

LIVESTOCK-NUTRITION LINKAGES IN THE SOMALI REGION OF ETHIOPIA

February, 2013

Veterinary Sans Frontier Switzerland, Ethiopia



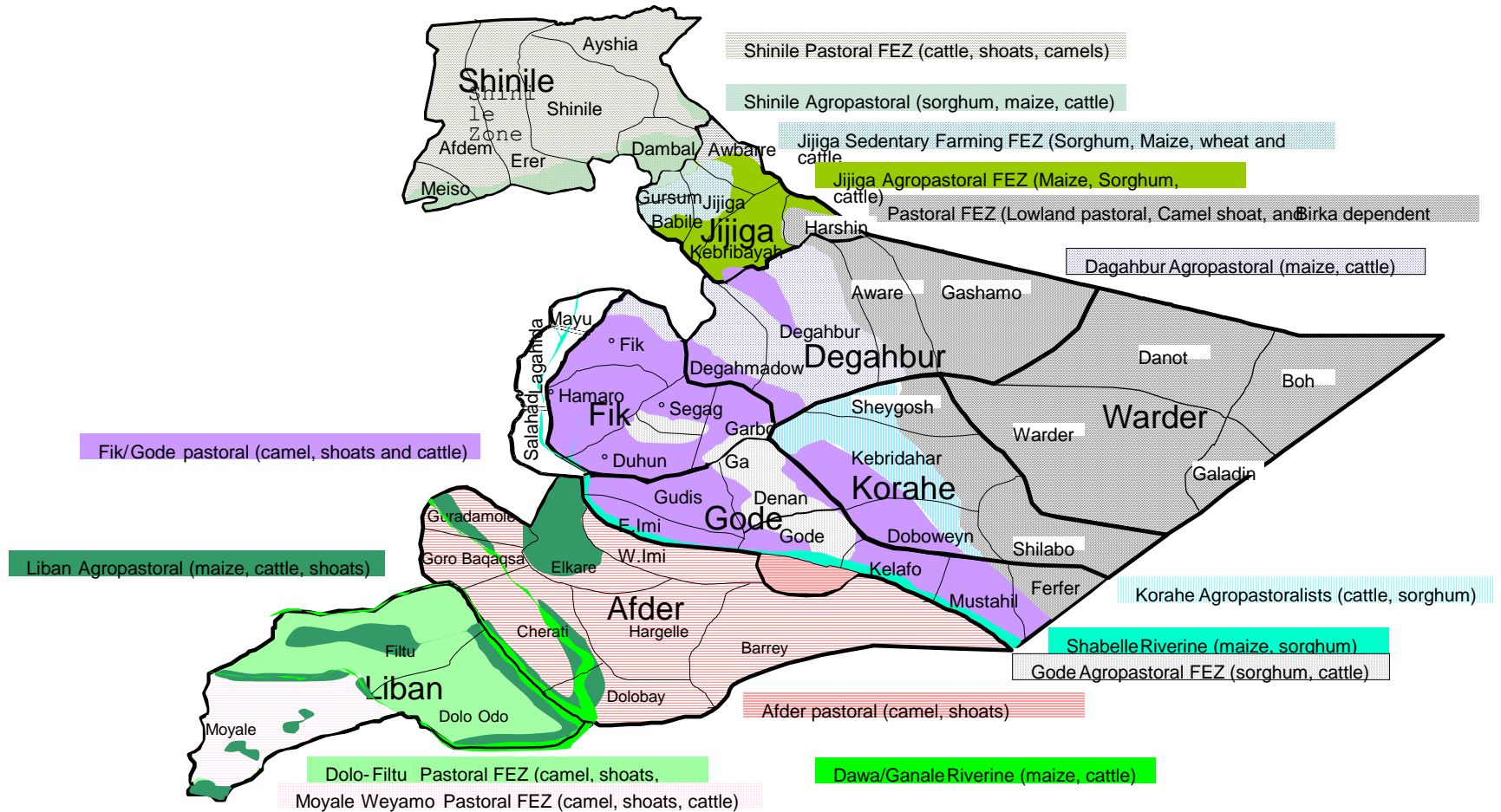
Camel - a Valuable
animal for the
Pastoralist

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Introduction

Somali Region, Ethiopia Livelihood (FE) Zones



Introduction cont...

- The region is very prone to recurrent disaster such as drought, flood, conflict, human/livestock diseases, which has negative impact on peoples live
- **Flood:** occurs in very year twice or trice while the last occur October 2012, all in Shabele, Ganale, Dawa and Weyb riverine areas
- **Drought:** frequent rain failure every 10 years only 3 years are good or near to normal, while the rest are erratic or fails, which leads to shortage of water, pasture, milk production, lack of livestock calving and stress to pastoral house holds

Impact of drought in pastoral areas



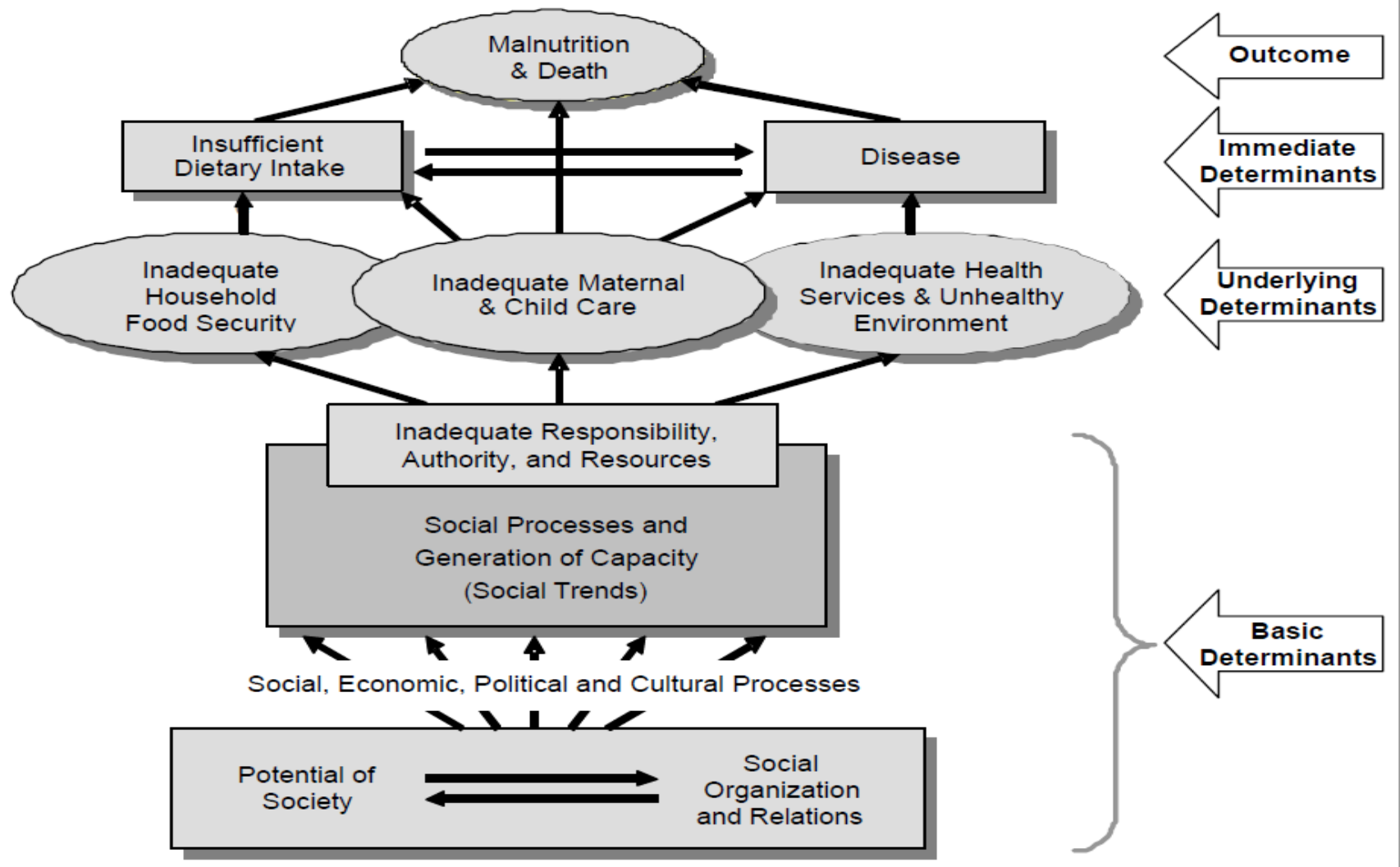
Effect of flood in riverine areas



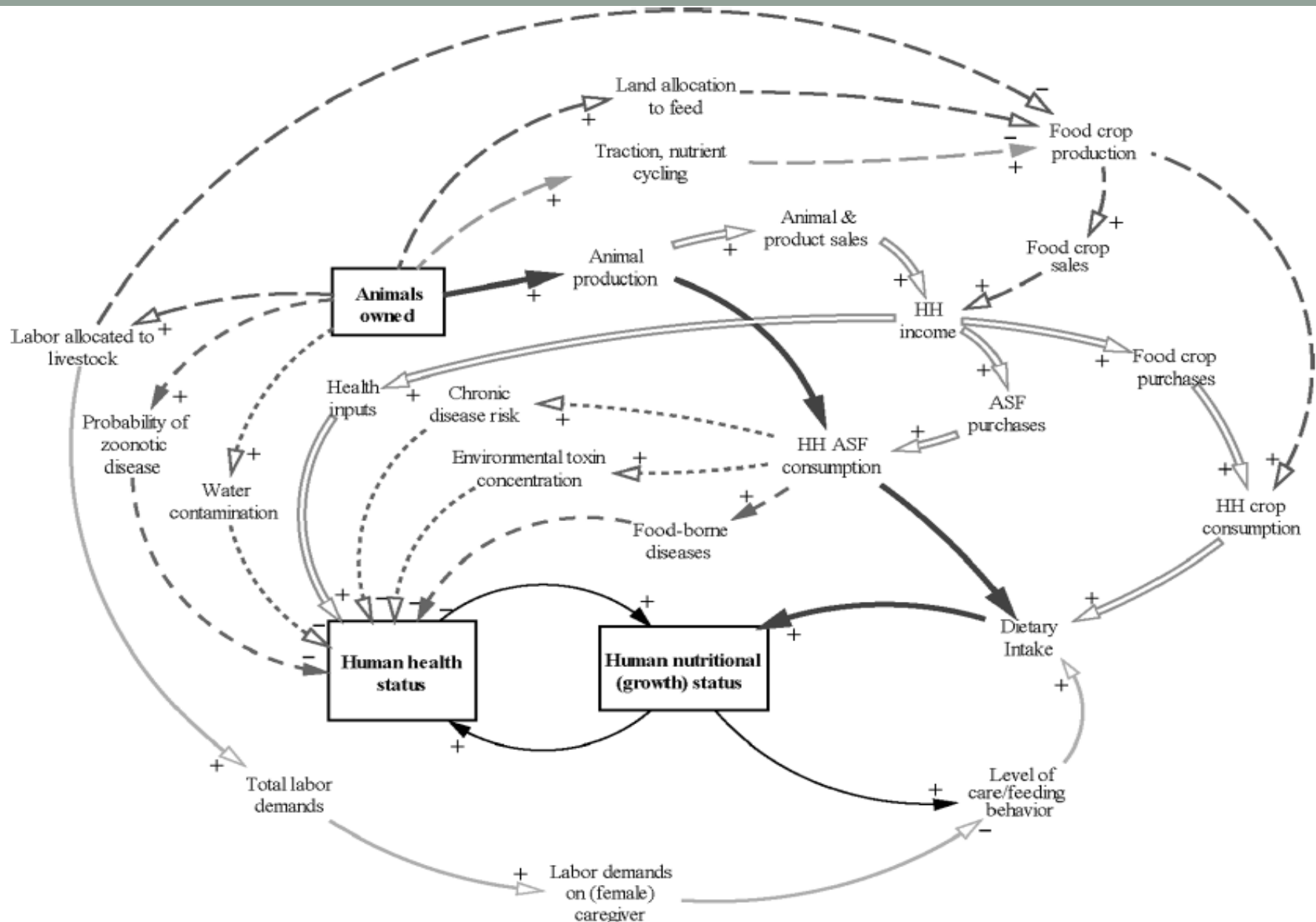
Status of malnutrition in Somali Region of Ethiopia

- Stunting prevalence is 33%
- Wasting- 22% (the highest from all regions)
- Underweight- 33.5% (third highest from all regions of Ethiopia)

Source EDHS 2011



