

Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems research project:

## Enhancing the Productivity of Small Ruminants through Improved and Cost-Effective Feeding and Animal Health Interventions (ENHANCE) in Burkina Faso and Niger

Livestock represents an essential component of the livelihoods of millions of people in Niger and Burkina Faso and is a key livelihood strategy in a region increasingly subject to the uncertainties of droughts, global climate change and consequent loss of livestock productivity that is impacting rural households. Agro-pastoral and pastoral populations in Niger and Burkina Faso have limited livestock herds per household, and most have limited resources to purchase inputs for increased productivity and little market power to ensure fair prices. This lack of available sustenance, particularly during the hot season, has a deleterious effect on livestock nutrition and health. Additionally, when animals are fed, they often do not utilize the feed efficiently due to the prevalence of parasites—for which one single anti-parasite treatment is used in the best cases, or more often none at all. This is due mainly to the limited capacity of community animal health workers, as well as the lack of knowledge of the types of parasites and their importance to the health of the animals. The issues are very similar in Burkina Faso. Over 80% of Burkinabé and 87% of Nigerians are involved with livestock in differing degrees, and livestock and its by-products represent an important source of revenues, and source of exports, second after cotton.<sup>2</sup> Constraints to livestock production include shortage of water in the dry season, insufficient quantity and quality of feed throughout the year and high cost of veterinary drugs and services. Other identified constraints are the low technical knowledge of fodder production and conservation.



Credit: Linda Logan

Mercy Corps is a recipient of a grant under the University of Florida (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems (LSIL) in partnership with Texas A&M University, and the Governments of Niger (INRAN) and Burkina Faso (INERA). The ENHANCE partners seek to expand this collaboration in West Africa to strengthen existing efforts in livestock rearing in Niger, which were started with Mercy Corps through FFP-funded programs such as the Development Food Assistance program in Niger from 2012-2018 “Sawki” and with other USAID-funded programs under the RISE umbrella, such as REGIS-AG in Niger and Burkina Faso.

### Objectives

The project objective is to enhance the productivity of small ruminants through improved and cost effective feeding in Burkina Faso and Niger by 1) improving the production, transformation, conservation and commercialization of nutritionally-rich and cost-beneficial fodder and improved animal feed, 2) improving the treatment of livestock against parasites that prevent a good utilization of feed and fodder, and 3) improving the political environment and support of the animal feed and fodder industry.

## Expected Outcomes

By the end of 2020, ENHANCE will: improve the development of appropriate production and post-harvest technologies in forage and feed value chains, animal feeds and feeding practices; strengthen capacity of small ruminant value chain actors to adopt technologies and innovations; disseminate best practices for parasites control and improve and disseminate policy recommendations related to the animal feed and fodder industry.

## Research Approach

Our work will build on research undertaken by the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock and Fish in Burkina Faso, part of which analyzed small ruminant value chains. In each region, activities will be conducted in one commune per agro-climatic area within the country. Initial field trips will enable the research team to present the project to stakeholders, e.g. livestock and crop extension services and civil society organizations. Selection criteria will include having irrigated land and rain-fed land to enable comparison of approaches and results, having significant small ruminant production currently and interest from key stakeholders in collaboration.

## Quick Facts

- Duration: 3 years
- Locations: Burkina Faso and Niger
- Full project title: Enhancing the productivity of small ruminants through improved and cost effective feeding and animal health interventions in Burkina Faso and Niger

## Contacts and Key Partners

- Senior Research Manager/Grant Administrator: Mr. Bagnan Salifou, Mercy Corps Niger ([bsalifou@mercycorps.org](mailto:bsalifou@mercycorps.org))
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- Objective 1 Lead Scientist: Dr. Salissou Issa, INRAN
- Objective 2 Lead Scientist: Dr. Amadou Traore, Government of Burkina Faso – INERA/CNRST
- Objective 3 Lead Scientist: Dr. Saidou Tembley, Universities du CAMES and Texas A&M University

Mercy Corps is the prime grantee for the ENHANCE Project and award and is a global non-profit organization registered in both Niger and Burkina Faso.