



LIVESTOCK

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Protecting Somalia's Leading Livelihood Assets

Livestock Offers a Critical Path to Escaping Abject Poverty in Somalia

Somalia's livestock sector dominates the country's economy, creating about 65% of Somali's job opportunities and generating about 40 percent of Somalia's GDP and 80 percent of foreign currency earnings. Despite insecurity, political instability, disease and bans by some major importing Gulf countries over the past two decades, the number of animals and meat exported continues to grow. Currently Somalia exports over 4 million animals including sheep and goats, cattle and camels per year. The private sector led export industry has helped to mitigate the impact of state collapse and war on the Somali people.

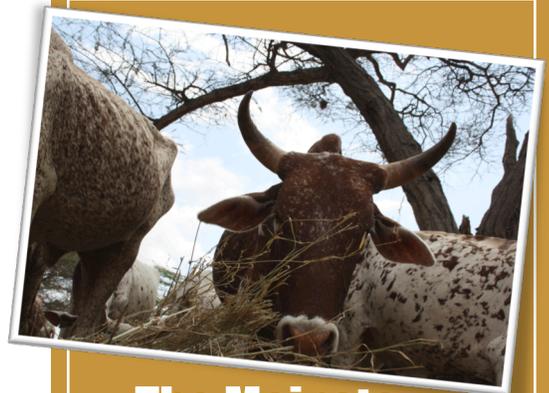
Household Asset

Livestock makes a significant contribution towards increasing the resilience of poor Somali livelihoods. As a key local consumption commodity, livestock is seen as a key source for household food security. Pastoralist communities exist throughout Somalia

with high in the north and central areas, while agro-pastoralists are in the southern areas. Throughout Somalia rainfall patterns force a complex series of movements in search of pasture and water across the different seasons.

Disasters, Diseases and Bans

Recurrent droughts, floods and international bans to prevent the spread of disease have periodically interrupted exports of livestock and their products. The most recent ban was imposed by Saudi Arabia in 2000 but lifted in 2009 grossly curtailing Somali livestock exports. In 2011, Somalia suffered the worst drought in decades leaving tens of thousands of animals dead due to disease outbreaks, starvation and water scarcity. Despite these hindering factors, with FAO's emergency interventions, livestock exports have continued to increase with the country registering over 4.7 million animals in exports the same year.



The Mainstay

LIVELIHOOD: The livestock sector is Somalia's largest contributor to Somali livelihoods with over 65% of the population engaged in some way in the industry.

MILK: In Somalia, milk is one of the most important foods—it is the major source of protein and vitamins for the population especially children.

DOMESTIC TRADE: Livestock marketing and trade also generate revenues for local administrations, through taxation of livestock destined for domestic consumption.

EXPORT EARNINGS: In 2011 Somalia exported 4.7 million animals, the highest export volume ever recorded, through the seaports of Berbera and Bossaso. This comes after Saudi Arabia lifted a ban on the import of livestock from Somalia in 2009.

FAO's Emergency Response to the 2011 Famine

As part of its emergency response to the 2011 famine, FAO launched an ambitious appeal for vaccinations and treatment of over 20 million livestock. In its wake, prolonged drought left tens of thousands of animals dead, a trend that had to be reversed.



Timely emergency donor funding from the Governments of United States, Italy, Britain, Australia, Spain, The World Bank and the European Union permitted FAO to roll out treatment and mass vaccination campaigns against untreatable diseases endemic to Somalia that threaten the herds. PPR (Peste des Petits Ruminants) is an acute highly contagious viral disease of sheep and goats, characterized by fever, erosive stomatitis, enteritis, pneumonia, and death, while Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP), a bacterial disease, is a cause of major economic losses to goat producers in Africa and Asia.

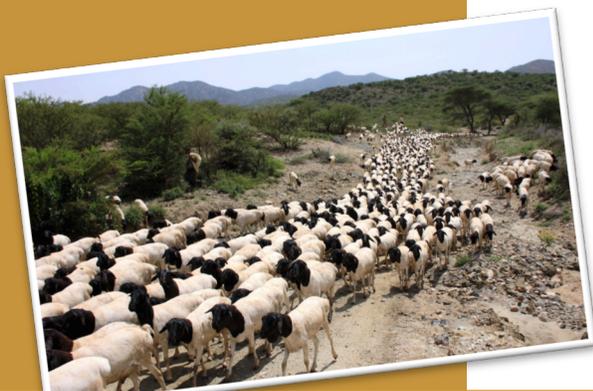
Racing against time, FAO in conjunction with several Livestock Professional Associations in Somalia, carried vaccinations of over 19.6 million animals against PPR and 7.5 million goats against CCPP. With timely interventions, such as these, there are hopes that livestock – cattle, sheep, goats and camels – will continue to help improve the food and nutrition security situation.