Conceptual framework of malnutrition, UNICEF



Causal linkages between livestock keeping and human nutrition and health outcomes among the poor (adapted from Nicholson et al., 2003)

Nutrition based livestock off take project in two districts of Somali Region, Ethiopia

Summary of the project

- Improved food security through nutrition based livestock off-take and livelihood protection for vulnerable pastoralist communities in Somali region.
- Implemented in two districts of Somali Region, of Ethiopia

Project Goal

To mitigate further deterioration of food security and livelihoods of drought affected pastoralist households in Gode and Hargelle districts of Somali Region

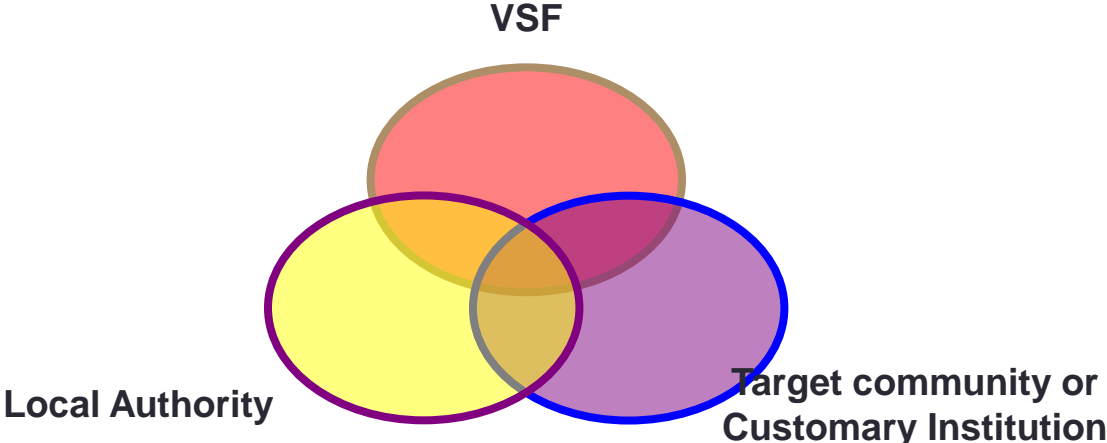
Objectives of the project

- ☞ HH food security enhanced through meat distribution for a period of 3 months through local markets
- ☞ Livestock assets of drought affected HH protected from further deterioration

