

## **PROMOTING ETHNOVETERINARY MEDICINE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK HUSBANDRY IN NORTHERN GHANA**

### **About ACDEP**

The Association of Church-based Development Projects (ACDEP) is a Ghanaian non-governmental organisation located in Tamale, Northern Ghana. It was established in 1977 and operates in all the regions in northern Ghana and the Bono and Bono East Regions. Its development programmes are largely in agricultural development and it works in close collaboration with its member non-governmental and governmental organisations, particularly the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), the Savannah Agricultural Research Institute (SARI), the Animal Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR-ARI), the University for Development Studies (UDS), Local Government (Districts, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies), the Water Research Institute (WRI), the Water Resources Commission (WRC) and others funded by international donor agencies. ACDEP is the host organisation of the Country Platform (CP) of Prolinnova since 2006.

### **The project location and targets**

The 3-year project “Promoting ethno-veterinary medicine for sustainable livestock husbandry in Northern Ghana” (October 2019 to September 2022) is financed by Misereor, a church-based development support organisation in Germany. It is being implemented by ACDEP in partnership with four key stakeholder institutions in Bongo District and Bawku Municipality in the Upper East Region, West Mamprusi Municipality in North East Region and Tolon District in Northern Region. The four stakeholder institutions involved in project implementation are CSIR-ARI, the Veterinary Services Department of MoFA, Pong-Tamale Central Veterinary Laboratory and the Animal Science Department of UDS. Swiss TPH (Tropical and Public Health Institute) provides international technical backstopping to the project.

The “Ethnovet Project” targets 1000 small-scale livestock farmers (at least 30% female) and 40 ethnoveterinary medicine (EVM) practitioners and community animal health workers (CAHWs) in 20 communities in the four districts; at least 15% of the ethno practitioners or CAHWs will be female. The project will also involve 40 formal veterinary staff and agricultural extension officers (at least 15% female) in the target districts. The project will identify and document 20 farmers’ ethnoveterinary innovations and practices used for priority livestock diseases for promotion, development and scientific validation for integration with formal veterinary medicine for livestock healthcare for small-scale farmers in northern Ghana.

### **Project rationale**

Animal diseases are a major constraint to the livelihoods of rural small-scale livestock farmers in the face of limited access to veterinary services because of a huge deficit in veterinary professional staff, lack of funding and high cost of services. Furthermore, there is a growing public concern about the negative effects of using chemical drugs and a desire for safe food for animals, coupled with increasing resistance of micro-organisms to some drugs (antimicrobial drug resistance). EVM stands as an environmentally friendly, easy-to-use, affordable and accessible complementary rural healthcare approach to small-scale farmers and has gained widespread use.

However, in spite of its growing popularity and use among rural small-scale livestock farmers, this approach has received neither the needed institutional and policy support nor recognition and technical support by formal veterinary services. Current collaboration between traditional healers and formal veterinary staff to complement each other’s services is very weak. Many formal veterinarians and other livestock professionals have not accepted or appreciated EVM, partly because veterinary experts and researchers view ethnovet practices and remedies as not standard and dosages are uncertain. Some

believe the treatments are not effective. This important alternative treatment and science needs political, institutional and technical support. To address these challenges of EVM, ACDEP led the sourcing of funds from Misereor and is implementing this project with an interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder team, under the umbrella of Prolinnova.

### **Project objectives**

The project aims to improve animal health and productivity of small-scale rural farmers through increased recognition and use of EVM as a complementary and integral part of veterinary services in northern Ghana. This will be achieved under three objectives as follows:

1. Validating potential herbal treatments commonly used by small-scale farmers for animals (poultry, small ruminants and pigs)
2. Improving preparation, packaging, use and commercialisation of selected herbal medicines and
3. Establishing a strong network of ethnvet practitioners for research, learning and advocacy in Northern Ghana.

### **Expected outcomes**

**Outcome 1:** Ethnoveterinary medicine used by small-scale farmers for common animal diseases validated

**Outcome 2:** Use of ethnoveterinary medicine by small-scale farmers increased

**Outcome 3:** A network of ethnvet practitioners and institutional stakeholders to promote integrated animal healthcare established

### **Project activities**

The main activities of the project are outlined as below.

#### **Validation of selected potential ethnoveterinary treatments**

- Project inception multi-stakeholder meeting
- Community sensitisation and awareness creation
- Detailed documentation of farmers' and ethnvet practitioners' knowledge and selected ethnoveterinary medicines and treatments
- Literature review on ethnobotanical and phytochemical properties of plants used for the herbal preparations
- Document case definitions of selected diseases from the herbal practitioners and formal veterinary perspectives (indigenous knowledge and formal science)
- Laboratory testing and analysis of herbs and herbal preparations for various properties
- Clinical test and on-farm farmer-led participatory trials
- Conduct socio-economic analysis of ethnoveterinary treatment
- Organise feedback review and planning meeting

#### **Improved preparation, packaging and use of selected ethnoveterinary medicines**

- Training of ethnvet practitioners in improved preparation of medications
- Train and support ethnvet practitioners in packaging and labelling products
- Train and support farmers and practitioners to cultivate and conserve medicinal plants

#### **Establish a strong network of ethnvet practitioners for research, learning and advocacy**

- Establish district-level networks
- Establish regional-level network
- Strengthen Prolinnova–Ghana platform for policy dialogue on EVM
- Document share and publish ethnvet practices and research findings
- Strengthen collaboration with Diobass–Burkina Faso
- Develop monitoring and evaluation plan
- Organise quarterly review and planning meetings