

## Provision of Livestock: Impact Case Study

### *Herd replacement using cash transfers in Kenya*

Isiolo District in Kenya suffered a severe drought in 2005 that resulted in many livestock deaths and high rates of acute malnutrition among infants. Following the long rains in April and May 2006, Save the Children Canada provided 750 households in 22 communities with a one-off cash transfer of 30,000 Kenyan shillings (approximately US\$490). The cash was intended either to help families to reconstitute their herds with animals of their choice or to invest in alternative productive uses, and also to have some cash to meet pressing immediate needs.

On average, livestock prices at local markets did not change significantly as a result of the cash distribution, although sellers did attempt to charge exorbitant prices because of the sudden increase in demand. Recipients adopted a variety of methods for dealing with this attempted inflation, including purchasing as groups with a representative, travelling to more distant markets, and delaying their purchases.

An evaluation conducted seven months after the distribution found that recipients appreciated the cash-based intervention because it enabled them to purchase the specific animals of their choice and to exert more quality control than is possible with in-kind restocking. It also allowed recipients to spend some of the cash on other needs. In total, 85 per cent of the cash was spent on livestock – mainly goats, sheep, and cattle, with some donkeys. The remaining 15 per cent was split between items such as shelter construction, investing in business/petty trade, debt repayments, veterinary care, health care, education, and food. Children's attendance at school, especially for girls and at the secondary level, has increased for the recipients compared to non-recipients. The programme targeted only 11 per cent of all households, and clearly did not reach all of those in need. However, it was felt that it made sense to provide larger amounts of cash to a smaller number of people than to spread the available money more thinly across all those in need.

Seven months after the cash distribution, the impact on food security was modest. Recipients improved the diversity of their diet, particularly because of increased access to milk. However, their reliance on food aid was not significantly reduced. Based on herd growth in the first five to seven months (+3 per cent for cattle, +16 per cent for goats, and +25 per cent for sheep), it was estimated that herds should be large enough to ensure food security within two years, which is substantially faster than if there had been no intervention. However, the final impact of the programme will only be clear in the longer term – and in particular during the next drought, when the participants households' resilience will be put to the test.

#### **Sources:**

O'Donnell, M. (2007) Cash-based Emergency Livelihood Recovery Programme, Isiolo District, Kenya, project evaluation draft report, Save the Children, Nairobi.

Croucher, M., Karanja, V., Wako, R., Dokata, A. and Dima, J. (2006) Initial Impact Assessment of the Livelihoods Programme in Merti and Sericho, Save the Children Canada, Nairobi.