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## SUMMARY REPORT

of

### ONLINE ZOOM MEETING ON:

**“ IMPACTS OF COVID-19 TO THE RANGELANDS AND PASTORALIST’S LIVELIHOODS IN ASIA”**

### **CAPA-SAPA**

Webinar on “ IMPACTS OF COVID-19 TO THE RANGELANDS AND PASTORALIST’S LIVELIHOODS IN ASIA”, organized by Central Asian Pastoral Alliance, CAPA, and South Asian Pastoral Alliance ,SAPA, was held in 12 June, 2020, with the participation more than 30 person from India, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Mongolia, as well as ILC staff members from RCU in Jakarta. The main objective of meeting was exchange on the impacts of COVID-19 to the Rangelands and Livelihoods of local communities in South and Central Asia.

The webinar was moderated by Hijaba Ykhanbai, Director, JASIL, focal point of CAPA, and panelists Maratova Elvira., National Federation of PUG, “Kyrgyz Jayity”, Kyrgyzstan; Anu Verna., Focal point, SAPA, India; N.Gankhuyag , Director , National Federation of Pasture User Groups, and Namuulan G., of NFPUG, Mongolia; Sharipov Azizbek., Director, National Association of Dekhan Farmers, NADF, Tajikistan; Rustam Muradov, Coordinator, UNDP/GEF project, Uzbekistan; and Faridon Ahmad, Co-convenor of SAPA, Afghanistan made presentations about the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in their respective countries and sub-regions.

Main questions to the panelists was: i)How pandemic impact to the livelihoods of local communities and herders?, ii)How pandemic impact to the pastureland use by local communities and herders?

**Kyrgyzstan:** Reflections due to the COVID-19 has been changes, as local community become more creative, increased solidarity with each other’s and at local level there new leaders, however impacts as procurement and marketing of milk, meat and transportation of agricultural products has difficulties, as

closed many bazaars/ livestock markets, shortage of labor, etc. Currently not possible calculate impacts and losses, and role of many organizations are now implement preventing measures. At national levels there are need to reconsider development strategy of the nation, and assess long term impacts of COVID-19.

In **India** during the lockdown Pastoralists who are affected by shortage of grass and water, livestock markets are closed ,no market for value added dairy products, obstruction in selling of milk, and milk Product

As well as the cost of animal husbandry is increased and difficulties in procuring food items and Government scheme; and COVID package is not in favour of maldharis (herders), and . during the period was done: rapid Assessment on the implication of lockdown on pastoralists and rangelands in India, with the support of ActionAid.

Presenter recommend: The cost of grasses and cattle feed are should be regulated by the governments, and in light with the increasing conflict with the locals calls for the safety provisions, necessary steps to be taken.

**Mongolia:** The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and its short-term spread around the world is a new and major threat to country's agriculture and natural resources sector. Mongolia is now in the prevention stage of COVID-19 pandemic spread. However to the question on “Did measures to prevent the spread of Covid -19 virus affect your income?” around half of respondents answered , as they are “affected”. During the prevention period children enrolled in distance learning, but 40 % of herders compiled on the poor condition of distance learning. Presenter concluded, that most national and international policy documents in the field of agriculture and natural resource sector do not specifically address the COVID-19 pandemic

The current policy and legal environment does not address support for herder households and the production, export and import of livestock products. Therefore, current agriculture and natural resource policies need to be reviewed and updated to integrate with national measures to improve pandemic risk management and resilience.

**Afghanistan:** Fewer pastoralists affected than common people and they life in pandemic free area in the country. There are food shortage at the beginning of Covid -19 , and there was done pandemic awareness campaign and distribution of kit to 5616 Pastoralists , (Mask, Gloves, Soap and Animal feed ) and hundreds pastoralists health voluntaries received medicines, **5000** bag wheat distributed on pastoralists in Kabul **1000** MT wheat distributed on pastoralists in Kandahar, 34 pastoralists received food items from WFP in Helmand province and more than 1 million ha Rangelands surveyed and entreated in rangeland bank and this survey is continuing. Its good news that 28 March named as Pastoralists National Day in Afghanistan.

**Uzbekistan:** The first coronavirus infection in Uzbekistan was detected on March 15. In the regions of Uzbekistan where infections have been identified, emergency measures have been introduced to prevent the spread of infection. There are full isolation of labor migrants arriving from foreign countries.

In connection with isolation / quarantine of the trip of scientists - employees of the research institute for pasture use, geobotanic survey, animal husbandry, etc. in pasture areas temporarily suspended (March-June) , there were problems with conducting geobotanical surveys, drawing up grazing plans, etc.

Restoration of pasture vegetation - the construction of fencing of pasture crop nurseries, along with the provision of seeds for highly productive pasture crops, is being delayed. A decrease in activity in the repair and reconstruction of water pipelines, other pasture infrastructure.

In connection with the increase in unforeseen types of costs in the country's budget, the Government is forced to review budget revenues and expenses, and reduce some types of costs, for example, the construction of new wells / boreholes, drilling and other significant socio-economic measures.

The government is using economic leverage to reduce the impact of quarantine on the socio-economic situation of not only the activities of business entities, but also of every citizen of the country; Pasture business entities are offered various loans for the purchase of machinery, production of products for export , loan repayment periods are repaid or extended.

**Tajikistan:** Pastoralists and small-scale ranchers have become vulnerable and unable to work on their land or take care of their flocks. They faced difficulties in gaining access to markets for their products, purchasing seeds and other necessary resources, as well as difficulties due to increased food prices and reduced purchasing power. Pastoralists also face difficulties accessing social protection systems, including health insurance, due to the pandemic, which threatens the food security and nutrition of vulnerable pastoralists and weakens their ability to fight disease.

**General conclusions:** Limited ability to work freely (India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan), Difficulties in selling agriculture raw materials, markets (Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan) and cities are inaccessible for pastoralists (India, Kyrgyzstan) , there are more attention on social and health issues of pastoralists (Afghanistan, Tajikistan), no reason for agriculture business as usual, difficulties on animal fodder (Uzbekistan, India) , and the food systems has some difficulties and it going to be changed (Afghanistan, India) , sustainable use of pasture, livelihoods and mobility of herders may become an issue (India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Afghanistan ), and there are some intentions on de-urbanization and Land grabbing in pastoral areas (India, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, etc). Currently some countries are going to review development strategies and budget redistribution measures (Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia), and in case of some other countries need to recognize the pastoralists and importance of rangelands (India, Uzbekistan).