Three fold benefits....

1. Improved diet for beneficiary households,
2. Increased income to community members from sale of livestock
3. Maintenance and support to local markets

Program Implementation approach






THE OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Baseline values

- Baseline survey conducted at the beginning of the project in Gode and Hargelle districts of Somali region (July, 2012)
- Deployed both Quantitative and Qualitative methods
- Indicators measured
 1. Household income
 2. Average number of meals per day
 3. Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)
 4. % of households consuming protein rich foods
 5. Household food insecurity
 6. Income of the local community
 7. Local market situation

Household income (Baseline)

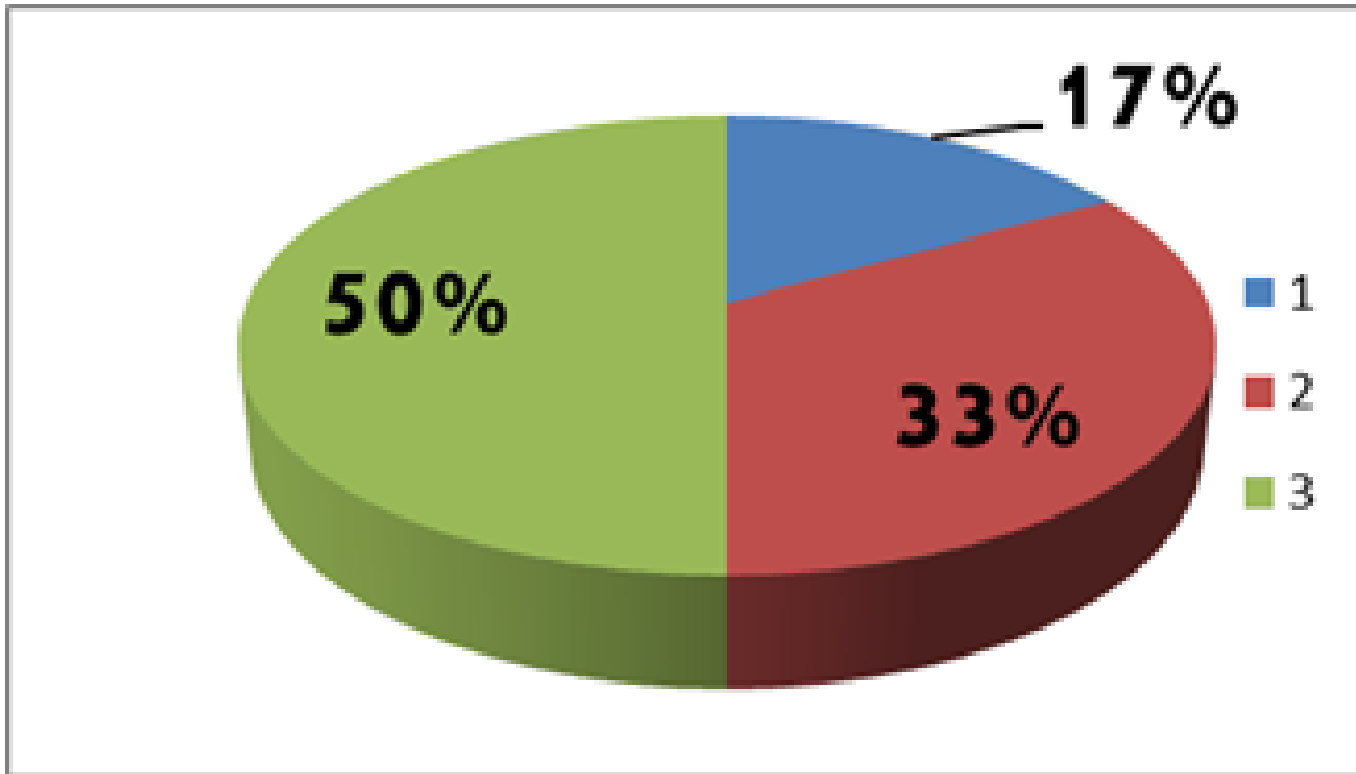
- The major source of income used for purchasing food for the majority **(52.5%)** of the respondents is **casual labor**

