



EASTERN AFRICA FEED ACTION PLAN

BACKGROUND

The livestock sector plays a critical role in the livelihoods, food and nutrition security, economy, and resilience of the population of the countries in the Eastern Africa region. It provides nutritious foods such as meat, milk and eggs for families and domestic markets. The sector employs over 60 per cent of the rural population and contributes substantially to export revenues, national gross domestic product (GDP) of individual countries and to the broader socioeconomic development of the Eastern Africa region. Demand for livestock products is continuously increasing globally and more so in developing countries, including the Eastern Africa due to population growth, increasing household incomes, urbanisation and globalisation. Currently, most countries in Eastern Africa consume one-third of the recommended amounts of animal source foods. This offers a huge opportunity to increase animal production and income of livestock farmers.

BASIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION NEEDS

The sustainability of the livestock sector hinges on how feed is produced and fed to livestock. A holistic view of animal nutrition illustrates that animal feeding impacts production and productivity, animal health and welfare, the environment, including biodiversity, land degradation and land-use change, food-feed-fuel competition, animal product quality and

safety, among others. The supply of adequate, safe and quality animal feed is the foundation of all livestock production operations, from pastoral to agro-pastoral, mixed crop-livestock and more market oriented intensive systems. Animal feed is the major component cost of production of most intensive and semi-intensive livestock operations.

CONSTRAINTS TO LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Livestock feed and feeding systems in Eastern Africa are constrained by a host of interconnected factors, including recurrent droughts attributed to effects of climate change, land tenure and land use changes such as encroachment of crop farming into grasslands, encroachment of invasive plant species, restrictions of livestock mobility, shared resource use conflicts, overgrazing, grassland degradation, soil infertility and inadequate inputs and planting material. In addition, poor feed conservation practices, limited capacity for feed manufacturing, lack of knowledge on appropriate feed and feeding practices, and inadequate data on estimates of the proportion/ number of animals kept within specific production systems constrain the efficient use of available feed resources.

Evidence from the region indicates that pastoral destitution is largely driven by feed and water scarcity. In most countries, the natural resource base in the rangelands is shrinking fast owing to prolonged and increased frequency of

drought events as well as land use changes. In recent decades, increasing climate change and variability, recurrent droughts and conflicts have exacerbated the feed gap. The Horn of Africa has experienced severe and frequent livestock feed and water crises of unprecedented proportions due to frequently recurrent droughts of prolonged duration. Successive rainfall failures accelerate the loss of vegetation cover and cause depletion of soil-seed-bank of desirable forage species and drying up of water sources. The 2020-2022 drought, with a record five consecutive seasons of rain failure in the Horn of Africa, severely affected large areas of Somalia, southern and south-eastern Ethiopia, and northern and eastern Kenya resulting in the death of 13.2 million heads of livestock across the region, including 6.8 million in Ethiopia, 3.8 million in Somalia and 2.6 million in Kenya. This calls for a concerted effort of regional bodies such as IGAD, international development partners such as FAO and member states to develop a coherent feed action plan to address the problem.



THE EASTERN AFRICA ANIMAL FEED ACTION PLAN- 2024-2028

The Eastern Africa Animal Feed Action Plan for 2024-2028 is intended to provide governments, development partners, and the private sector and livestock producers with a systematic and guided plan to facilitate sustainable improvements to animal feed challenges in the region. The Action Plan is an updated version of the previous five-year Action Plan prepared in 2019. It has been prepared mirroring the Eastern Africa Livestock Feed and Feeding Strategy for 2023-2037. It provides actions leading to improvements in feed resources availability and quality, and better feeding management through increased year-round availability of sufficient and improved quality feed, a critical step in building the resilience of livestock-dependent livelihoods in the region.

The Action Plan comprises four major parts with a series of outputs and actions associated with them. The four areas are:

- ① Establish and strengthen livestock and feed resources data, information and communication systems.
- ② Develop sustainable animal feed supply chains.
- ③ Identify the status of rangelands and grazing areas and disseminate best practices for their management.



- ④ Strengthen an enabling environment for feed production.

The main objectives of the animal feed action plan are to:

- ① Leverage the potential and opportunities provided by animal feed resources to stimulate development and income generation in poor rural communities by improving the efficiency and profitability of the animal feed sector;
- ② Enhance the participation of poor rural communities in the animal feed value chain;
- ③ Facilitate private sector-driven animal feed market development, within and outside Eastern Africa, ensuring market access and competitive prices across countries;
- ④ Provide a guide for governments to develop enabling policies and regulatory frameworks on feed for enhanced trade between countries in Eastern Africa; and
- ⑤ Exploit the production potential of rangelands and ensure sustainable natural resource use as a key ingredient in the development of the animal feed sector in East Africa.



POLICY ADVICE

- ① IGAD, FAO and member states should develop harmonised regional feed quality and safety standards as well as certification procedures.
- ② IGAD should strengthen a regional fodder and range platform and support member states establish pastoral unions/federation and associations or cooperatives to articulate pastoral issues for policy buy-in.
- ③ IGAD and member states should promote and advocate for public-private partnerships information sharing and harmonisation at the region level.
- ④ IGAD should advocate for tax waivers or incentives on animal feed, ingredients and test kits in the region.
- ⑤ Member states should improve conditions for enhancing availability of feed technologies and technical capacity and know-how of feed producers.
- ⑥ IGAD and member states should promote large scale fodder production in strategic cross border areas prone to drought and floods.
- ⑦ Member states should support establishment of strategic feed storage reserves in a location that is accessible to both domestic and export needs.
- ⑧ IGAD and FAO should facilitate information sharing and strategic experience sharing within and among countries as part of capacity building.

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