



Tropentag, October 7-9, 2008, Hohenheim

“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:  
New Drive for Rural Development”

## Indigenous Buffalo Farming and its Improvement: A Potential Drive for Rural Development in Nepal

LOK NATH PAUDEL<sup>1</sup>, UDO TER MEULEN<sup>2</sup>, CLEMENS WOLLNY<sup>3</sup>, USHA PAUDEL KANDEL<sup>4</sup>,  
MATTHIAS GAULY<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Georg-August-University of Göttingen, Institute of Animal Breeding and Genetics, Germany*

<sup>2</sup>*Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Institute of Animal Physiology and Animal Nutrition, Germany*

<sup>3</sup>*University of Applied Sciences Bingen, Faculty of Life Sciences, Germany*

<sup>4</sup>*Truibhuvan University, Faculty of Education, Nepal*

### Abstract

Eighty-six per cent of the population of Nepal lives in rural areas. Agriculture, engaging about two-third of the total population, contributes 38 % of gross domestic product (GDP) in the country. Livestock is an integral component of Nepalese farming system that contributes more than one-third of the total agricultural GDP (AICC, 2005).

Buffaloes are raised for supply of animal protein, draft power and manure. Buffalo farming has got the utmost important as they have been reported to contribute 52.9 % of the livestock share in the national GDP. The government of Nepal has adopted an agriculture perspective plan (APP) as a 20 years priority focused forward looking strategy. APP has given first priority to milk and then to meat. Buffaloes contribute 71 and 65 % of the total annual production of milk and meat, respectively. Because of more positive attributes of buffaloes than cattle, farmers of Nepal prefer buffaloes over cattle. However, there have been only limited studies relating to improvement of their production potentialities. In spite of three decades of government's programs for upgrading local animals, almost 90 % of the buffalo population still remained untouched. This study was conducted to find out the possible reasons that had hindered improved buffalo farming in Nepal. One-hundred and five farmers from three districts, 35 from each district, of western development region of Nepal were randomly surveyed based on the pre-structured questionnaires.

It has been found that bigger body size, need of more input per unit of output, problems during calving, late in first calving, long calving interval, more repeat breeding problems and high sensitive to disease and parasites were found as contributing factors for not increasing the number of improved buffaloes. Use of locally selected elite bulls in breed improvement programs, training for the needy people, gender mainstreaming in buffalo farming, programs for round the year forage production, were suggested by the farmers as the measures to be incorporated in the annual programs of the Department of Livestock Services to make the buffalo farming enterprise more profitable which could be considered as a potential drive for rural development in Nepal.

**Keywords:** Agriculture perspective plan, buffaloes, elite bulls, gross domestic products, Nepal, rural development