

## Institutional updates

### ILRI 2019 annual report now available

*By Jimmy Smith and Lindsay Falvey*



We are publishing the [2019 annual report](#) of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) during a global pandemic whose impacts on human health and the global economy have already proven catastrophic. Both COVID-19 and recent events around the world have shown that inequalities of various kinds—social, racial and economic, among others—remain powerful forces that need to be addressed. At ILRI, we are committed to ensuring that our research on livestock contributes in a multitude of ways to addressing the current crisis, from preventing future pandemics to helping those most impacted by the present one. We are working on livestock solutions that help re-ignite economies, support health and nutrition, and build up sustainable and resilient food systems in the poorer parts of the world.

This report's focus on gender is especially timely. Few societies in the world are free from inequalities arising from gender, as few are free from inequalities of race, status and multiple other kinds of division.

Homing in on gender is not simply a matter of focusing on women's issues, as an earlier school of thought might have done. Rather, our focus is on the whole system of relationships and power dynamics that define the roles that women and men of all ages have in society. Livestock benefit from women's work and women—countless millions of women in the developing world—benefit from livestock. Interventions, even ones that seem purely technocratic and neutral, such as animal vaccination programs, are often less effective than they could be if gender isn't considered. Thus, ILRI was delighted this year to be selected as host of the CGIAR-wide platform on gender in

agriculture. The platform will initiate a process of genuine change towards greater gender equality and better lives for smallholder farmers everywhere.

ILRI is pursuing equity across its workforce, with the percentage of professional women at ILRI (as categorized by CGIAR) currently at 34%. ILRI's current board of eleven trustees includes five women, including its chair-elect Elsa Murano, and ILRI's senior management team of eight includes three women. ILRI is advancing towards 50% participation by women and has put in place a variety of measures to increase the number of women in its ranks, such as ensuring that recruitments do not proceed unless female candidates are considered.

This year's report features several field-based stories that illustrate ILRI's research 'in action.' We learn why it can be difficult for women to access vaccination programs for their animals in Ghana, how women are on the front lines of surveying and preventing future zoonotic disease outbreaks in Ethiopia, how young people are making a decent living for themselves through improved dairy production in Kenya and how a new green fodder variety is improving milk productivity and gender equity in India's smallholder dairy sector. These stories are complemented by research examples from across ILRI's portfolio, presenting solutions from laboratory to field that showcase ILRI initiatives to support institutions, develop capacity and conduct research on systems and policy solutions.

We do not as of this writing know what impact the current pandemic will have. However, as a scientific research institute dedicated to the people whose lives depend on livestock in the developing world, ILRI has a long record of addressing many of the issues that are now at the very centre of the global agenda, such as disease surveillance and control, climate change and environmental destruction, and hunger and malnutrition.

No matter what challenges may come in the months ahead, we at ILRI continue to focus on delivering livestock research that makes a difference to all.



### Welcome note

Welcome to the fifth edition of ILRI's South Asia newsletter!

This newsletter shares key updates of ILRI's activities in South Asia with stakeholders, partners and donors.

I hope you will enjoy reading it and thank you for your strong support to ILRI South Asia.

Learn more about our work at [www.asia.ilri.org](http://www.asia.ilri.org). If you have any feedback please contact [ilri-delhi@cgiar.org](mailto:ilri-delhi@cgiar.org)

**Habibar Rahman**  
Regional representative for  
ILRI South Asia

## ICAR–CGIAR review meeting assesses progress of collaborative projects

In a meeting held 4 May 2020, representatives of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and ILRI assessed the progress of ICAR–ILRI collaborative projects. Habibar Rahman, regional representative for ILRI South Asia, presented the achievements and progress of projects undertaken in 2019. Trilochan Mohapatra director general of ICAR, appreciated ILRI's expertise on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and expected to have more future collaboration with ILRI on AMR research.

## ILRI's contribution to India's One Health program

ILRI's Habibar Rahman joined a high-level national expert group in India that is addressing One Health in the country. At a national meeting on One Health, Rahman said India has been identified as a hotspot for vector-borne diseases, food-borne illness, zoonotic diseases and AMR and needs to focus resources towards addressing these disease challenges. He stressed that existing animal disease forecasting systems, such as the National Animal Disease Referral Expert System (NADRES), can be extended and strengthened through the development of mobile applications. He raised the issues of the lack of proper vaccination in livestock and wild animals and said that ILRI can support the preparedness against non-native or exotic animal diseases in India.

