

**International conference on livestock value chain finance and access to credit:
Improving smallholders' livestock value addition and marketing through access to
finance and credit**

Ezulwini, Swaziland, 21-23 February 2017

Call for Abstracts

Improving the livelihoods of livestock smallholders and other value chain actors through livestock value addition and marketing is constrained by the lack of access to finance, working capital, affordable quality inputs, and well-structured value chains. Unlike other agricultural sub-sectors such as crops, fruits, and vegetables, financing livestock activities, especially fattening and finishing activities, through financial institutions or value chain actors is very scarce. Livestock smallholders usually cannot provide collateral (such as land title deeds or physical assets) to obtain loans from financial institutions, and value chain finance in this sector is not well developed. However, there are a few examples from developing countries in Africa, Asia and Central and South America where financial products and mechanisms have been developed to help smallholder livestock producers to access working capital and to add value to their product.

This conference aims to:

- Demonstrate viable and financially sustainable business case models on low cost feeding regimes for fattening enterprises ;
- Clarify segmentation of role of value chain actors and create smart linkages;
- Share experiences and research involving access to finance/credit for smallholder livestock producers and other value chain actors;
- Support a dialogue between livestock value chain actors, financial institutions, scholars, private sector companies (input and service providers), and governmental institutions;
- Discuss how to scale-up and replicate success stories from the sector to other developing countries and regions.

The following topics will be discussed during the conference:

- Institutional environment necessary to transform and support the commercialization of smallholder livestock farming;
- Smallholders and livestock value chain actors access to credit;
- The role of micro-credit institutions in financing livestock value chain;

- Value chain finance mechanisms for the livestock sector in developing countries.

The Conference's Scientific Committee invites authors to submit abstracts for presentations at the Conference. There will be two types of presentations: oral and poster presentations.

Submission guidelines

Abstracts should be **400 words maximum**. Submissions should clearly indicate whether the author is aiming at an oral or a poster presentation.

The deadline for Abstract submission is 2 December 2016. Successful candidates will be notified on **16 December 2016**. Authors selected for oral presentations will be asked to submit full papers (7 page long) by **20 January 2017**.

The conference will be held in Ezulwini, Swaziland from 21 to 23 February 2017.

Please direct your submissions to Nadhem Mtimet, ILRI (n.mtimet@cgiar.org) and Sikhhalazo Dube, ILRI (s.dube@cgiar.org)

Participants will exchange ideas during a series of parallel sessions, where both oral communications and posters will be discussed. Farmers from a number of Southern African countries will be invited to share their experience.

Particular emphasis will be placed on sessions mixing disciplinary perspectives and a showcase of innovative approaches from the field. Field visit will be organized for participants to learn more about the achievements of the ongoing project "Innovative Beef Value Chain Development Schemes in Southern Africa" led by ILRI and funded by IFAD.

By the end of the conference we expect participants to have a better understanding of the different commercialization models and financial mechanisms that allow smallholder livestock producers and value chain actors to access credit. We hope that the conference will become a starting point for increased collaboration between the financial institutions and the livestock value chain participants in Swaziland and the region.

Distinguished keynote speakers and up to 70 delegates, including key livestock value chain actors from developing countries and innovators from the field, are expected to attend the conference. The forum is organized by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in partnership with the Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (SWADE) and the Micro Finance Unit – Swaziland (MFU), with financial support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and as part of the research on value chains under the CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets.