

Fourth Ethiopian Fodder Roundtable Meeting

Topic: Effective delivery of input services (AI, feed and veterinary services) to livestock development in Ethiopia

22nd June 2010

ILRI, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Summary

The IFAD-Funded 'Fodder Adoption Project' (FAP) uses feed scarcity as an entry point to address major constraint in livestock development in selected districts in Ethiopia. It also recognizes that fodder scarcity is not just about technologies but also about the collective capacity of a network of individuals and organizations. It therefore uses an innovation system framework to engage multiple actors along livestock commodity value chains—facilitating continuous interaction among stakeholders to generate innovation rather than just research products or technologies. The Fourth Ethiopian Fodder Roundtable was held on the theme of 'Role of effective delivery of input services (AI, veterinary services, and feed) to fodder/dairy development in Ethiopia'. The roundtable discussions were facilitated based on discussion points emerging from brief PowerPoint presentations. The presentations outlined some key constraints contributing to feed scarcity in Ethiopia: the subsistence mode of production; poorly developed market for livestock products; chronic shortage of fodder biomass; dominance of arable production; feed being an intermediate commodity; weakness of private sector; and an extension system which focuses on the cereal sector. AI provision in Ethiopia is weak due to the constraints associated with lack of breeding policy, lack of regular monitoring of bulls for reproductive performance, absence of a herd registration and recording system, poor technical, financial and managerial support and poor networking of the service. Formation of dairy farmers associations, a cattle breeders association and establishing private business associations were suggested as options for effective delivery of AI services.

The presentation on the lessons from experiences of facilitating multi-stakeholder platforms as a means for stimulating innovation in livestock development highlighted that multi-stakeholder platforms are useful in stimulating interactions among a wide range stakeholders involved in livestock value chain. From an initial focus on fodder, the scope of the discussions was broadened as emerging issues expanded particularly in dairy sector. The project started with fodder and evolved to deal with other issues such as veterinary and AI services, marketing, etc. in the course of the project implementation. The meeting concluded with a final plenary synthesis discussion summarizing intervention/actions needed for effective delivery of input services to smallholder livestock production. The roundtable participants recommended that the livestock sector should be given strong policy attention (e.g., breeding policy), government line departments to focus on regulatory activities and strengthening linkages between federal, regional and Woreda structures while creating a conducive environment for private sector activity through provision of credit facilities, improved access to foreign currency, loosening of bureaucratic bottlenecks in importation of essential inputs, developing replicable business models such as business hubs, and formation of business associations and unions.

1. Background

The Ethiopia Fodder Roundtable has become a useful forum to discuss common issues of concern in fodder/livestock development in Ethiopia. Three roundtables have already been held on different topical issues over the last two and half years. The discussions covered a range of interesting issues around feed as a component of livestock value chains in Ethiopia. Based on recent field experiences in facilitation of action research on fodder, input services (AI, veterinary and feed services) continue to be a major constraint for sustainable fodder and dairy development. Therefore, the Fourth Fodder Roundtable was held on the theme of 'Role of effective delivery of input services (AI, veterinary services, and feed) to fodder/dairy development in Ethiopia'. The fourth Roundtable was convened on 22nd of June, 2010 at ILRI Addis Ababa campus.

The roundtable discussions were facilitated based on discussion points arising from brief oral power point presentations. The meeting concluded with a final plenary synthesis discussion summarizing intervention/actions needed for effective delivery of input services (AI, feed and veterinary services) to smallholders livestock production. The highlights of major discussion points and synthesis are presented as follows.

Session I: Paper presentations and discussions

Feed resources for commercial livestock production in Ethiopia -opportunities and challenges – Alan Duncan, ILRI

Alan outlined the major constraints contributing to feed scarcity in Ethiopia. The constraints include the subsistence nature of livestock production, focus on staple cereals, poorly developed markets for livestock products-meat and milk, chronic shortage of biomass as reflected in high relative prices of biomass over concentrate feeds, dominance of arable production, feed being an intermediate commodity, weakness of private sector, extension coverage dominated by sectoral structure and package mode, land tenure arrangements which discourage investments in long-term crops such as perennial fodders and fodder trees. Some progress has been made on land tenure front with land certification. He concluded the presentation by suggesting the way forward to address the constraints. There is a favourable environment emerging for the livestock sector with urbanization leading to increased demand for livestock products and improving infrastructure. The other enabling factor is the dwindling grazing resource which is forcing other feed sources to be considered. The PowerPoint can be accessed here: <http://hdl.handle.net/10568/1985>

Q: Why is the involvement of private sector so weak in livestock sector?

Ans: Shortage of support services are major problems. Business people need business development support services. Shortage of initial capital to invest in expensive livestock

enterprises is a big hurdle to private investors. Also business people who have the money lack the technical know how about livestock production and livestock experts on the other hand do not have initial capital.