- The mean monthly income of the community is **714 +736 birr (about 39± 40 USD)**. 
- The **minimum** monthly income is **50 birr (about 3 USD)** and the **maximum** is **3,000 birr (about 162 USD)** 

Household income..... Cont'd

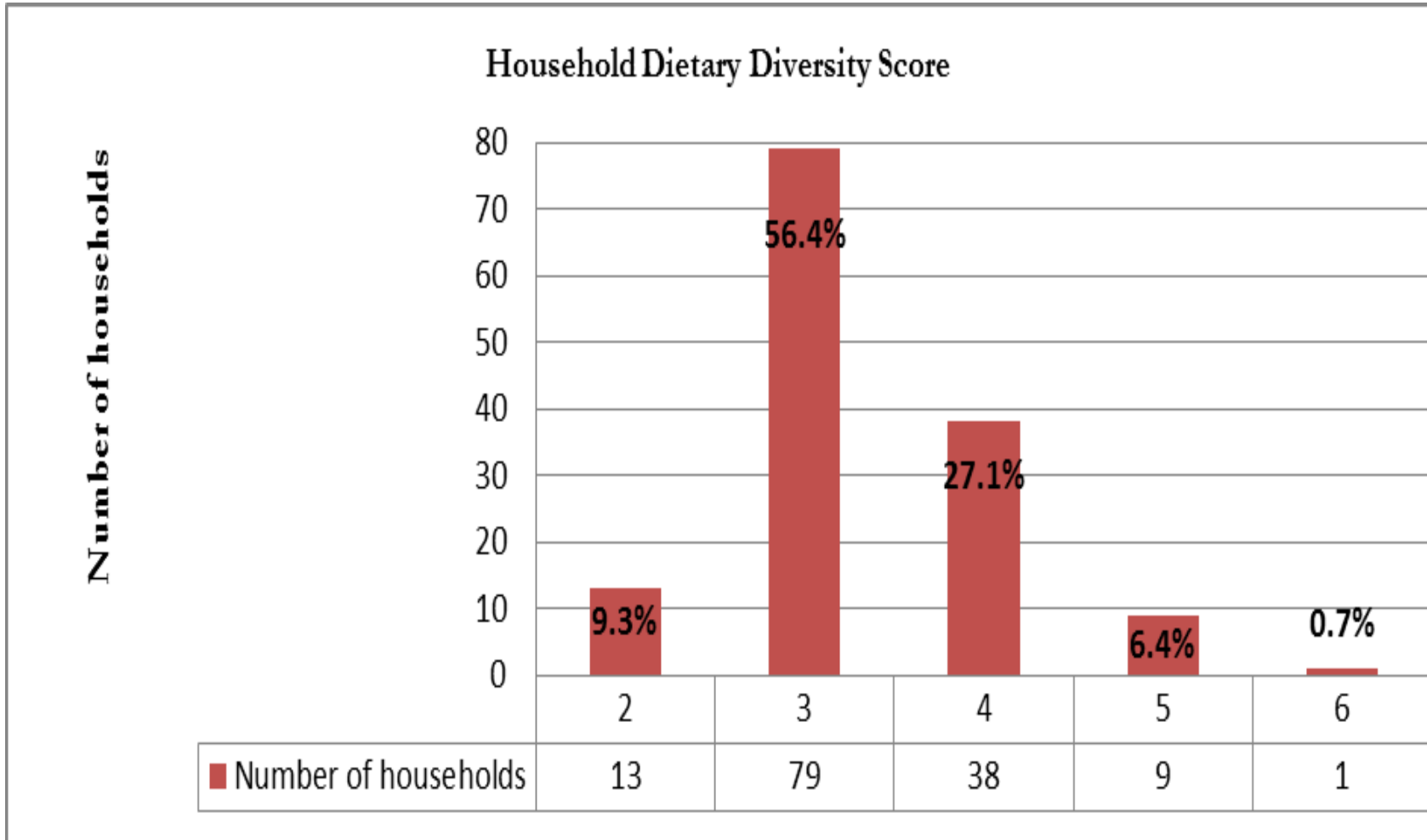
- The qualitative data also illustrates how the income of the local community is affected by the current drought situation. The Woreda DPP representative stated
 - *“They don’t have cash. They only have livestock. Whenever drought affects their livestock, everything will be lost.”*
 - And one of the Kebele representatives said,
 - *“The drought situation affected the economy very deeply. The livestock, which is the backbone of the community, had deteriorated. The body condition of the livestock had deteriorated and milk production is very little. Whatever negatively affects the livestock, negatively affects the economy of the community.”*

Expenditure (Baseline)

- On food items
 - Sugar is the item which most (99.3%) of the households expend on, followed by salt and cereals with 98% and 89% respectively.
- From the non- food items
 - Medical treatments is the most expended on with 68% of the households.
- The amount of money expended on these items,
 - Sugar has the highest mean monthly expenditure with 323 birr followed by cereals with 255 birr.
 - Clothing accounts for the highest amount of expenditure with an average of 131 birr



