

Provision of Livestock: Impact Case Study

Livestock fairs in Niger

Between June 2005 and June 2006, the northern part of Dakoro District in Niger, a pastoralist and agro-pastoralist area, had seen livestock losses of up to 60 per cent, especially in cattle. At this level of loss, it would take nearly 30 years to rebuild the herds to their pre-crisis levels. Livestock represented the main, if not the only, source of revenue. Oxfam and its local partner, the Association pour le Renouveau de l'Élevage au Niger (AREN), took the initiative to help rebuild livestock assets via a livestock fair system.

A total of 1,500 participants received \$360 worth of vouchers in order to buy the animals of their choice (such as cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys) from local traders and wealthy livestock keepers participating in eight fairs organised during January and February 2006. To avoid quick cashing-in of the distributed animals to meet immediate needs, the participants also received \$30 in cash.

The fairs were held in partnership with the PROXEL project (run by VSF- Belgium and their local partner, Karkara), which oversaw both the health inspection of animals before entry to the fairs and the vaccination of the animals purchased. Oxfam also contracted PROXEL to conduct a mid-term follow-up of the distributed animals and provide technical support to participants, notably through a prophylaxis programme and awareness raising on new livestock husbandry techniques.

One year later, an evaluation of the programme highlighted the importance of this follow-up process to the success of the programme. The herd increase rate was 74 per cent. A total of 11,476 animals were purchased through the fairs, which at this rate of growth would mean a total herd of around 20,000 one year later. The offtake rate, including sales and home consumption, was very low (goats: 0.4 per cent; sheep: 0.6 per cent) in line with the objectives of the project, which focused on rebuilding herds. These positive outcomes were linked by the evaluators to the veterinary follow-up and the training provided to participating communities. The target communities were also noted to have increased their demand for veterinary support for their other livestock as a result of the programme.

Sources:

Oxfam GB/Vétérinaires sans Frontières Belgium (VSF-B) (2007) Rapport d'activité: Opération de reconstitution du cheptel, département de Dakoro, Région de Maradi, Niger, janvier 2006 – mars 2007, Oxfam GB/VSF-B, Niamey.

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