



Livestock for Livelihoods

Farm Africa's Livestock for Livelihoods project helped Ugandan and Ethiopian pastoralist women establish Women's Livestock Groups that rear and add value to goats, run savings and loans associations that support the development of small-scale businesses and learn how to improve their families' nutrition.

This booklet is one of a series of various learning products generated from the project.

Project duration:

The project ran from 2 March 2018 to 31 July 2021. This booklet was written in January 2022.

Project budget:

£3,845,000, of which £3,370,000 was provided by UK aid from the UK government.

GOAT HUSBANDRY BY PASTORALIST COMMUNITIES

FACTORS AFFECTING THE ADOPTION OF IMPROVED PRACTICES IN KARAMOJA AND SOUTH OMO

The drylands of Ethiopia's South Omo zone and Uganda's Karamoja sub-region are home to thousands of pastoralists who migrate with their livestock in search of pasture. Livestock is the main source of livelihood for the communities found in these areas. In both locations, disease, drought, and degraded grasslands have cut the size of herds, so although livestock rearing is common it is unproductive.

Communities living in these regions are faced with other challenges such as high poverty rates and food insecurity, leading to high rates of malnutrition and stunting in children. Food insecurity is a major and ongoing challenge rendering women and children vulnerable to malnutrition. The heavy reliance on natural resources renders this livestock-based livelihood sensitive to climate dynamics such as recurrent droughts seen in the two regions. The regions are faced with constant insecurity, conflicts, and subsequent instability, which further increases the challenges faced by the pastoralist communities.

Farm Africa, through the Livestock for Livelihoods project, supported pastoralist women living in these regions to set up sustainable, small-scale goat-rearing enterprises that will help them generate an income and provide their families with a more nutritious diet. The enterprises comprise of rearing goats for breeding or provision of breeding services, for milk production or for sale in live animal markets.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Goats in South Omo and Karamoja are often managed by women. To help women pastoralists improve their goat production, household nutrition, and incomes, the Livestock for Livelihoods programme ensured that livestock and rangeland systems were productive, sustainable and appropriate for female pastoralists. Farm Africa set up a revolving goat scheme across South Omo and Karamoja, where each woman selected as a primary beneficiary received does (female goats) from Farm Africa. Once that doe had kids, these were passed on to other vulnerable women (secondary beneficiaries), creating a cycle of improved prosperity. For more details on the revolving goat scheme read our booklet [Revolving Goat Fund](#).

A total of 10,350 women benefitted from the revolving fund, which strengthened women's economic empowerment. The women were also organised into cooperative and value addition groups where they received training on business skills and financial literacy, as well as equipment and tools to kick-start their business enterprises. The project worked closely with Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) who then provided livestock extension services to the women, ensuring the goats are in good health at all times. These skills allowed the pastoralist women living in South Omo and Karamoja to set up sustainable, small-scale goat-rearing enterprises that generated an income as well as improved their families' nutrition.

To ensure the women had access to healthy and improved breeds of bucks for breeding, one member from each Women's Livestock Group (WLG) was selected to become a buck keeper. The buck keepers were given two bucks each (Boer in South Omo, Toggenburg in Karamoja), which were then available to the WLG for crossbreeding with the local does. The cross-bred offspring grow faster, are more efficient feed converters and produce more milk and meat than the local goats, as well as being easier to raise than purebred exotic goats. By strengthening breeding and livestock health services, Farm Africa is increasing livestock productivity, meaning that pastoralist women can generate greater income from the small-scale goat-rearing enterprises they set up with support from the project.

The women beneficiaries received training on improved goat husbandry, covering housing, feeding practices, disease control, use of veterinary services, and fodder production. The implementation of improved husbandry practices resulted in improved productivity of the goats and increased incomes from the sale of goats and goat products.

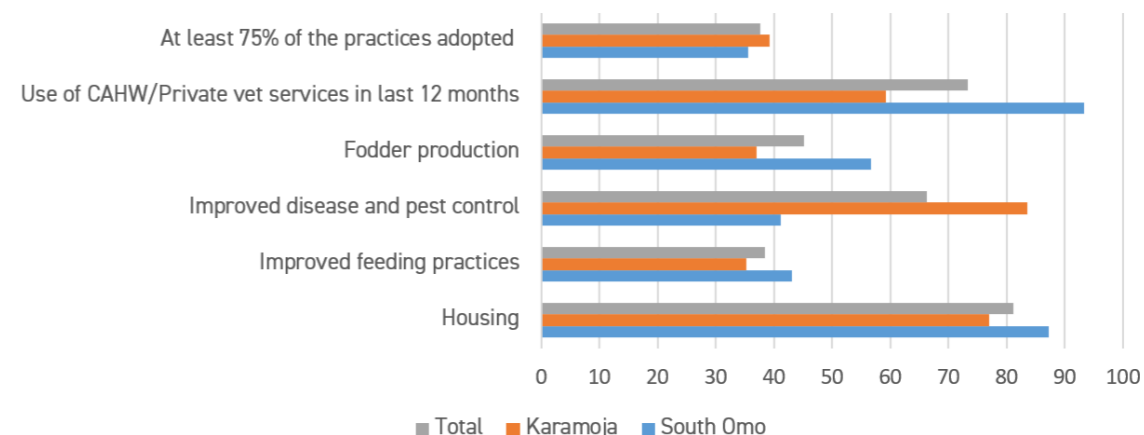
RESULTS AND IMPACT

Generally, the proportion of farmers practising improved husbandry practices went up between the beginning of the project in 2018 and 2021. The use of housing to protect goats from extreme weather increased from 71.6% in South Omo and 1.0% in Karamoja to 87.3% and 77.0% respectively. Similarly, the practice of improved feeding increased from 0% and 10.6% at the baseline to 43.0% and 35.3% in 2021 in South Omo and Karamoja respectively. The proportion of farmers that sought advice or services from the CAHWs or private veterinary service providers also increased. In 2021, about 73% of the farmers reported having sought services or advice from CAHWs or private veterinary services, as compared to about 60% at the baseline. More farmers in South Omo as compared to farmers in Karamoja practised housing, improved feeding, fodder production, and use of CAHWs or private veterinary services as shown in Figure 1. This was attributed to the improved knowledge gained by the beneficiaries and increased availability of services as a result of the project.