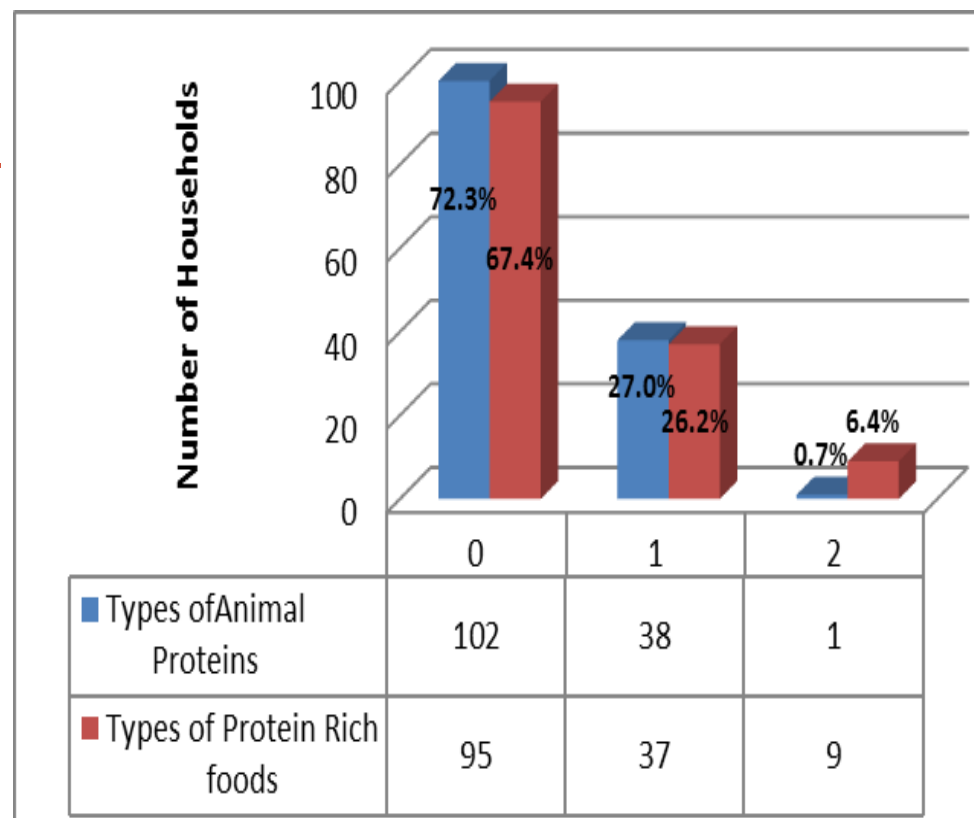
Number of meals eaten in a day by the respondents, Hargelle and Gode Woredas in Somali Region, June-July, 2012.



Number of Food groups eaten in a day, Hargelle and Gode Woredas in Somali Region, June-July, 2012

Food Groups consumed, Gode and Hargelle Districts, Somali region, June-July, 2012

Food group consumed	N (%)
Cereals and cereal products	140 (100.0)
Milk and milk products	38 (27.1)
Sugar	140 (100.0)
Oils/fats	118 (84.3)
Meat & poultry	1 (0.7)
Pulses/legumes, nuts	15 (10.7)
Roots and tubers	2 (1.4)
Vegetables	11 (7.9)
Fruits	0 (0.0)
Eggs	1 (0.7)
Fish and sea foods	0 (0.0)
Miscellaneous	0 (0.0)



Consumption of protein rich foods, Gode and Hargelle Districts, Somali Region, June-July, 2012.

- And one of the women from the community stated their need for a variety as,

“Maize, wheat and Porridge (for targets) are our usual food. Who can give us meat and milk? Only those who have money are lucky to get it. I, with my family did not have any meat or milk for the last 7 months.”

- One of the key informants stated the importance of milk for pregnant mothers as,

“Milk was good for pregnant mothers and children, but people do not afford to buy. It is common to see pregnant mothers going to the health center, with their face white. They usually have anaemia because of lack of food.”



Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence, Hargelle and Gode Districts of Somali region, June-July, 2012

Level of Household food insecurity	Somali N (%)
Food Secure	0 (0.0)
Mildly food insecure	0 (0.0)
Moderately food insecure	0 (0.0)
Severely food insecure	139 (100.0)
Total	139 (100.0)




Local market situation

- About **36%** of the respondents depend on **animal and animal products sale** for purchasing their staple foods
- One of the KII showed the market situation at the time of the study. He stated,
“We sell a goat for 800 birr and we not only buy cereals. We buy sugar, salt, medicines, etc,. and we buy a small amount of cereal (usually 25 Kg) with the money left. One goat will be for 75 Kg of wheat or maize. We do not usually depend on selling a livestock, because the body condition of our livestock is severely affected and is not fit for market. We have to do collection of firewood and other casual labor to meet their needs.”

