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IFAD Supporting Pastoralism: Livestock and Infrastructure

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Background

Many IFAD rangeland projects aim to deliver direct benefits to pastoralists by using strategic instruments for project implementation to provide immediate improvements in livelihood security. Issues that may be addressed include:

- **Livestock**

  Restocking
  Animal health services

- **Rural Infrastructure**

  Water points
  Roads

Issues in restocking

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Conclusions from IFAD's experience

In general, IFAD views restocking projects as a client-driven and participatory means of improving the sustainability of livestock-dependent livelihoods. Consequently, IFAD has integrated the provision of livestock into the wider process of rehabilitation and longer-term development, as evidenced by the Arhangai Rural Poverty Alleviation Project in Mongolia and the Kidal Food and Income Security Programme in Mali.

Targeting

One of the major difficulties facing restocking projects is to ensure that livestock are distributed to the identified target group. Two considerations tend to be given priority in the targeting of restocking beneficiaries: the neediness of the communities or families and the likelihood that the project will be successful. Since success can be measured either in terms of increased production (only possible if the recipient ends up with a herd of a reasonable size and the resources to care for it) or in terms of loan repayment (often considered to be more likely in the case of the more affluent), there is an inherent tension between these two considerations.

Restocking the herds of the most impoverished households has not always been possible. For example, the objective of the Arhangai Rural Poverty Alleviation Project in Mongolia was to

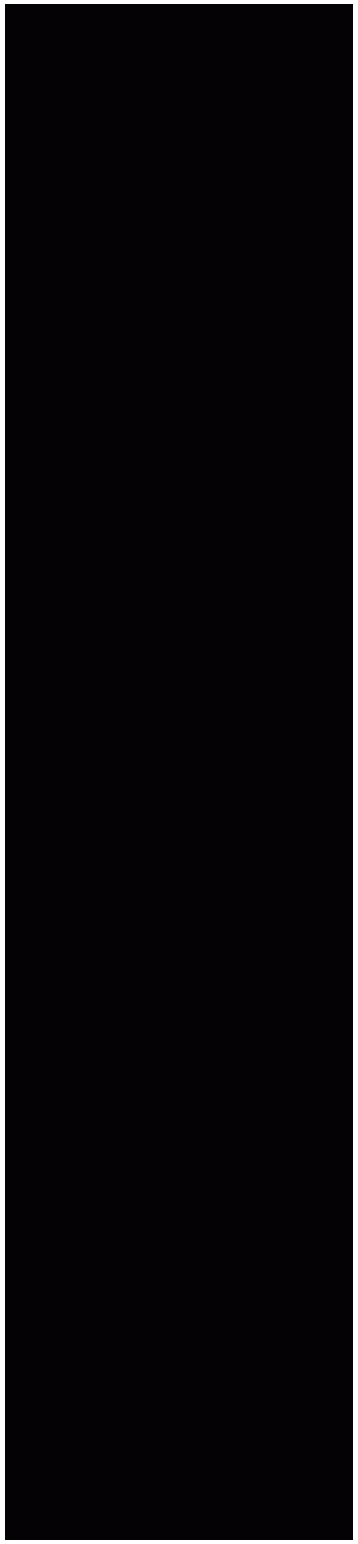
- Projects should use strategic interventions to provide pastoralists with direct benefits in key areas.
- A focus on livestock can strengthen the resilience of pastoralist households.
- Pastoralists and grazing experts should be consulted on the location of proposed roads and water points.

reduce rural poverty, principally through the distribution of livestock to very poor herding households, in a manner supporting a regulative mechanism of sustainable rangeland management. However, supervision reports have uncovered bias against poorer applicants at local levels, and, according to the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), 30% of the beneficiaries selected for the 2000 distribution had herds in excess of the official upper limit.

Poverty targeting is therefore complicated by the need to ensure that beneficiaries end up with herds of a viable size and by community concerns that very poor applicants will not be able to repay their loans. In consequence, it is important to ensure the equity of the restocking process by the use of strong participatory targeting, monitoring and evaluation processes, in place prior to, during and after livestock distribution.

Livestock Procurement

	Abroad	**Local**
Advantages	• No price inflation in project area • Breed improvement options	• No change in overall stock numbers • Clients can select their own livestock



Problems	• Complex logistics • More animals on range • Lower chances of animal survival	• Possible price inflation in area • Distorted incentives for local herders to sell animals

Projects procuring animals from abroad, either on economic grounds or for the purposes of breed improvement, have frequently run into problems. For example, in the Northern Pasture and Livestock Development Project in China, 50 imported Friesian cattle had to be killed in quarantine. In addition, an influx of new livestock may have serious environmental implications for the rangelands.

