Socioeconomic aspects
Atts is providing some socioeconomic aspects which was not covered by the project and might be of valuable addition

1.1 Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

As promoted by the British Department of International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the sustainable livelihoods approach has three essential features. Firstly, as a framework for analysis, it draws attention to the full range of assets that people draw upon to compose a livelihood, namely human, natural, financial, physical, and social and/or cultural assets. Secondly, as an instrument for policy and program design to reduce vulnerability, it emphasizes a holistic understanding of development so that an adequate asset mix can be created, sustained, and transferred from one generation to the next, a feature which has now translated into policies and programs dedicated to asset-building for sustainable livelihood outcomes. Thirdly, it puts people in the community at the centre as the principle agents of development, acting through community based organizations to collaborate with various other agents such as local government, NGOs, and the private sector.

In a related sense, assets are also the basis on which people take action; they can empower people to challenge the structures that determine the way in which resources are allocated. However, these assets cannot be activated without access to them. Social capital is therefore a particularly important asset because it provides access to other assets, and it is access that is the most critical resource of all.

(ABCD) offers a set of principles and practices to mobilize and sustain community economic development. Connections between these principles and practices will take into consideration (i) current interest in sustainable livelihoods as a conceptual framework, (ii) the concept of social capital, (iii) the social psychology of mobilization, (iv) the enhancement of capacity and agency to engage as citizens with the entitlements of citizenship, (v) the role of multiple stakeholders; and (vi) the issue of control over the development process.

As an approach to development, Asset-Based Community Development takes as its starting point the existing assets and strengths of community, particularly the strengths inherent in community-based associations and other social networks. As a strategy, it is shaped by a distinctive set of principles and these, in turn, inform field-based methods and practices. Although no blueprint exists, these methods might include: interviews to elicit examples of successful community initiatives and to identify hidden and unrecognized assets; “asset mapping” when the full range of assets on which the community can draw are comprehensively recorded and documented; mobilization of a core group of community organizers; initiation of a community activity that requires no outside assistance; and a progressive scaling up of such activities, as linkages to external institutions are called upon to invest in community-driven development initiatives.

This approach integrates much of the innovative practice occupying centre stage in development literature, such as that on sustainable livelihoods, the role of social capital, democratization via decentralization, governance and civil society, and psychosocial strategies for community mobilization.

The ABCD approach is designed to recognize the attributes and potential contributions of all — irrespective of age, gender, or class — and to show where opportunities for collaboration exist for mutual gain. Second, ABCD stresses the key role played by formal and informal associations, networks, and extended families at the community level, and by the social relationships that connect local initiatives to external opportunity. In this way, while all types of assets are taken into consideration in the ABCD approach, particular importance is attached to identifying, strengthening, and mobilizing social capital. This is the key to accessing the other assets needed for community economic development. An ABCD approach highlights how and why associations in the community have been able to mobilize people for change in the past,
pointing to the voluntary nature of (non kin-based) associations, the trust and reciprocity that characterizes relationships among members, and the characteristics of leadership in essentially horizontal (rather than hierarchical) organizations. If each and every individual participates in several associations and social networks for different purposes, the traffic of social connections inside and beyond the community is potentially huge.

**Third**, the ABCD approach provides practical tools and methods that can be used by community members to identify and link assets. These include tools for mapping assets and analyzing the local economy, illustrating the potential linkages among assets to optimize local economic opportunity for both exporting out of the community and plugging the leaks that lead to unnecessary draining of resources. Mapping techniques also provide the means for putting value on skills, talents, and capacities that might otherwise be taken for granted in conventional economic analysis, ensuring (for example) that natural, social, and cultural assets are also taken into consideration. It is thus necessarily holistic in its orientation. Just as the sustainable livelihoods approach encourages practitioners to “think holistically, act sectorally,” an ABCD approach encourages community-level activity that optimizes that community’s asset-base, while conscious of that activity’s interconnections with other aspects of community life.