STATUS AT THE END OF THE PROJECT

- Rapid assessment evaluating the short term impact of the project interventions on the nutrition and livelihood of individuals
- The rapid assessment involved qualitative and quantitative methods

Household income (end)

- The major source of income used for purchasing food for the majority (**68%**) of the respondents is **casual labor** 
- The **mean income** of the community is **658 \pm 478 birr (about 36 \pm 26 USD)**. 
- The **minimum** monthly income is **100 birr (about 5 USD)** and the **maximum** is **1,500 birr (about 81 USD)**. 

Expenditure

- Food items
 - sugar is the item which most (98.6%) of the households expend on, followed by salt and tea with 95.7% and 66.4% respectively.
- From the non- food items
 - School related expense is the most expended on with 83% of the households expending on it.
- Regarding the amount of money expended on these items, sugar has the highest mean monthly expenditure with 258 birr followed by cereals with 123 birr.

Meal in a day during the meat distribution

- It is usual for them to eat Injera with chopped and roasted meat. For lunch they boiled the wheat with bones and meat and add a meat soup to it, which makes it more palatable and nutritious. In the evening, most of them usually have a meat soup or make a hard porridge ('Sor') and eat it with meat sauce or soup.
- Even after the meat distribution stopped, it increased the demand of meat and other foods like tomatoes

“...Our children were very much getting used to the meat. So we started to buy a very small amount of meat and tomato from town, when we get back from our firewood sale business. We cook the meat with tomato.

When children refuse to eat Injera with tea, their father jumps to get his donkey cart and buys some meat. Even the demand for meat increased.”

Other economic effects

- It increased the demand of tomato in the diet, as one of the beneficiaries explained. As a result, some women started petty trading tomato in this Kebele.
- The beneficiaries became more active and economically productive. One of the Kebele representatives mentioned, *“Some people were not so active. They were just sitting down and waiting for food aid. After they ate meat, they became so active and started to work. Some of them engaged in agriculture and started to cultivate onion. And some of them worked on donkey cart.”*

- A key informant from Gode Woreda Agriculture office said, *“I know a family in Digino Kebele, where the head of the household is too weak to work because of lack of food. He had Papaya farms, since the generator is out of order and they cannot do irrigation. The family was a beneficiary of the meat distribution. After they ate the meat, they were so energetic that they started to water their plantation by bringing from the river by a bucket, and his plantation revived.”*
- The economic benefit to the women group was also significant. (elaborated in the case study).
 - They were able to buy uniforms for their children, and some of them who have children learning in Universities were able to send money.

Unintended social Impact

- Re-gaining fertility
 - ‘Kubet’ disappeared
 - The menstrual cycle of some women resumed, and getting pregnant
- Some declared to get better from diseases
 - Some women getting ‘white’ from anaemia recovered
 - Client flow to health post from infections decreased (head of health post)

A beneficiary from one of the Kebeles, who was also a clan leader said,

“I had a double vision before. But now, I can insert a thread through a needle hole.I am an old man with grey hair, such a man will not lie.”

Unintended.... cont'd

- Family re-union

A woman beneficiary mentioned...

“...Men used to look at their children crying hungry. Rather than looking at them like that, they used to prefer to take Kchat and go away from home. But after our children got well from a better nutrition and seeing a happy family, our men stayed at home and our integration even increased.”

Relevance to the socio-cultural context of the target community

- Camel's meat is the food that the indigenous community know **how to cook**, **how to manage**, **how to categorize** and even **how to preserve** for a long time.
- Camel meat is not only for food, it's also a medicine.
- Its value in the community

One of the clan leaders in Ilan Kebele said

“Slaughtering camel is a sign of respect in our culture. Therefore, we are not only benefitted nutritionally, but we perceive that we are respected when this project slaughtered us a camel meat.”

Short- term pilot project, but points to sustainable impact

- Livestock interventions contributed to the protection of assets
- Improved nutrition → re-gaining energy → increased productivity to become 'meat buyers'
- Increased demand for meat and other food items → creates more market opportunity
- Capacitating the livestock producers and meat distributors

Success story of a Woman beneficiary



- **Bisharo Abdi Anshur**, a 39 year old mother of 7 children, living in Dabdere Kebele of Hargelle woreda, is one of the VSF meat distribution beneficiaries in the Kebele, 32km south of Hargelle town.
- ▶ Bisharo was an ex-pastoral dropout from Malko-dur area Hargelle Woreda, and was a pure pastoralist with 32 cattle, and 75 shoats.

