

USAID Livestock Systems Innovation Lab (LSIL)
Gender and Youth Supplementary Information for Graduate Student Recruitment

Background:

As part of the US Government's Feed the Future initiative to end global hunger and poverty, the Livestock Systems Innovation Lab (LSIL) at the University of Florida (USA) supports research to improve livestock farming in selected target countries. Our vision is to "sustainably improve livestock production in order to improve the nutrition, health, incomes and livelihoods of the poor" (<https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/about-us/>). The University of Florida manages the LSIL and is involved in conducting research on the livestock value chains in Nepal, related to the entrepreneurial opportunities for youth, entitled "Barriers and Opportunities for Youth Entrepreneurship in Livestock Value Chains." One of the research questions is a better understanding of what types of activities are available that would contribute to income generation and provide economic growth opportunities for youth, ages 18-30, particularly young women.

Cross-Cutting Themes: Gender and Youth

Gender is a multi-dimensional issue in livestock systems, involving roles and relationships that may seem fixed and unchangeable. Women are often concentrated in the lower ends of the livestock value chains, frequently without access to the resources needed to be highly productive. Youth unemployment, underemployment, informal employment and working poverty are concerns in virtually every part of the world, but especially in developing countries. The Gender and Youth cross-cutting theme (CCT) within the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems (LSIL) seeks to increase equity and access across livestock value chains through research and capacity development. We aim to understand gaps and drivers for engaging male and female youth in income-generating opportunities in livestock value chains and to launch initiatives to address some of these gaps.

Young people between 15 and 24 years of age number 1.21 billion and account for 15.5 per cent of the global population. Projections suggest that youth will reach 1.29 billion (15.1 per cent of the world total) by 2030 and almost 1.34 billion (13.8 per cent of the overall population) by 2050 (United Nations, 2019). Unemployment among youth represents one of the greatest global challenges. Recent estimates suggest that 600 million jobs would have to be created over the next 15 years to meet youth employment needs. Finding decent work can be especially difficult for this demographic. It is estimated that 96.8 per cent of all young workers in developing countries are in the informal economy. In Nepal, young people account for approximately 20.8 per cent of total population of the country (age group 16-25 years) while 40.68 per cent of the population lies in the age group 16-40.

Youth unemployment, underemployment, informal employment and working poverty are concerns in virtually every part of the world, but especially in developing countries. Global statistics indicate that social entrepreneurs tend to be fairly young (youth are 1.6 times more likely than adults to be engaged in entrepreneurial activity) and male (55 per cent of social entrepreneurs are male and 45 per cent are female). Estimates indicate that youth between the ages of 15-24 account for 15.5% of the world's population (United Nations, 2020). With these high numbers, youth are still far more likely than their counterparts to be unemployed, underemployed, employed in the informal sector, or among the working poor. Employment rates for youth worldwide are currently around 30 per cent for young women and 13 per cent for young men (ILO, 2019).

In youth development, USAID outlines their positive youth development (PYD) approach as engaging "youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential." Such approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems" (YouthPower).

To learn more about the Gender and Youth cross-cutting theme (CCT) within LSIL consult:

<https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/themes/cctgy/>

Project Objectives:

As part of the Gender & Youth efforts for LSIL Phase II, we are looking for research projects (MSc thesis research) to understand the gaps and drivers for engaging male and female youth in income generating opportunities in livestock value chains, especially dairy and goat, through working with partner universities in the target countries.

Potential Research Questions:

- 1) What are the key barriers and opportunities facing youth to become agricultural entrepreneurs in Nepal? Do these differ for males and females?
- 2) What knowledge, attitudes, and practices do smallholder dairy or goat producers, and others connected to the value chain have *particularly as they relate to youth and women's involvement?*
- 3) What are the opportunities for engaging young women in the dairy or goat value chain for sustainable livelihoods? What barriers are unique to young women due to gender constraints?
- 4) What are approaches to successfully engage and maintain youth in livestock value chains in Nepal? Are there examples that are working in Nepal?

How to apply for this research opportunity?

MSc students of Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), who have completed their major course work (especially third semester students of any department), should submit the following documents to be considered for this opportunity (**by the deadline of July 5, 2024**):

1. Application Form (see below Annex 1 for more information),
2. One-page Curriculum Vitae (described in Annex 1),
3. One-page Personal Statement of Interest (described in Annex 1),
4. One-page Letter of Support from Academic Supervisor/Mentor (described in Annex 1),
5. Grade report/academic credentials, and
6. Three-page research proposal following description in Annex 1.

