



Tropentag, October 9-11, 2007, Witzenhausen

“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:
Sustainable and organic approaches to meet human needs”

Gender Role, Present Situation, Constraints and Opportunities: Is it a Challenge for Livestock Research and Development in Nepal?

LOK NATH PAUDEL¹, MATTHIAS GAULY¹, UDO TER MEULEN², CLEMENS WOLLNY³

¹*Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Institute of Animal Breeding and Genetics, Germany*

²*Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Institute of Animal Physiology and Animal Nutrition, Germany*

³*University of Applied Sciences Bingen, Faculty of Life Sciences, Germany*

Abstract

Gender is the term used to refer to the socially constructed relations between women and men in a particular society. There is a strong relationship between gender and agriculture in developing countries. According to the UN report (2000) on the status of women, women are twice as likely as men to be involved in agriculture-related activities. Moreover, two-thirds of the world's 876 million illiterates are women, most of whom live in rural areas of developing countries. National averages of female workers in the agricultural labour force vary. But globally women have a principal role in agribusiness, food processing, and consumer related activities.

As far as Nepal, a Himalayan country, is concerned, livestock plays a significant role to the national economy. Buffalo is the most preferred ruminant that contributes about 70 and 65% share to the national milk and meat production respectively. A study carried out on gender aspect revealed that women perform more than two-thirds of the total agricultural works but their participation in capacity building viz: group formation and mobilisation, exposure to new technology, training, etc. is only about 40%. Specifically, women participation in group formed for goat keeping is the highest (57.2%) where as it is lowest in the case of buffalo farming group (18.4%). It clearly shows that women have only got the opportunity towards the small ruminants but they are neglected to the most important enterprises like buffalo and cattle.

Experience has shown that when women in developing countries, like Nepal, are empowered, the benefits are felt in entire families and communities. Constraints such as lack of capital and access to institutional credit, social and cultural norms, education and poverty, lack of technical skills and access to extension services affect women more than men and limit women's participation and efficiency in livestock production. However, positive trend of women education, government policy towards capacity building, women advocacy and developing partnership show the opportunity for the women and ultimately for the livestock research and development in Nepal.

Keywords: Capacity building, challenges, gender, livestock, research and development