

SCALING FEEDS AND FORAGES INNOVATIONS FOR SMALLHOLDER LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS IN SON LA PROVINCE

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Problem statement

Smallholder livestock farmers in Vietnam's Northwest Highlands face seasonal feed shortages and largely depend on low-quality crop residues and natural grasses, leading to inadequate animal nutrition and low livestock productivity.

The solution

As part of Chăn-hênh initiative, a participatory model was developed to promote adoption of improved forages and feed technologies for cattle and pigs. The approach combines:

- Capacity building for extension staff and farmers through Training-of-Trainers (ToTs) and Training-of-Farmers (ToFs)
- Demonstration farms and trainings on forage cultivation, feed management, conservation practices (e.g., silage).
- Integration of feed innovations into local extension programs through partnerships and co-investments.

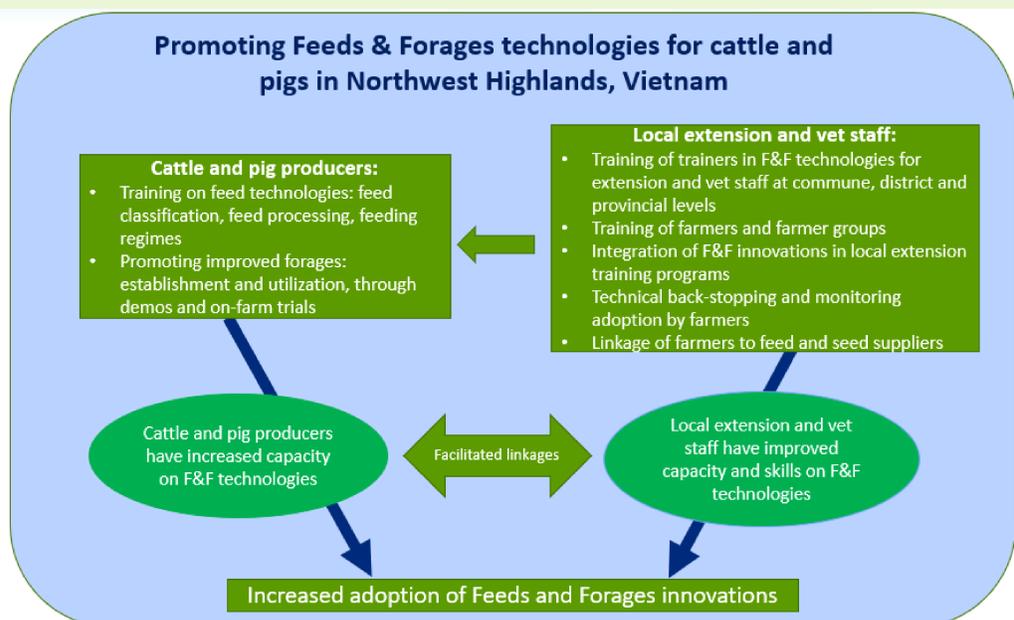


Scalability and regional relevance

The next phase of the Chăn-hênh initiative will:

- Scale this model to additional communes in Son La
- Integrate complementary innovations to improve cattle productivity and strengthen local cattle value chains.
- Scaling will be led by local partners, supporting wider adoption and replication across similar livestock systems in the region.

For more information: <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/168314>



Key results and impacts

- **Extension capacity strengthened:** 56 extension and veterinary staff trained through ToTs.
- **Farmer capacity increased:** Co-investment with Agricultural Service Centers enabled 34 ToFs, reaching 1,183 farmers (33.8% women) on forage establishment, feed management, and silage.
- **High-performing forage varieties identified:** Green Elephant, VA06, Mun River Guinea, and Mombasa Guinea grasses yielding up to 124–143 t/ha fresh biomass in the rainy season. Ubon stylo improves dietary protein supply.
- **Improved forage utilization:** Feeding trials with cattle underway to evaluate productivity and economic benefits of improved forages and feed innovations under farmer conditions.
- **Impact:** Linking forage production, farmer training, and feeding trials supports adoption of improved feeding practices and more resilient livestock systems

Partners and donors involved

Chan-henh is co-implemented by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (ABC), the Vietnam Institute of Animal and Veterinary Sciences (VIAVS), the Vietnam Women's Academy (VWA), the Department of Agriculture and Environment (DAE) of Son La Province, the Sub-Department of Animal Husbandry, Animal Health and Aquaculture of Son La Province, and the Agriculture Division and Agriculture Service Center of selected communes within Son La, working closely in collaboration with local actors including women and men livestock keepers.

This work is supported by the Aquatic Foods (SAAF) Science Program, and previously the CGIAR Sustainable Animal Productivity initiative. CGIAR research is supported by contributions to the [CGIAR Trust Fund](#)

Regional Conference
Sustainable Livestock Transformation for Food Systems in Asia and the Pacific
Hanoi, Vietnam, 24-25 March 2026



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