

## Maintaining Core Borana Breeds Via Centre-Based Feeding System for Drought Affected Pastoralists of Borana

### Introduction

The project is implemented in Dire, Dubluk and Wachile sites that are found in the woredas of Borana Zone/Plateau in Oromia Regional State, which is the southern-most part of Ethiopian lowlands, bordering northern Kenya. The Borana Zone is mostly a pastoral livelihood zone located bordering Somali Region in the east, Guji Zone to the northeast and SNNPR region in the west. Its altitude ranges from 1,600 m above sea level (asl) in the northeast to about 1,000 m (asl) in the extreme south.

The climate is semi-arid, with average annual rainfall ranging between 350 mm and 900 mm. The precipitation is bimodal with 60% of the annual rainfall occurring between March and May. The plateau has the savanna in the north, which has potential for carrying high numbers of livestock, the bush land with high shrub cover in the central area, the medium-potential grassland in the east, and the volcanic areas in the west.

The pastures are dominated by savannah vegetation, with a varying proportion of open grasslands, perennial herbaceous and woody vegetation. Livestock rearing is the major food and income source for the 1.1 million people residing in the zone. In normal years, the zone is one of the major sources of livestock supplying to local, national and international markets. However, recurrent droughts are integral to these pastoral systems, but the frequency of drought has increased from 20 to 5 years. Drought sometimes occurs after 3 years. The project areas' communities are some of the frequently drought affected communities in Ethiopia.

The communities primarily rely on pastoralism as their way of life. However, drought is a very common disaster for the communities, and lack of animal feed due to drought-induced pasture land degradation has caused the death of large stock of live animals. This threatened the lives of the Borana core breeding animals.

Understanding this, SOS SAHEL ETHIOPIA a local NGO, using financial support from UNOCHA, CST together and NCA, in collaboration with its partners innovated and implemented a good practice that aimed at saving Borana core breeding animals via an innovative approach; namely, centre-based animal feeding system.



#### INTERVENTION AREA

Enhanced production and livelihood diversification



#### LOCATION

Dire, Dubluk and Wachile sites of Borana Zone in Oromia Regional State.



#### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Coordinated by SOS Sahel Ethiopia, Consortium members of the project include CARE and ACF, and work in collaboration with the woreda offices of health and DPPC. UNOCHA, CST together and NCA funded the project.

### Beneficiaries

The practice benefited 2,857 households (724 female and 2,133 male) via the provision of animal feeds and veterinary services. At the same time, 2,040 (705 female and 1,335 male) targeted households benefited from the cash paid for destocked livestock. Over and above, through Cash for Work Activities, 1,882 households (782 female and 1,100 male) benefited.

### Methodological Approach

Identification of innovative pastoralist households, those who showed interest to engage in centre-based animal feeding system were done in a participatory fashion.

In this good practice, SOS Sahel Ethiopia purchased and distributed 67,283 bales of hay (1,009,245 kg), animal feed and 2,078 quintals of concentrate animal feed. They professionally recommended veterinary drugs and equipment and delivered them to the targeted beneficiaries. They were able to reach 4,248 core breeds which were identified, ear tagged, vaccinated, treated for external parasites and provided with supplementary feed.

A centre-based feeding system and proper feed management system was put in place to meet the feeding requirement. This was done by deploying temporarily employed 20 guards and ten feeders (two guards and one feeder per feeding centre) to coordinate and facilitate proper feeding and veterinary services. The target households brought their cattle to the feeding centre near the water centre and the cattle accessed animal feed (hay and concentrate) as per the livestock

emergency guideline standards (LEGS) and measurement standards. The service providers were not supposed to move house to house; rather, they served the cattle and the target householders at the feeding centre where the guards would hand over the daily feed requirement to the feeders, and in turn the feeders would hand over the entitlement to each beneficiary after identifying and registering the beneficiaries. This is a very cost-effective method in saving the lives of the Borana core breeding animals in a severe disaster situation.

The intervention has also been using inclusive-approach so as to address the plight and needs of members of the drought affected communities especially women, children under five and elderly. It has also been using twin-track approach in addressing the practical and strategic needs arising from gender issues. Initially, at the assessment stage, gender-disaggregated data is collected from the ground, followed by consulting the community to identify their priority needs and concerns in all the stages of the project cycle. In doing so, the practice has been designed to ensure that women and men participate and benefit equally.

## Results

- The lives and livelihoods of disaster affected community are protected and restored through the provision of supplementary animal feeding and veterinary services.
- Improved ability of pastoralists to meet their household needs; for instance, it is planned in the good practice to slaughter 3000 livestock (1200 cattle and 1800 shoats), and actually 2948 livestock (1184 cattle and 1764 shoats) 98.3% have been slaughtered. For the destocked livestock, the community (705 female and 1,347 male beneficiaries) is compensated and paid 2,712,260 birr that helped the stressed pastoralists subjected to drought to enhance the beneficiaries' purchasing capacity for food.
- Improved nutrition of families affected by malnutrition; for instance, 6,550 family members (2,428 female and 4,670 male) benefited from the distributed meat, after checking of its edibility by animal health professionals, this contributed to the improvement of the health and nutrition of women and children under five.
- Improved nutrition of core breeding animals to support survival and aid recovery.
- Drought-induced death of core breeding Borana livestock has been minimised.

## Validation

The practice has been validated through a meeting by both female and male beneficiaries of the project wherein it came out that it has properly and timely addressed their needs. The practice has also been evaluated and validated via a field visit and an end line meeting by a task force constituting the pastoral office, animal health office, water office, gender office, education office and the likes; community livestock

emergency committee; kebele administration; and by the donor.

## Success Factors

- Using a combination of approaches such as centre-based, integrated, participatory, cluster-based approaches to save the lives and livelihoods of disaster affected communities.
- The community actively participated in the whole project cycle management and contributed their share in the process of selecting an appropriate feeding centre and arranging the feeding plot.
- The intervention focused on the priority problem of pastoralist community, that is, severe shortage of feed and water.
- Over and above, customary institution (Geda System) played a significant role in building strong relationship and trust among communities.

## Constraints

Shortage of feed and pasture, mortality of livestock and lack of financing were among the major challenges faced. In addition, there was no experience of centre-based livestock feeding system before and persuading the beneficiaries that the livestock should be fed using a centre-based approach selectively was a challenge. This challenge was addressed through continuous consultation.

## Sustainability

The project has identified and taken measures that ensure sustainability of the impacts. These include:

- Involvement of relevant stakeholders with diversified skills and competencies at all stages of the project cycle;
- Full participation and collaboration of the beneficiaries and their ownership of the process;
- Adequate knowledge and skills.

## Replicability and Up-scaling

- The implementation modality in the assessment, designing, implementation and follow-up process is cost-effective, result-oriented and inclusive that it can be easily adopted by others.
- The very approach of addressing the need of the drought affected pastoralist community in a cost-effective and community-friendly manner can be easily scaled up to other areas and localities.
- The practice has been innovated with low cost, simple technology, mutual understanding as well as local resources with high commitment and full participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

## Additional Information


National Guidelines for Livestock Relief Interventions Ethiopia  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7eba/640a6c7a91d8efe6027e34be6a98bb791432.pdf>

<https://sahel.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Gender-Pastoralism-Vol-1-ebook.pdf>

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