

2013: Annual Progress Report

1. General Information

ADA Project Reference No.	
Project Title	Increasing the productivity of dual-purpose cattle in Nicaragua through use of appropriate breed types and application of best husbandry practices
Duration (day/ month/ year to day/month/year)	1 st July 2013 to 30 th June 2016
Reporting period (day/ month/year to day/ month/year)	1 st July 2013 to 31 st December 2013
Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total budget • Austrian contribution • Other funding 	Euro 644,646 Euro 499,782 Euro 144,864
CGIAR Center	ILRI
Project Leader	Dr. Okeyo A, Mwai
Partner / Department	Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT)
Name of partner's project leader	Dr. Rein van der Hoek
Other partners	Universidad Nacional Agraria (UNA), Nicaragua: Dr. Roldan Corrales BOKU-University: Dr. Maria Wurzinger
Narrative Summary: <p>The “More milk and meat through better breeds” project seeks to identify factors constraining dual-purpose cattle production in Nicaragua and design and promote interventions that would sustainably improve their productivity. The goal of the project is to improve livelihoods, food, and nutritional security of the rural poor in Nicaragua by enhancing milk and beef production through the application of improved breeding and husbandry strategies.</p> <p><i>The project objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess systems constraints, research gaps in the Nicaragua smallholder dual-purpose cattle herds, opportunities for improvement gains, and the overall dairy & meat value chains development. • To identify the priorities and best-bet technical (health, feeding, and breeding) and marketing interventions and the respective research needs that would benefit the different gender and actor groups in the Nicaraguan milk and meat value chain. • To identify cattle breed-types that best match the existing and emerging smallholder 	

production systems in Nicaragua.

- To build and strengthen the institutional, actors' and farmers' capacities to improve input and market service delivery, and technology applications that would enable sustainable animal and herd productivity improvements.
- To develop a university research program connected with the breeding monitoring and traceability programs for dual-purpose cattle in Nicaragua

Activities in the first 6 months of the project (July 2013 to December 2013)

Two research sites located in Central Nicaragua and with a strong presence of small and medium-size dual-purpose cattle farms, Camoapa and Matiguás were pre-determined for project activities. Cattle production is predominantly based on permanent grazing of naturalized grasslands, introduced pastures and crop (mainly maize) residues.

Project partners held a project inception workshop in Nicaragua in September 2013, where information on the project plan was presented and discussed with representatives of relevant ministries in Nicaragua and some members of the farming communities in the targeted areas. It was noted that although the farmers in the sites readily adopt technologies when introduced, they always return to their "old ways" at the end of the projects. The project implementing partners are thus challenged to always consider long term sustainability in the process of implementing activities. Information from the group discussions is available at <http://ilri-angr.wikispaces.com/ILRI-CIAT-BOKU+Project++Nicaragua>.

Following the inception workshops, a focus group discussion was organized and held in Matiguás which was attended by 16 male and 5 female farmers. Information obtained is available at <http://ilri-angr.wikispaces.com/ILRI-CIAT-BOKU+Project++Nicaragua>. The work-plan for the year was also revised, and the team began the process of adapting and translating various tools for collation of baseline information that had been developed by the CGIAR CRP 3.7 project teams. In collaboration with other members of the CGIAR CRP 3.7 team, a situation analysis report is under preparation and will be available in the first quarter of 2014.

2. Management issues

One main challenge in the implementation of the project has been the transfer of funds between institutions to support different activities. This was caused by many structural changes taking place within the CGIAR affiliated institutions, with new legal systems put in place. Only since January 2014 all the legal documentation has been in place and project activities though slightly delayed have started

3. Research progress

In the last six months, links and cross-learning with partners involved in other programs in Nicaragua have been established. Participatory rural appraisals and focus group discussions have also been carried out to create awareness within the target communities of the planned project activities.

Main milestones include the involvement of the National Agricultural University of Nicaragua (UNA), and establishing contacts with the cooperative Nicacentro (based in Matiguás) and the NGO ADDAC (Asociación para la Diversificación y el Desarrollo Agrícola Comunal). The project will work with farmers affiliated to both organizations.

The focus group discussions carried out had an emphasis on gender aspects in relation to livestock production.

4. Dissemination of outputs

Since project activities have just started, no publications have been produced as of yet.

5. Project implementation

Activities planned for 2014

The main activities in 2014

- Develop sampling framework to generate baseline information to assess systems constraints and identify gaps in the smallholder dual-purpose cattle herds
- Baseline household survey to inform respective research needs that would benefit the different gender and actor groups in the Nicaraguan milk and meat value chain, and determine the roles and constraints facing smallholder dual-purpose cattle producers
- Training of Farmers, technicians, and students to build/strengthen their capacity in livestock health, feeding and breeding
- Select households and begin monitoring animals and herd dynamics
- Characterization of the existing dual-purpose cattle populations
- Literature review of agricultural policies influencing the cattle value chain and its relevance for gender equity

6. Financial statement

7. Other comments

8. Contacts and Addresses for Reports:

An **electronic** version of the report (with any certified and signed documents scanned in and sent as a .pdf document) has to be submitted to:

Daniela Krejdl (daniela.krejdl@ada.gv.at) and

Programme and Projects (programme@ada.gv.at)

no later than **28 February 2014**.

Reference:

- **Project Number**
- **Annual project report 2013 as well as (a short version of) the respective project title**