The local purchase of animals may have the serious disadvantage of artificially inflating prices within the project area. For example, although the Arhangai Rural Poverty Alleviation Project in Mongolia attempted to increase the number of herds of a viable size without altering the overall burden upon the range, by purchasing livestock locally from richer pastoralists and redistributing them to poorer ones, stock levels rose and some range degradation did occur. However, local animals do not need to adapt to local conditions and are therefore more likely to survive. If genetic improvement is necessary, this is best done in local centres, as is the intention in the Badia Rangelands Development Project in Syria.

Generally, the purchase of livestock by the clients themselves, with the help and advice of project staff, seems to work well.

Sustainability

Restocking may not always be the most suitable way of helping destitute herders. It could be that a pastoralist way of life is no longer sustainable in the project area, or that the potential beneficiaries are unsuited to herding. In such cases, credit for alternative income-generating activities would be a more appropriate project activity than restocking.

Moreover, in any restocking project, provisions should also be made to maximize the distributed animals' chances of survival. If the original herds were lost due to natural disaster, restocking should be accompanied by additional measures to ensure herd sustainability, such as vaccination, drought early warning systems and animal insurance. For instance, 'livestock survival packages' that included credit for fodder and veterinary inputs proved very popular in the Northern Pasture and Livestock Development Project in China. In contrast, credit had to be cancelled in the Special Country Programme in Niger after a drought made repayment of existing loans impossible.

Issues in animal health services

National Level

Earlier IFAD projects focused on the institutional strengthening of government veterinary departments. For example, in the Northern Pasture and Livestock Development Project in China, rural veterinary centres and dipping tanks were improvements specifically targeting pastoralists.

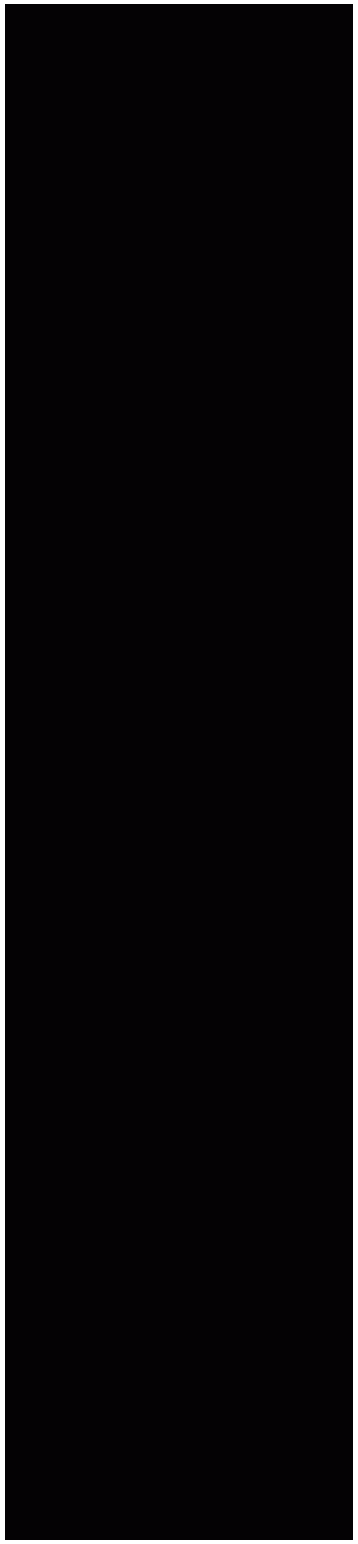
The National Livestock Project in the Central African Republic increased the technical and management capacity of the Livestock Department (ANDE) by offering refresher courses to its staff. As a result:

- A greater proportion of animals were vaccinated (mostly against rinderpest).
- An estimated 80% of herders gave regular treatment to their animals for internal and external parasites by the end of the project.

The measures effectively translated into lower mortality rates and increased meat production.

Community level

In recent years, the need for local, private-sector veterinary options has become increasingly obvious. IFAD is now committed to privatization and cost recovery, but effective privatization of animal health care in rangeland areas requires special consideration. As a group, pastoralists may not be the most profitable clients for private veterinarians, since the travel costs of reaching



scattered herds are too high. Consequently, the focus has been shifted to herder delivery systems, reflecting the need to benefit the rural poor more directly. Community-level approaches to the improvement of animal health services have involved the training of herders to treat animals, and the facilitation of access to veterinary inputs and drugs. For example:

- The Livestock and Pasture Development Project in Eastern Region of Morocco intended to train 600 animal health workers, although far fewer obtained qualifications. According to the 1996 Mid-Term Evaluation Report, the strong resistance by qualified government professionals to the recruitment and training of additional animal health workers was the main cause. Complementary roles need to be clarified and all stakeholders consulted.
- A revolving fund for veterinary products in the Central African Republic began slowly under the government livestock service, but was transferred to the National Livestock Producers' Association in the third year of the project. Herders used and administered the fund well, and sales surpassed the appraisal objective by 500%, reaching 80% of the target population.

