Is there a future for small-scale animal production in the tropics?
Quick answer, long process

• Yes, but it is and will not be easy
• Large scale implementation of an integrated FARMING SYSTEM APPROACH is needed
• Extension geared at the small farm as a whole production unit, with all it’s aspects, including soil science, crop and foddercrop production, pasture management, animal management, labour, economy etc. in an integrated approach
Content

• Introduction
• Constraints
• Relevant stakeholders
• Constraints for small farmer development
• Opportunities and solutions
• Take home message
Relationships between various inputs and livestock production.
Constraints for small farmer development

- Capital investment
- Water and power
- Knowledge of husbandry & nutrition
- Adequate support service
- Access to adapted and proven technology
Relevant stakeholders

• The farmers, men or women
• The government, national or regional/local
• The market, input supply or processing and marketing
• Service organisation, extension, veterinary services, AI
• Lobby groups, environmental, animal welfare etc.
• Education and training
The farmers, men and women

• Not their best own advisor
• Water, men and women
• Nutrition
• Overgrazing
• No inocculant
• Strategy, productive ?
• Social aspects
• No sources of applicable information
The government:
national or regional/local

• Focussis on technology
• Supplies loans and subsidies
• Has no clue about farmers' situation
• Therefore the extension service has no answer nor strategy
• Prefer to work with big(ger) farmers
The market, input supply or processing and marketing

• Both input and output chain prefer big(ger) farmers
• Milk market is highly informal
• Quality control is difficult with many small producers
• This induces lower prices
Service organisation, extension, veterinary services, Art. Insem.

- Have no adequate message nor service for small farmers
- Prefer big(ger) farms/units
- Technology oriented
Lobby groups, environmental, animal welfare etc.

• There are only lobby groups for larg(er) farms
• Small farmers are very difficult to organise, recourses, education
• Farmers unions are the big ones, they discriminate small farmer
Education and training

• Veterinary or biology background
• No “farm vision”
• Very reproductive
• No analitical approach
• No independent thinking
Dairy development is sustainable, equitable and a powerful tool

- Provide regular income
- Provides nutritious foods
- Diversify risks
- Improve the use of resources
- Generate on- and off farm employment
- Creates opportunities for women (milk money)
- Provide financial stability & social standing (saving and asset creation)
Dairy development is sustainable, equitable and a powerful tool for development.
There is no general solution, each farm is different, so each farm needs a different approach.

Farming system analysis is a very appropriate tool here.

Use your brain power to develop ideas and communicate clearly with the farmer, don’t prescribe, discuss with him/her, ask questions, so they may come up with their own solution.
Take home message

• Think about your strategy how to approach and work with small farmers.
• How would you (as if being a farmer) like to be treated by an advisor/extensionist?
• What do you need to know first to be able to understand the farmer’s reality?
• What kind of questions will help the farmer to develop his own answers?
• Test your new approach on a known person.
THANK you very much for your attention and be a creative agricultarist/animal production advisor

For more information:

Gijs den Hertog

gijsdenhertog5@gmail.com
0570 – 531157
Knowledge of animal husbandry, particularly nutrition (the biggest cost)
Support services, feed supply, health, extension (and AI)
Access to adapted and proven knowledge and technology
A very small farmers cow