Expectations

Students are encouraged to tie this research to their master's thesis work. Students will be encouraged to implement this research opportunity within one year. At a minimum, students will be required to submit a white paper and present their paper at a national or regional conference related to the topic after the research is completed. A small stipend to participate in the national or regional conference will be provided. In addition, each recipient of funding shall take and receive a certificate for the on-line course "Integrating Gender and Youth into Livestock Research Projects."

Students interested in applying for this opportunity, should have the following qualifications:

- a) MSc students who completed their major course work (third semester students of any department) at the Agriculture and Forestry University. Female students are encouraged to apply.

- b) Educational background should be related to agriculture, animal science, value chain, agricultural economics, or agribusiness management.
- c) Able and willing to conduct field research in rural areas of Nepal.
- d) Able and willing to participate in a gender and youth research training along with their academic supervisor/mentor.
- e) Able and willing to participate in Zoom meetings with the research team to assess progress.
Gender experts from the University of Florida will be willing to serve on the students' advisory committee for this research.

Selection Process

Academic credentials and research proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of a faculty member (academic supervisor/mentor), Gender expert, the Local Capacity Development PI (or his delegate), and the LSIL's Gender & Youth and LCD leaders. We expect that up to six students can obtain funding to do field research and develop research skills through this mechanism.

Interested students should submit a full application package to: utiwari@afu.edu.np (Cc: dorex@afu.edu.np). The subject of the email should be "**Applicant's full name-LSIL-LCD-Research Grant.**"

For questions about this opportunity, please contact:

Dr. Ujjal Tiwari (utiwari@afu.edu.np, 9855083475),
 Dr. Subir Singh (ssingh@afu.edu.np, 9855055205),
 Dr. Nirajan Bhattarai (nbhattarai@afu.edu.np, 9855060704), or,
 Mr. Praseed Thapa (prthapa@afu.edu.np, 9845078833)

References and Webinars to support this project:

- 1) Drs. Colverson and McKune developed a three-part webinar series on “Integrating Gender and Nutrition into the Project Planning Cycle of International Livestock Projects”. The series is available on the LSIL Gender Webpage:
<https://livestocklab.ifas.ufl.edu/events/webinars-on-gender--nutrition/>
- 2) *Engaging young agripreneurs: Options to include youth in private sector extension and advisory services in Rwanda and Uganda*. International Food Policy and Research Institute. (n.d.).
[https://ebrary.ifpri.org/digital/collection/p15738coll5/id/7497#:~:text=A%20study%20in%20Rwanda%20and,internships%3B%20\(6\)%20credit%20and](https://ebrary.ifpri.org/digital/collection/p15738coll5/id/7497#:~:text=A%20study%20in%20Rwanda%20and,internships%3B%20(6)%20credit%20and)
- 3) Catholic Relief Services – *Youth Engagement*
<https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/crs-youth-engagement-eng.pdf>
- 4) United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF] (2019). SAP and UNICEF partner to give young people job skills training. Press release, 25 September. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/sap-and-unicef-partner-give-young-people-job-skills-training>
- 5) United Nations. 2020. *Youth, Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda*.
www.un.org/development/desa/youth/world-youth-report/wyr2020.html
- 6) IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development). 2019. *Creating opportunities for rural youth: 2019 rural development report*. Rome: IFAD. IFAD. (n.d.). Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth.
https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41192713/RDR2019_Chapter09_W.pdf/827a0834-61cc-c880-d962-dddaaa5ca723
- 7) Cunningham, K., Ploubidis, G. B., Menon, P., Ruel, M., Kadiyala, S., Uauy, R., & Ferguson, E. (2015, March 23). *Women’s empowerment in agriculture and child nutritional status in rural Nepal: Public health nutrition*. Cambridge Core.