Factors affecting effective delivery of artificial insemination and veterinary services: Ada'a case study – Dr. Alemayehu Lemma, Debre Zeit Vet Faculty, Addis Ababa University

The presentation highlighted the factors that affect the success of AI services. The major factors that affect the success include performance of the bull, collection, storage, processing and transport of semen, reproductive performance of the cow; estrus manifestation/detection, conception/fertility rates of the female, insemination technique; the site of semen deposition, the time of insemination, presence of appropriate breeding policy, efficiency of AI technicians and commitment of AI centers. He argued that AI services are extremely poor in the country as reflected in negligible population of hybrids (0.35%) and exotic (0.04%) cows in the country and less than 1% AI coverage. Only 791 artificial technicians were trained until 2005/06. The poor AI service in Ethiopia can also be attributed to the constraints associated with the absence of a national breeding policy, lack of regular monitoring of bulls for reproductive diseases and performance, absence of a herd registration and recording system, poor technical, financial and managerial performance and poor monitoring and networking of the service. He claimed that the poor AI service at Ada'a is reflective of the poor AI service in the country. Lack of structural linkages between AI Center and service giving units, absence of collaboration and regular communication between National Artificial Insemination Centre (NAIC) and stakeholders and inadequate resources in terms of inputs and facilities are the factors crippling AI services in Ethiopia. The PowerPoint can be accessed here: <http://hdl.handle.net/10568/1981>

Comment: The number of AI technicians you reported in your presentation (around 800 trained) might have gone elsewhere in search of greener pastures. I suspect the number of active AI technicians is far below than what is reported in your presentation.

Q: Most research activities are limited to central parts of the country such as Debre Zeit and Addis Ababa. Why do you not consider other places like Mekele, Bahir Dar, Awassa, etc?

Ans: There are some research activities going in milk sheds around regional towns. I presented about Ada'a because the project is operating at Ada'a and wanted to see the problems in AI services at Ada'a. For example, there is a lot of research around Fogera.

Q: Why is NAIC so weak? Does the livestock master plan address this issue? Why are all the problems and suggestions from research falling on deaf ears?

Ans: NAIC was initially established on an ad hoc basis based on recommendations by senior officials. It was not strategically designed to serve the whole country. It is a unit in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with a limited mandate. It does not have the authority to coordinate activities at regional level. NAIC is so weak that there are only 19 active bulls producing semen for the whole country (cattle

population about 50 million). The bulls also have major transmittable diseases. The major problem lies in the lack of a coherent breeding policy. There has been a draft breeding policy document on the table since 2003. But no decision has been made so far.

Comment: There has been effective AI service in the country some 15 years ago without any AI policy. We can not blame policy for the weaknesses and failures of NAIC itself. There are no regulations which prohibit NAIC from taking on coordination activities in the regions. The management must take major responsibility for the weaknesses in NAIC.

Experiences of artificial insemination services in Ethiopia: experiences of private veterinary and AI Services in Ethiopia- Dr. Emiru Zewudie, ALPPIS and Dessalegn Gebremedhin, EMDTI

The presentations covered the history of AI in Ethiopia, efforts made to improve the AI services, success stories, limitations and opportunities – growing concern and needs for improvement. They reiterated the major factors that affect the effectiveness of AI services highlighted by Dr. Alemayehu. Private AI service delivery has less than ten years of history in Ethiopia. The private AI technicians are former government employees and most of them are based around Addis Ababa with only few in other parts of the country. The sources of semen for these technicians are mainly the National Artificial Insemination Center and private organizations which import semen from abroad. Some of these technicians are close to abandoning the delivery of the service on a private basis because of the high operational costs.

By way of emerging options for delivery of AI services, they suggested formation of dairy farmers associations, cattle breeders associations and establishment of private business associations like Addis Livestock Production & Productivity Improvement Service PLC (ALPPIS). Reorganizing and monitoring the delivery of AI services at the national level, encouraging and supporting the private sector to successfully participate in the delivery of AI services as the way forward. Farmers are willing to pay for the services if they prove to be effective and reliable.

The Power Points can be accessed here: <http://hdl.handle.net/10568/1984> and here <http://hdl.handle.net/10568/1986>

Comment: I do not agree with Dr. Emiru's assertion that the weakness of NAIC is due to the lack of a breeding policy. NAIC must be self critical and there is plenty of room for improvement with the existing mandate.

Comment: When we talk about dairy we have to talk about the whole range of supporting services in dairy value chain. We need to integrate feed, AI and veterinary services and market linkages.

Q: Why do we have both animal production graduates and veterinary graduates in each FTC? What if we equip animal production graduates with basic skills in veterinary and AI services?

Ans: There appears to be a problem in the design of TVET college programs and their curriculum. This could have been integrated. The major problem is that the TVET graduates are not adequately skilled in their areas of specialization.