To achieve a prosperous and resilient Somali livestock sector, FAO through national, regional and international authorities and organizations, will continue to implement programmes supporting pastoralists and agro pastoralists focusing on animal health, animal production, value addition and marketing. This is in addition to supporting organizational, institutional and policy development. FAO's activities in Somalia's livestock sector are all geared towards boosting the sector at different levels. Key goals include;

- improving economic growth and employment in the livestock sector;
- decreasing the vulnerability of pastoralists' livelihoods due to epidemic diseases outbreaks;
- diversification of incomes by creating nontraditional activities related to livestock infrastructure and enterprises
- improving the production and productivity of the livestock sector;
- promoting the marketing of livestock and livestock commodities;
- promoting meat hygiene and enhancing the national human resources capacity through training;
- support to disease surveillance and certification; and
- improving fodder production and conservation.
- Livestock product and byproduct processing

Key Achievements

- 1 VACCINATIONS:** Since July 2011, FAO has vaccinated over 19.6 million livestock against PPR and 7.5 million against CCPP
- 2 TREATMENT:** Over 3.5 million livestock have been treated for bacterial infections and parasites
- 3 SURVEILLANCE:** FAO has established a continuous early warning system that includes surveillance and response to priority diseases.
- 4 INFRASTRUCTURE:** FAO has constructed two large modern slaughterhouses, constructed and rehabilitated Hargeisa Livestock Market and a Meat Market in Borama.
- 5 LIVESTOCK BYPRODUCTS:** FAO has introduced new products in Somalia's livestock value chain including soap and jewelry made from livestock bones.
- 6 POLICY DEVELOPMENT:** FAO has worked with the authorities of Somaliland and Puntland to pass key Acts regulating meat quality.





SEED: Boosting Livestock Value

Somalis cash in on livestock waste

Suweisra Mohamed waves a thick dry camel bone with an assuring smile. “This is now worth lots of dollars,” she says brandishing the neatly cut camel thighbone. At 47 years of age, Suweisra, an unrelenting Somali woman, has finally discovered what she described as hidden treasure in piles of Somaliland’s waste. Piles of decomposing animal remains, litters environs of every slaughterhouse. Suweisra wishes she had known this earlier. “Until now, we used to throw away these bones, which were useless to us,” she said. But now I know that we have, for many years been throwing away money, a lot of it.” Suweisra co-leads the Somaliland Meat Development Association, a local organization that brings the meat sector together in Somalia’s semiautonomous region of Somaliland.

The treasure in bones

Everyday, tens of thousands of camels are slaughtered across Somalia - a country where meals are heavily meat-driven. Tones of bones, hides, and hooves, among other culturally undesirable parts are discarded. But under a United Kingdom funded initiative, FAO is encouraging communities to process animal skins, make soap from bone marrow and fashion buttons from camel bones. The first year of this initiative has shown surprising results. “We have been trained how to carefully cut fresh bones at both ends and extract the bone marrow, which we boil and mix with caustic soda in a very simple process,” said one trainee, a project trainee, describing the soap making process. She used soap, she produced barely hours earlier to hand wash her white fabric. “It works perfectly well,” she added. Years of civil war that stunted development, Somalia, let alone Somaliland, have almost no

homegrown industries that produce basic commodities like soap.

Beyond making soap from camel bone marrow, Somalis are also being trained how to profit further from the hard-dry bones by carving out crafts. With skilled carving, just about anything can be made out of the dense camel bones. In the first year of SEED programme, over 100 trainees have produced necklaces, bangles, flower vases, beads, and combs among several other products.

Upping livestock value

Livestock in most parts of Somalia are sold using visual appraisal. Sheep weighing about 35-40 kg can be sold at an equivalent price of US\$320-340. The Borana cattle breed, with an estimated body weight of 400 kg, is sold at about US\$930. Camels, with an estimated weight of 300 kg, are sold in the Middle East at about US\$820/head, with a general annual exports value estimated at over US\$250 million. With SEED programme enterprise activities; Somalia’s domestic meat production is on path of realizing full value by exploiting what was hitherto waste. Dr. Abdi Aw Dahir Ali, Somaliland’s livestock minister said when livestock bones are fully utilized, by producing soap and crafts, the value of livestock increases significantly.

“With soap and things like crafts produced from livestock bones, we have seen the value of each animal, be it goats, sheep or camel, go up by 30 to 40 percent and this is unprecedentedly good for our people,” said Dahir Ali. “These are the kinds of activities we strongly believe will lift people out of the cycle of poverty.”



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Soap and bone craft production are currently on a large scale with a full market launch expected at the end of 2012. Efforts are also underway to expand these ideas across Somalia as means of creating more jobs and income. So far, 120 Somali youths, mostly young women have already been trained and have started producing tones of soap and hundreds of necklaces, spoons combs and flower vases.

Scaling up SEED

Strengthening the Somali national economy through development of livestock and fisheries sector is a key goal

for UK funded Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Program (SEED). To bring revolutionary change in these sectors, UKAID is working with FAO, UNDP, ILO and Save the Children in a series of inventions. With its first phase ending in July 2012, the programme seeks to scale up in the second and final phase with creation of thousands of sustainable jobs across Somalia.

“In Phase I, we have succeeded in demonstrating that jobs and income from things like bones, which we are scaling up in Phase II by expanding to areas like curing and turning leather from hides and skins, biogas and manure production,” said Luca Alinovi, FAO’s Country Representative for Somalia.

The Process: From Bones to Soap



- Obtain fresh camel leg bones;
- Cut them neatly at both ends to permit easy scooping of bone marrow;
- Empty the bone marrow into a bucket by inserting a stick through the bone to force out bone marrow, a spongy tissue inside bones;
- Boil the bone marrow for at least 2 hours;
- Mix the boiled bone marrow with Sodium Hydroxide, commonly known as caustic soda to hydrolyze the fats;



FAO’s Livestock Activities are funded by