A case of a woman....cont'd

- Due to recurrent drought, her family continued shrinking their animal asset to 25 shoat and 2 cattle in 2005, after which they were unable manage the family with the remaining livestock capacity.
- Fled to Dabdere village and sold most of these animals
- Tried to practice farming again around Labashilindi area. But this was not successful for them due to lack knowledge about farming.
- Food aid dependent families, and yet they haven't received wheat for the last three months (May-July 2012).

A case of a woman....cont'd

- She became sick, and developed chronic malnutrition due to lack of enough diet, while pregnant with her last child.
- She gave birth to her new baby (boy) while she was very weak, and she remained in bed for almost 4 months.
- By then, she was unable to stand up or walk, and she lost all her resistance for which her breast dried and she stopped breast feeding the child because of her poor condition.

A case of a woman....cont'd

- Her children, who were very close to each other in age, were also very weak. Her husband went to his older family in the pastoral area for more support, after exhausting with taking care of her for her sickness and having nothing to feed the children.
- Amidst all these bad conditions, “the miracle happened”
-
- VSF meat distribution started and Bisharo was selected as beneficiary.

A case of a woman....cont'd

- For the first three weeks of meat distribution she was unable to reach the distribution site, and her neighbor was supporting her to collect the meat with her distribution card.
- But after receiving 5kg of meat of all parts (fat, hump, lean meat, liver and bones) for three consecutive weeks of the first months, she was able to stand up with her own feet, walked to collect the meat all by her own.

A case of a woman....cont'd

- Bisharo said,

Although I never went to hospital, people thought I am TB patient. All what I received was only anti-pain tablets. I thought I was going to die. But today I have re-gained all my hope to live and raise my children. I started breast feeding my child again and yielding milk gradually.'

A case of a woman....cont'd

- Her husband returned back, while they were receiving meat and he became very happy seeing the face of his children glowing from happiness and good health. They also received WFP food aid though it was only wheat grain.
- Bisharo said,
*‘Yes, I can now eat the wheat grain I hate even to chew previously with a good appetite and interest.
This was a miracle for me, you (VSF) saved my life, thank you very much, if you stop the meat distribution our case will be in more critical but still we have Allah who will going to help us may be in other form, “even if not meat”.’*

A case of the Women Group



The Tewekel association is a group of 60 members, found in Gode Woreda.

It is a women group which was responsible for the slaughter in the meat distribution.

The term 'tewekel' is to mean 'with Allah'.

The association was previously 3, with 20 members each [Tewekel, Korah (means sun), and Deyah (means the moon)] and now merged into one, under the umbrella of Tewekel in December 2011. They have 4 male members, and the rest are females. The average family size among the members is 12.

Women group...cont'd

... the meat distribution

- One of the (male) members of the association said,
“We have seen wheat and porridge distribution as emergency intervention. I have never seen an organization which distributes fresh meat for free. It is my first encounter, and I’m so glad to see that. The organization met our nutritional and cultural needs. People whose sight is weakened improved after eating camel meat. I would like to say please....people are so much used to meat.... So don’t stop meat distribution. You unified us. And we are now in a capacity to work with other organizations.”

Women group...cont'd

...Economic benefit

- Before the meat distribution, in their butcheries in town, they slaughter camels 7 days a week. Their income from a single camel varied. They sometimes get 2000 ETB (**about 108 USD**) and sometimes 3000 (**about 162 USD**)
- There were times of loss, when they lose up to 1,000 birr (**about 54 USD**). Therefore, on average they get a net profit of 17,500 ETB (**about 946 USD**) per week.
- When this meat distribution came, additional **5 camels** were slaughtered per week and they get a net benefit of 4,000 ETB (**about 216 USD**) per camel, thereby 20,000 ETB (**about 1081 USD**) per week. This is what they **additionally** benefited as a group.

Women group...cont'd

...what they aspire to achieve in the future

- Their aspiration goes beyond their current locality. So one of the representatives mentioned,
‘Our intention in the future is to broaden our coverage and reach the entire Gode Zone. Our confidence and morale was so enhanced in this 3 months’ time during the meat distribution.’

Lessons learnt

- Community participation, especially customary elders is crucial.

“Give the stick to the community and let them guide you’. We give the resources and the technical assistance, the policies and procedures of the donor, the organization and the government are followed.” ...is the way it was explained by the project staff.

- In a tribal community like Somali’s a fair distribution of interventions is needed.
- Gender, tribes (majority and minorities) and different community sectors need to be given a due emphasis in every phase of the project planning & implementation.
- Full participation of government line departments is crucial.

Conclusion

- The nutrition base livestock off take project implemented in two districts of Somali region, Ethiopia
 - Relevant to the needs of the community
 - Effective in addressing the intended objectives
 - Had unintended impacts which indirectly contribute to the livelihoods of the community
 - Enhanced the economy of the meat distributors and created additional access to market



...Road to nutrition security in Pastoral areas...

**Thank you
for your attention!**