Stakeholder platforms as way of bringing together input services-Kebebe Ergano, FAP-ILRI

The IFAD-Funded 'Fodder Adoption Project' (FAP) uses multi-stakeholder platforms to bring together people working with livestock and fodder in Ethiopia. The project entry point is the recognition that feed scarcity is a major constraint to livestock production in Ethiopia. It also recognizes that fodder scarcity is not just about technologies but also about the collective capacity of a network of individuals and organizations to bring about change. It therefore uses an innovation system framework to engage multiple actors along livestock commodity value chains—facilitating continuous interaction among stakeholders to generate innovation rather than just research products or technologies.

The vehicles for the interactions are several multi-stakeholder platforms where actors directly or indirectly involved in livestock value chains raise and discuss common issues of concern. From an initial focus on fodder, the scope of project discussions were broadened as different actors set out their concerns. The project started with fodder, but it was pulled into to deal with other issues such as veterinary and AI services, marketing, and so on.

The PowerPoint can be accessed here: <http://hdl.handle.net/10568/1983>

Q: In your recommendation you mentioned the need for change in the innovation system: individual, organization and system wide. In which level of the three would change be more urgent?

Ans: Changes are needed in all the three levels concurrently. Changes in one may not be enough to make the innovation systems thinking operational.

Session II: Synthesis of discussion in breakout groups to address the following questions:

The participants were divided into two groups to deliberate on the following issues:

- What constrains veterinary, feed and AI services in Ethiopia?
- What are the barriers to ready availability of AI, feed and veterinary services to smallholder farmers?
- What alternative models can be used to enhance veterinary, feed and breeding services?
- What recommendations can this group develop to enhance sustainable support services to livestock development in Ethiopia?

The major points emerging from the breakout groups are summarized below.

Group 1:

Major constraints:

- Strong institutions dealing with livestock are lacking
- Market linkages
- Shortage of investment capital, land and lack of incentives
- Poor infrastructure
- Problems of input supply

Barriers for availability of AI, feeds, vet.

- Infrastructure/ Accessibility
- Awareness/ information gap
- Limited market/demand
- Roles and functions of DAs are biased towards sectors

Alternative models to enhance AI, vet. services and feed

- Decentralize semen production to regions
- Empower NAIC
- Creation of awareness of the farmers
- Encourage private sector players by providing credit and facilitating organization into cooperatives, unions, dairy associations, etc
- Establishment of dairy hubs

Recommendations:

- Livestock should get more policy attention (breeding policy,...)
- Focus and targeting for the livestock services

Group 2

Constraints

- Government should focus on regulatory aspects and stimulate private sector
- Mechanisms for import of biological material is problematic
- Lack of foreign exchange
- Lack of associations of actors
- Some flaws in NAIC structure – linkage to regions is weak
- Structural disconnect all the way from federal to regions, zones and Woredas
- Structural problems with feed development – e.g.: free grazing
- Shortage of dairy inputs – e.g. Forage seeds, dairy equipment, liquid nitrogen, equipment repair, drugs. Might need subsidy initially
- Lack of credit

Alternative models to enhance AI, vet. Ser and feed

- Establishing business hubs such as cooperative unions. They can manage dairy hub as a business. The support services such as vet, AI, feed, market linkages can be established for the milk shed.
- Long term loans to people investing in livestock sector with subsidized interest rates. This model worked in Kenya
- Business development support services for small scale investors
- Multi stakeholder platforms need to be accompanied by tangible changes e.g. in incentive structures
- Government should focus on regulation – service delivery should be given to private sector. More discussion opportunities between federal and regional bodies. Preparing a position paper can help achieve this.
- Dedicated Agency for livestock as is being done in Oromiya is a welcome development – but it should not get involved in marketing
- Create some positive examples to convince government and private actors in: AI, vet, feed production

Recommendations:

- Government line departments should focus on:
 - Regulation
 - Enhancing linkages between federal, regional and woreda structures
 - Enhance conducive environment for private sector through provision of credit facilities, access to foreign currency, easier importation of inputs
- Private sector should develop replicable business models, business hubs, form business associations and unions.

Ethiopian Fodder Roundtable

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June 22 2010
Info centre ILRI

Time	Presenter
9:00	Welcome and introductions – Alan Duncan
9:15	Feed resources for commercial livestock production in Ethiopia -opportunities and challenges – Alan Duncan
9:35	Factors affecting effective delivery of AI and veterinary services: Ada’a case study – Dr. Alemayehu Lemma, Debre Zeit Vet School
10:00	Coffee/tea
10.15	Experiences of AI services in Ethiopia-Dr. Emiru Zewudie, National AI Center - ALPPIS
10.35	Experiences of Private Veterinary and AI Services in Ethiopia- Dessalegn Gebremedhin, EMDTI
10.55	Stakeholder platforms as way of bringing together input services-Kebebe Ergano, FAP-ILRI
11.15	Breakout groups
12.00	Reporting back
12.30	Lunch

Breakout groups facilitated by Kebebe Ergano and Kindu Mekonnen to address the following questions:

- What constrains veterinary, feed and AI services in Ethiopia?
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- What alternative models can be used to enhance veterinary, feed and breeding services?
- What recommendations can this group develop to enhance a sustainable support services to livestock development in Ethiopia?