**Fourth**, the ABCD approach is not only people-centred (as in the sustainable livelihoods approach), but is a *citizen-driven* approach. The logical consequence of focusing on assets, capacities, and capabilities is to encourage a proactive role for the citizen, replacing the passive, dependent role of client in the welfare service delivery model of community development practice. The active citizen mobilizes (or is mobilized) at the associational level. As associational life gains momentum, it builds up the capacity over time to leverage external resources, and to claim rights and access to services to which community members are entitled by virtue of state or global citizenship. For example, a group of artisans may need to draw on local resources to ensure a sustained product line. It will also need linkages with external agencies that can help in the design and marketing of its product. ABCD can be an effective mechanism for establishing those internal linkages and mobilizing social capital within the community (sources of raw materials, credit, traditional designs, child care provisioning, an effective water supply) while identifying external resources that can be tapped, such as a producer cooperative, a transportation network, or a source of credit on which the group can draw for marketing purposes. At the same time, the capacity of this artisanal group may be strengthened as an advocate for the community as a whole. For example, it may lead the effort to draw on local government support for a more accessible water supply, serving both domestic and artisanal needs. In sum, external resources are accessed to serve the community’s agenda.

The *niche* for NGOs is now less in direct intervention and more in strengthening civil society to mediate between market and state. Two important functions are integrated in this humanizing role: the **first** is the nurturing of social and economic assets that exist in even the poorest communities; the **second** is advocating for, and holding governments accountable for, the redistribution of more concrete assets through redistribution of land, employment opportunities, public facilities and services to which the poor are entitled. In addition, through humanizing capitalism, civil society can generate “the less tangible assets that enable the process of implementing an ABCD approach is being documented as it unfolds, paying attention to: (i) local adaptations of the approach that maximize its effectiveness in stimulating community-driven development; (ii) the key enabling and constraining conditions at macro- and micro-levels that affect the application of this approach; and (iii) lessons learned about the optimal role for the NGO in the community, and its relationship to other external actors, particularly local government, when introducing this approach at the community level. The overarching research goal of the action research is to discover the extent to which a sustainable improvement in livelihood can be realized when people cease being clients of NGOs and government agencies and instead act as citizens. It will identify the policy environment conducive to community development opportunities being created from “the outside in,” while identifying critical elements of an asset-based strategy that can build linkages from the *inside out* strengthening civil society while stimulating sustainable community economic development.
1.2 Leadership Development

Leadership Development is a process of helping people develop their inner strengths for the benefit of the community. For example, persons in leadership training learn about their personality, emotional intelligence, creativity, leadership style, selling skills, team role preferences, relationship skills, ability to handle stress, and mental toughness in order to better understand the impact they have on others and how to perform more effectively. Community Development can only be sustained over a long period of time if there are motivated and committed local leaders to keep the community development process going. Leadership Development ensures that a constant supply of new people are being trained and encouraged to assume leadership positions within rural areas. Leaders need to understand leadership functions and issues such as team building, networking, and collaboration.

Steps

- Provide training that is sufficient to equip staff with leadership skills, techniques, and theory to enable them to conduct leadership training in local communities.
- Provide annual leadership training for at least one community within their area of responsibility.
- Assist rural communities in their efforts to train and encourage people into leadership positions. It is important to encourage rural citizens to seek leadership positions at all levels whether it be local, state, or on the national level.
- Help communities seek out underrepresented groups to participate in leadership positions or leadership development activities and training.
- Work with schools in local communities to engage and involve students in community development activities. Youth are the community leaders of the future.
- Encourage people from disadvantaged groups to participate and take leadership roles. Cultivate these new leaders to take ever increasing responsibilities and provide them with encouragement and assistance where needed.

Enabling effective innovation

Innovation platforms could be created around crop-livestock value chains and strategies put in place to ensure that innovations are pro-women and pro-poor. Network could best be done by linking research to the policy-makers and the organisations involved, a Fodder Innovation Policy Working Group could be created comprising senior government representatives from the departments of animal husbandry, rural development; heads of NGOs; and scientists from agriculture and fodder research organisations. Building networks and putting institutional arrangements in place to enable innovation is a better way of addressing the fodder shortage problem along with the conventional technology transfer approach. A base-line socio-economic survey is to be conducted.