The government agreed to constitute an inter-agency group to formulate an action plan that includes priority areas and an assessment of available expertise and resources. Three teams will also be set up to lead the coordination and convergence of One Health activities in the country (a surveillance and forecasting group, a mitigation group and a response and management group).

## Project news

### Livestock System Innovation Lab improves rural livelihoods in Nepal and Cambodia

The Feed the Future Livestock System Innovation Lab (LSIL), which is funded by the US government and implemented by the University of Florida and ILRI, is implementing 10 innovations to improve human nutrition, health and income in Cambodia and Nepal.

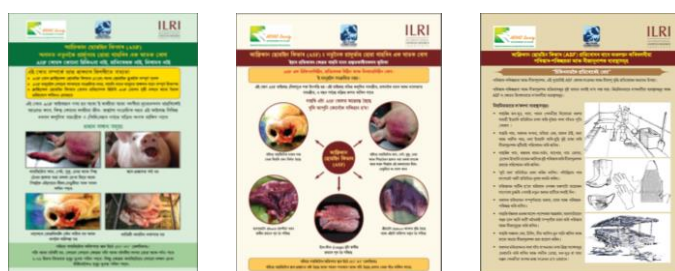
These innovations include precision feeding using feeding support tool, living fences for forage production, improved production of seasonal fodder for goats, improvement of pig nutrition, disease reporting in remote locations, preventive health care by distance learning, mastitis control, improvement of pig health, food safety in the pork value chain and upgradation of goat marketing using mobile applications. These innovations have been well received by farmers and value chain actors and supporters, both public and private in the two countries. Quantitative assessment and anecdotal evidence collected towards the end of the first phase of the project suggests that the lab could substantially contribute to improved nutrition, health and income of smallholders in the livestock value chain in both countries.



Farmers in front of maize cobs stored for feeding goats in Barwanchan, Nepal (photo credit: Padmakumar V.)

## ILRI supports African swine fever control in Assam

In May 2020, ILRI actively worked with the Government of Assam in designing an African swine fever (ASF) control program for the state. Ram Pratim Deka, an ILRI scientist who is based in ILRI-Guwahati in Assam, was appointed to a high-level committee of a group of experts constituted by the Government of Assam to tackle the disease. In addition, at the request of the World Bank, ILRI-Guwahati has developed a draft ASF control plan, which has been vetted by the bank and shared with Government of Assam Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary. ILRI has also supported the department by producing three brochures on ASF and organized one virtual training for the veterinary officers of the department.



Set of three brochures prepared by ILRI to support African swine fever control in Assam (photo credit: ILRI).

## Increasing coordination and collective action for pig subsector development in Assam

ILRI took an initiative to increase coordination and collective action among various schemes and programs relating to pig sector development in Assam. At the request of the Commissioner and Secretary, Government of Assam Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, several coordination meetings were organized in January 2020 by ILRI where senior officials of the department participated.



The meetings were also attended by Niranjana Kalita, director of research, Assam Agricultural University (AAU), Swaraj Rajkhowa, director, ICAR-National Research Center on Pig (ICAR-NRCP) and ILRI representatives. The meetings came up with a draft plan to designate different pig breeding farms under the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary as nucleus, multipliers and demo farms, and initiate collective action by pig sector actors.

## Assessing dual-purpose paddy varieties for high-quality straw for dairy animals

With the support from the Assam Agricultural University (AAU) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), ILRI collected straws of 54 varieties of paddy available in Assam and analyzed them for nutrient content and digestibility at ILRI's nutritional laboratory in ILRI-Hyderabad. The results of straw quality data are being analysed and compared with the paddy yield data to identify paddy varieties that have higher yield and better straw quality. Upon completion, the analysis report will be shared with AAU, IRRI and Department of Agriculture, the Government of Assam for promoting recommended paddy varieties.



ILRI scientists interact with dairy farmers in Assam (photo credit: ILRI).

