

# National Highland Research Development Centre

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## Background

The center was established in the year 1995 as one of the four main research centers in the country under the Council of RNR Research of Bhutan (CoRRB). The centre's main focus was on livestock research where it coordinated livestock research activities in the country in collaboration with other research centers. The present structures were completed in the year 2003 with financial assistance from SDC/ Helvetas. In the year 2010, the nomenclature was changed to RNR research and development center and aligned with the Department of Livestock under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. Over the years the center has gone through various transformations to meet the changing developmental needs of the people. In the year 2016, the center was renamed as the National highland Research and Development center to focus on highland livestock development. Yak is the main source of livelihood for most highlanders. The decline in yak-rearing households emerged as one of the greater concerns and accordingly there was a need to provide enabling policy support on priority to protect the highlanders and their livelihoods. In the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP, realizing its importance in traditional, socio-cultural and bio-diversity conservation aspects, highland development was identified as one of the core programs in the overall plan. Further, in the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP, highland development was identified as a "Highland Program" wherein the integrated plans were framed to trigger the tapping of economic and employment opportunities for the highlanders. The center focus its livestock development activities in the highlands which are

defined as “those areas above 2500 masl where there are untapped potential opportunities for enhancing sustainable livelihood despite harsh environmental conditions”. The center which is under the Research and Extension Division, DoL, works in close collaboration with the Regional Livestock Development offices, the district livestock offices and the local governments in initiating and implementing the development plans.

## **Vision**

Harmonious and socio-economically vibrant highland communities with sustainable livelihood and happiness

## **Mission**

To promote highland as a socio-cultural and economic hub with fair and equitable access to resources and knowledge for tapping potential opportunities through a holistic approach

## **Mandates**

- To promote the sustainable alpine livelihood of the highland communities by exploring diverse economic opportunities through a holistic approach.
- To promote and preserve the socio-cultural traditions of the highlanders in consistence with GNH principles through sustainable management of animal energy resources.
- To ensure equitable access, sustainable management and utilization of Rangeland ecology and resources.
- To conserve animal genetic resources and generate technological innovations to enhance to income generation and employment.
- Conduct research on highland livestock, farming systems and socio-economics

# Values

- Integrity
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness
- Innovation
- Sustainability

# Roles and Functions

1. Prepare development and research plans, budgets and strategies;
2. Support in developing highland policies and research;
3. Support in developing highland projects for the acquisition of funds;
4. Prepare human resources development plan;
5. Develop and implement comprehensive production, processing and marketing strategies for highland development;
6. Monitor and evaluate progress and prepare analytical reports;
7. Coordinate and implement highland research activities;
8. Support Dzongkhags in implementing highland development activities;
9. Produce and publish scientific papers and other multi-media on highland development;
10. Explore payment for environmental services scheme;

# Roles and Functions of Units

## 1. Sustainable Alpine Livelihood Unit

1. Implement alpine livelihood supporting activities;
2. Monitor and evaluate alpine livelihood activities;
3. Develop alpine livelihood activities and eco-tourism;
4. Conduct research on alpine livelihood activities;
5. Maintain technical information and data on Highland;

6. Establish and monitor yak production and development;
7. Coordinate input supply for farmers;

## **2. Animal Energy Unit**

1. Promote the use of alternative energy sources;
2. Diversify the use of draft animals for business opportunities;
3. Support biogas production;
4. Conduct research on alternative animal energy resources;
5. Support and monitor Mithun production and development.

## **3. Rangeland Farming and Climate Change Adaptation Unit**

1. Promote climate change adaptation and mitigation activities for highlanders;
2. Collaborate with relevant agencies to enhance livestock productivity in the Highland;
3. Collaborate with relevant agencies to enhance management, productivity and utilisation of rangelands resources;
4. Conduct climate change adaptation research for Highlanders.

## **4. Pro-Poor Livestock Farming Unit**

1. Establish and monitor goat production and development;
2. Establish and monitor apiculture production and development;
3. Establish and monitor sheep production and development;
4. Establish and monitor equine production and development;
5. Establish and monitor mastiff dog production and development;