- <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/public-health-nutrition/article/womens-empowerment-in-agriculture-and-child-nutritional-status-in-rural-nepal/1767D6B46B007CEC813281271D8DD313>
- 8) Khanal, S., Dhital, P., & Christian, S. (n.d.). *Farming the future: Youth enthusiasm and transforming Nepal's economy through Agriculture*. Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development. <https://www.foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj/article/view/928>
 - 9) Paudel, L. N., ter Meulen, U., Wollny, C., Dahal, H., & Gauly, M. (1970, January 1). *Gender aspects in livestock farming: Pertinent issues for sustainable livestock development in Nepal*. VTechWorks Repository. <https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/items/4b9f0062-75c8-41ea-8ca0-ed57eb608721>
 - 10) *Positive youth development measurement toolkit*. YouthPower. (n.d.). <https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development-toolkit>
 - 11) Poudel, R. (2023). *Assessment of Goat Value Chain in Mid Hills of Nepal*. Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies. [https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/107400475/V3I1111-libre.pdf?1700072476=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DAssessment the Goat Value Chain in Mid H.pdf&Expires=1714428699&Signature=B8PB99pCTsLiuOeohJTvdKSc-jo3Vs8b9nfTs00t3GpZ-eYI8qk6zHsQh9f5d0mp7Vq37eUYaHnSw06apcsM1CqVcL7tsz1UOdOu2La0pJOhxVID-0jn9R22DPZ7sM69U5SD6sjZitBHHG8Y4kqYr3rF-hXpNd4~n2aCn~xvBQJkXiE7xcfoaKV8wdAeay5tVsnRoVE9K4LxrXX-NPFpYoejByUAQ6W6suNW6vTIEsfDQPg~ot3wSPtkp2i7t1Bu4ck~1mDoCk7qnDV-nTBIeviuwx04MvLOmVC27MgTy5sYyPOgw7~az9qNH7yb-GxWMgSqdmRNlPqNP76Qu-WbmQ_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA](https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/107400475/V3I1111-libre.pdf?1700072476=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DAssessment%20the%20Goat%20Value%20Chain%20in%20Mid%20Hills%20of%20Nepal.pdf&Expires=1714428699&Signature=B8PB99pCTsLiuOeohJTvdKSc-jo3Vs8b9nfTs00t3GpZ-eYI8qk6zHsQh9f5d0mp7Vq37eUYaHnSw06apcsM1CqVcL7tsz1UOdOu2La0pJOhxVID-0jn9R22DPZ7sM69U5SD6sjZitBHHG8Y4kqYr3rF-hXpNd4~n2aCn~xvBQJkXiE7xcfoaKV8wdAeay5tVsnRoVE9K4LxrXX-NPFpYoejByUAQ6W6suNW6vTIEsfDQPg~ot3wSPtkp2i7t1Bu4ck~1mDoCk7qnDV-nTBIeviuwx04MvLOmVC27MgTy5sYyPOgw7~az9qNH7yb-GxWMgSqdmRNlPqNP76Qu-WbmQ_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA)

Annex 1.

**USAID Livestock Systems Innovation Lab (LSIL)
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Application Form – Deadline July 5, 2024

Note that this form should be submitted with additional documents described in 3, 4 and 5 below.

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant's name:

Academic Department:

Faculty:

University: Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU)

Email:

Phone:

2. FACULTY MENTOR/ADVISOR

Do you have a faculty mentor/advisor? Yes _____, *if Yes complete below.* No _____

Name:

Academic Department:

Faculty:

Email:

Phone:

3. CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

The CV should be one page maximum.

4. PERSONAL STATEMENT OF INTEREST

The Statement of Interest should be one-page maximum describing:

- Why you are interested in this research opportunity.
- Describe your previous gender-related research experience if any. If not, explain how you envision benefiting from this research opportunity.
- Explain how this opportunity will benefit your career trajectory.
- Indicate the commitment to attend the Gender and Youth workshop offered by the LCD project

5. LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR/MENTOR

The Letter of Support should be one page maximum to affirm:

- The supervisor/mentor expresses interest in applicant's research.
- Clearly indicate the commitment to support applicant through the research process.

6. RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The description of proposed research should be three pages maximum including:

1. Title of the proposed research.
2. Introduction and problem statement (limited to one page).
3. Importance of your research and planned publication output(s) from research (limit to half a page).
4. Methodology (limit to one page). Describe how you plan to conduct the research and analyze collected data. What research approach (theoretical framework) and methods (qualitative or quantitative) you will use. Describe potential research sites, sampling frames and sample sizes. Describe limitations if known.
5. Ethical considerations (limit to half a page). Describe if and how you will observe ethical considerations. Indicate if you need to obtain approval from the University's Ethics Committee (Institutional Review Board). Note that research involving human subjects may require approval by the University's Ethics Committee.
6. Reference list (not included in the page count).
7. Timeline and budget (not included in the page count).

Application form and all associated documents must be submitted in ENGLISH. Please use 11pt Times New Romans, single space.

The full application page must be sent electronically to utiwari@afu.edu.np (Cc: dorex@afu.edu.np)

For information about how to write a proposal, visit the following online resources:

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/doing-research/doing-a-doctorate/starting-a-doctorate/writing-a-research-proposal>

<https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/research-proposal/>