## Capacity development

### Training on the economics of animal health to improve management of disease threats in India

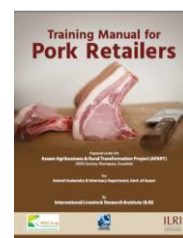
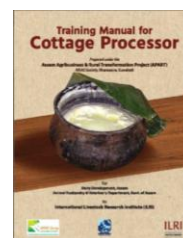
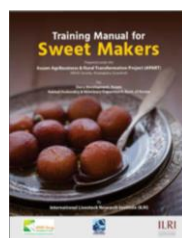
From 8-10 January 2020, more than 20 researchers from various institutes of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) were trained on animal disease economics and frameworks for risk analysis and risk management to improve veterinary disease prevention and control in India. Participants learned the basic concepts of animal disease economics, how to use a system dynamic model for analysing the impact of animal diseases, the economic importance of veterinary diseases, available resources and costs of veterinary activities. The participants are expected to use the systemic dynamic model to analyse the economic impact of specific animal diseases that are prevailing in their regions and train their fellow scientists. The three-day training was conducted by ILRI and ICAR-IVRI in Izatnagar, India.



Release of training manual by the dignitaries (photo credit: ILRI/Vijayalakshmy Kennady).

## New training manuals for milk sweet makers, cottage processors and pork retailers

Under the World Bank-funded 'Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation' or APART project, ILRI has developed three customized training manuals for milk sweet makers, milk cottage processors and pork retailers. These manuals have been developed based on a training need assessment of respective value chain actors. The training manual was pre-tested with relevant government officials and respective value chain actors to ensure relevant and easy-to-understand training contents. The finalized manuals will be translated into Assamese and will be used in the APART project to train respective value chain actors.



Covers of training manuals for milk sweet makers, cottage processors and pork retailers (photo credit: ILRI).

## Farmers trained on pig breeding under the World Bank-funded APART project

From 22-25 June, ILRI organized a training on management of government pig breeding farms for farm managers in Guwahati, Assam, under a breeding program whose results are being followed closely around the world and that was started under the Pig Breeding Policy of Assam. The training was delivered by Ram Pratim Deka, ILRI scientist. The initiative is part of the Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (APART) project, which is supported by the World Bank through the Assam government.

## Success stories

### Dairy farming is the best for earning sufficient income for educated rural youth in western Odisha

Chittaranjan Karna, aged 30, lives in Patrapali Village of Attabira Block, Bargarh District in Odisha State of India. His father influenced him towards dairying starting from his childhood. After getting frustrated at his job as a member of safety management team, he switched over to the dairying

business. Today he has eight cross-bred high-yield (Jersey and Holstein Friesian) dairy cows and six acres of irrigated land. Despite being actively involved in dairy farming he did not have knowledge on economic milk production and improved green fodder production. In October 2017, Karna met Panchanan Pasayat, ILRI's field coordinator in Bargarh District who guided him on how to cultivate improved fodder grass and economic milk production. Under the program 'Feed and fodder production in different agro-climatic zones and its utilization for the livestock of Odisha,' he was provided with knowledge, fodder seed and basal dose of fertilizer to cultivate 0.5 acres of green fodder. With support of ILRI he started growing green fodder and was able to save INR 120 (USD 1.6) per day after feeding his cows with green fodder. By growing 0.5 acres of land, he is now able to produce 60 kilograms of green fodder.



*A farmer work in a fodder farm at Bargarh, Odisha (photo credit: ILRI).*



The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works to improve food and nutritional security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for efficient, safe and sustainable use of livestock. Co-hosted by Kenya and Ethiopia, it has regional or country offices and projects in East, South and Southeast Asia as well as Central, East, Southern and West Africa. [ilri.org](http://ilri.org)



CGIAR is a global agricultural research partnership for a food-secure future. Its research is carried out by 15 research centres in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. [cgiar.org](http://cgiar.org)

ILRI thanks all donors that globally support its work through their contributions to the [CGIAR Trust Fund](#).

*Patron: Professor Peter C Doherty AC, FAA, FRS*

*Animal scientist, Nobel Prize Laureate for Physiology or Medicine—1996*

Box 30709, Nairobi 00100 Kenya  
Phone +254 20 422 3000  
Fax +254 20 422 3001  
Email [ilri-kenya@cgiar.org](mailto:ilri-kenya@cgiar.org)

[ilri.org](http://ilri.org)  
*better lives through livestock*

ILRI is a CGIAR research centre

Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Phone +251 11 617 2000  
Fax +251 11 667 6923  
Email [ilri-ethiopia@cgiar.org](mailto:ilri-ethiopia@cgiar.org)

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