Key support tools

With regard to animal health, the nomadic lifestyle of many range inhabitants may challenge the effective delivery of veterinary services. Three key types of support tools are necessary for an effective delivery system.

- Technical support tools, including the promotion of traditional groups and training initiatives. For example, IFAD has encouraged associations supplying veterinary inputs and training community animal health workers, in the Central African Republic and other countries.
- Financial support tools, such as loans and revolving livestock development funds. IFAD has had a number of fairly successful experiences in the implementation of revolving funds for livestock drugs (e.g. the Western Savannah Project - Phase II in Sudan).
- Policy-based support tools, which involve liaison with national governments. These include the encouragement of an end to subsidies, appropriate pricing and trade policies, and proper quality control.

Issues in water development

Water is a basic requirement of rangeland users, to whom water rights are as important as grazing rights. In the Kidal Food and Income Security Programme in Mali, for example, water conservation measures were originally a minor aspect of planned programme activities, but when the programme had to resettle ten times as many refugees as had been foreseen in the aftermath of the Touareg rebellion, the borehole construction

initiative became one of its major achievements.

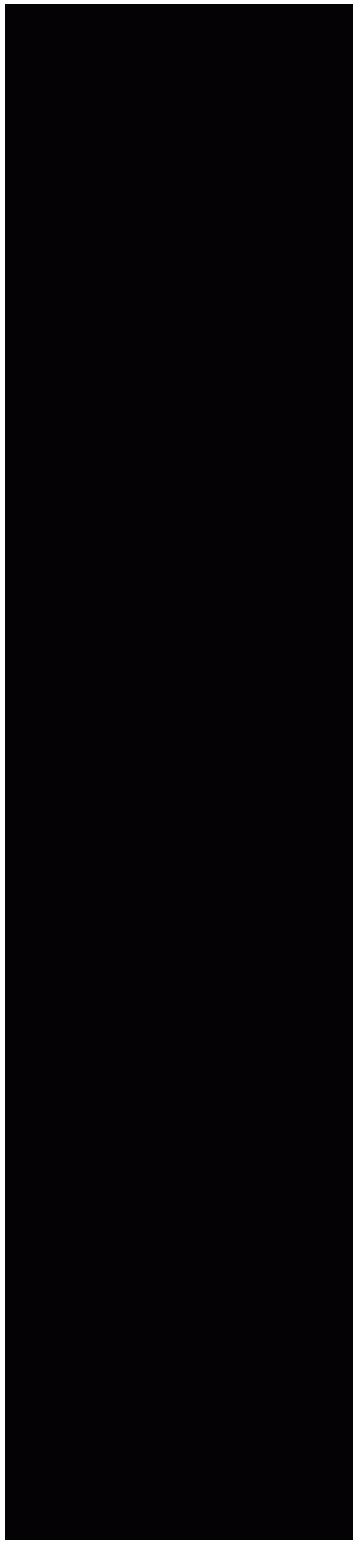
Methods used in IFAD's projects to increase water availability include:

- The construction of wells, pumps, canals, boreholes, tanks, cisterns, reservoirs, dams and water-harvesting systems.
- The rehabilitation and provision for upkeep of all of the above.
- The promotion of fairer arrangements for sharing the available water and water transport facilities.

The development of water points is likely to encourage increased use of the surrounding lands, which may cause localized rangeland degradation in some cases. It may also lead to disputes over access rights, although these may be minimised by the formation (as occurred in Morocco in the Livestock and Pasture Development Project in the Eastern Region) of cooperative water users' associations to control new water points.

Issues in road improvement

The off-take of live animals and livestock products from the rangelands, particularly during critical periods, is dependent upon workable roads and tracks. Thus, effective drought mitigation strategies, like marketing strategies depend upon



roads of sufficient quality to withstand variable weather conditions.

For example, 600 feeder roads were rehabilitated under the National Livestock Project in the Central African Republic. By the end of the project, herders could reach markets more easily, and consequently visited them more frequently. The result was that herders increased their off-takes and pressure on the rangelands was reduced.

However, caution is required in the planning of new road and track networks, as the use of improved roads may have environmental consequences. For example, pastures near to the most popular routes may become overgrazed, or herders may move into new districts or areas, thus changing the balance of the ecological system. Since the potential effects on the rangelands are significant, the location of new and rehabilitated tracks becomes a particularly important issue.

Furthermore, user rights may be infringed upon. For instance, pastoralists who use the lands through which the roads pass may be reluctant to share their grazing areas with strangers on a regular basis. Again, strong local-level institutions can ameliorate any problems and equity issues prior to project implementation.