Adoption of housing for goats, improved feeding practices and fodder production are mainly dependent on land size, membership of the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), and access to financial credit. These practices are also seen to be implemented more by women who have higher economic empowerment. Adoption of improved disease and pest control practices is associated with increased women's economic empowerment and the goat herd size. Since the women manage the goats, they can direct more resources from their increased incomes to improve the goats' health. Female-headed households were also recorded to seek advice or use services from CAHWs or private service providers more than male-headed households. Although land size and household income showed a tendency to influence adoption in South Omo, women's economic empowerment was the only significant factor associated with adoption intensity. In Karamoja, there was no significant factor associated with adoption intensity. Karamoja had significant improvements in the households practising improved husbandry between the baseline and 2021.



Uptake Rate of Improved Goat Husbandry Practices



FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ADOPTION OF GOOD HUSBANDRY PRACTICES

In general, factors associated with the adoption of improved goat husbandry practices included:

- 1. The productive land size owned by the household** – households owning larger land parcels were better able to implement the improved husbandry practices compared to those with smaller parcels.
- 2. Goat herd size** – households with smaller goat herds were implementing more of the improved practices compared to those with larger herds.
- 3. Women's economic empowerment score** – women who are more economically empowered can put into practice improved goat husbandry.
- 4. Household income level** – the higher the income level of the households, the more improved practices implemented.

There was a downward tendency for households that accessed financial credit to have adopted some of the improved practices. This suggests that these households are borrowing for consumption and not investment as the households that borrow frequently from the VSLA are those that are struggling to meet their daily household consumption needs.

In summary, women's participation in economic activities has increased in both Karamoja and South Omo pastoral communities. Women have engaged in business activities such as roadside market vending and sale of vegetables, goats' milk, live goats and products. Equally so, almost all women in both communities joined women's saving

groups to mobilise resources needed for good animal husbandry practices like deworming, shelter and provision of supplementary feeding to their goats.

Unfortunately, the challenges of adopting better animal husbandry practices in both Karamoja and South Omo still outweigh the advances. Some of these challenges include:

- Insecurity from cattle raids, inter-clan/tribal conflicts, and armed conflict has resulted in widespread asset depletion across the entire pastoral communities in the two regions.
- Lack of access to and control of land ownership, inheritance issues, land disputes and poor land policies.
- Service delivery gaps such as extension services, supply of agro-inputs, breeding services and disease control in the two areas.
- Changing weather patterns as a result of climate change lead to more frequent extreme events (floods or drought), increasing temperatures and changing rainfall amounts and distribution. These changes result in more variable water availability and thus in more variable pasture quality and availability.

"I will be happy to receive these goats to help me bring up my family. I am happy I will get milk for my children. In our society women have never owned their own goats before."

Nyanga Maria, Karamoja, Uganda



LESSONS LEARNT

The success of the approach is entrenched in the multifaceted nature of the project. All the women beneficiaries received training on goat husbandry and management before receiving the goats. This was done to ensure that they were well equipped with the knowledge and skills to appropriately look after the goats once they had received them. The women were also trained on fodder production, collection and conservation of locally available feeds including crop by-products and/or through the growing of forage crops. This integrated approach in the delivery of the project activities and support to the beneficiaries has ensured that by the end of the project, the beneficiaries are implementing the improved husbandry practices.

As access to finance is a challenge amongst the beneficiaries, the project encouraged the women to participate in VSLAs to mobilise savings. In the VSLAs some women have created a goat fund kitty where they are contributing small amounts from which they can borrow to buy drugs to treat any sick animals. The project included the component of improving veterinary service delivery by supporting CAHWs to deliver animal health services to the women beneficiaries and this resulted in a significant improvement of animal health services at kebele levels, thus contributing to more women seeking vet services for their livestock. The model of distributing the goats to individual beneficiaries rather than to groups ensured a sense of individual responsibility in taking care of the goats and in paying for any health services required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Projects that aim to improve the livelihoods of pastoralists should integrate activities aimed at promoting land access, control, and ownership reforms for meaningful and long-lasting impact in the target communities. We see that land ownership has a bearing on the uptake of improved husbandry practices such as fodder production. Therefore, it is an integral component on improving livelihoods through livestock programmes.

Livelihood promotion or strengthening interventions must be preceded with economic empowerment initiatives for women to meaningfully promote participation in the development projects. Other contextual factors that should be considered include the involvement of local clan leaders, the breeds of the animals given out (for projects distributing livestock) and the general climatic conditions of the project areas.

Given the social challenges women face in terms of land ownership and inheritance, among other things, it is also advisable to incorporate gender-transformative approaches and training into development projects by engaging boys and men to change their mindset and promote female engagement at leadership levels.

Improving resilience and adoption of better breeds should focus on cross-breeding existing local breeds with exotic breeds to improve productivity while maintaining indigenous traits of survival in harsh climatic conditions and preservation of heritage attached to the animals by the pastoralist communities.

Farm Africa promotes sustainable agricultural practices, strengthens markets and protects the environment in rural Africa.

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