project Leader

David McGill, University of Melbourne

### Key partners

- Charles Sturt University
- University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan
- Sindh Agricultural University Tandojam, Pakistan

### ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Anna Okello



## Objective

**The project's overall aim is to improve the profitability of smallholder farming households in the Punjab and Sindh provinces of Pakistan, through on-farm efficiency gains and development of dairy and beef market opportunities.**

### The project's specific objectives are to:

- Investigate the support necessary to integrate the whole-family extension approach within the current dairy-beef value chain and evaluate the impacts on smallholder farming families.
- Analyse the current beef industry structure in Punjab and Sindh with a focus on identifying market opportunities for smallholder farming families.
- Evaluate alternative enterprise combinations which have the potential to improve on-farm efficiency and profitability.
- Support smallholder dairy-beef farmers to engage in more profitable value chain opportunities.

## Expected scientific results

- Development of rearing strategies for the male calves produced on-farm which fit with the cost-price structure of meat value chains.
- Assessment of novel dietary supplements which boost enteric immunity and villous development.
- Assessment of how a home-grown feedbase can be maximised to increase fodder production efficiency and reduce costs associated with buying in feed.
- Improved scientific knowledge, leading to new management systems and increased production efficiency of smallholder farming households.

## Expected outcomes

- Improved efficiency of smallholder dairy farmer participation in dairy and beef value chains.
- Additional income opportunities through beef production and improved market access.
- Improved smallholder household livelihoods from increased value of beef.
- Improved connections between smallholder farmers and markets.
- Increased engagement between farm business groups and value chain personnel.
- Increased engagement of youth and women working on-farm and in the agricultural sciences.
- Increased awareness among farmers of the opportunities for beef production from their farm to maximise them.

