Camel Husbandry and Production

best practices from FARM-Africa's
Pastoralist Development Project in Kenya
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About FARM-Africa

FARM-Africa (Food and Agricultural Research Management) is a British-based non-governmental organization initiated in 1985 whose goal is to reduce poverty by enabling marginal African farmers and herders to make sustainable improvements to their well-being by managing their renewable natural resources more effectively. The Camel Improvement Project, which later became the Pastoralist Development Project (PDP), was its first undertaking. The project began in Kenya in 1988 and ran for 12 years. This booklet is one of a series documenting how the project progressed and the lessons it learned along the way. It presents the best practices that evolved from the work. FARM-Africa hopes that by recounting the good practices that came out of the project, by listing its points to consider of practices that worked and those that did not, it can be of aid to others who are planning to work with pastoralists in northern Kenya or in a similar environment.

The original PDP strategy

The Camel Improvement Project set out to promote the camel—its husbandry and production—because the camel was seen as being drought tolerant and environmentally friendly, well suited for conditions in northern Kenya. The camel had been neglected or at least underused, and the thought was that with a relatively small input a development project with the camel as its focus could render great benefits. Helping the communities improve this one resource could also act as an entry point for tackling broader development issues.

The project, built on 12 years of research by the UNESCO Integrated Project in Arid Lands (IPAL) in the 1970s and 1980s, was conceived at a time when nomadic pastoralism was considered an archaic form of life by many development agencies and administrators and the camel was considered an unimportant livestock species. Nomads had been encouraged to give up their lifestyle and settle near towns and centres so they would have access to basic services such as health and education. But these policies and uncontrolled water development had led to considerable degradation around settlements and exacerbated the effects of drought. Through education and creation of awareness, the project influenced change of those attitudes and it is now widely accepted that nomadic pastoralism is the most effective and efficient form of land use in arid pastoral areas. The challenge was, and still is, to provide sustainable services to a society that is constantly on the move.

The next step for the project was to decide how to reach the remote nomadic pastoralists and put in place sustainable means of broadening their management and development capability. FARM-Africa approached this through mobile outreach—taking the project to the nomads rather than establishing sedentary headquarters.

The project's start-up phase involved community dialogue and planning. Local community members agreed with project staff that the project would set up a mobile outreach camp. Staff then gathered information through household questionnaires, range transects and aerial surveys to determine the present situation and later, to record project impact. Initially the project provided its services directly to the selected contact farmers and at the same time it encouraged communities to form camel improvement groups (CIGs). Gradually the project's scope broadened to undertake work in other major aspects of pastoralist life—natural resource management, microenterprise development, human health care. (See FARM-Africa booklets 'Animal health', 'Natural resource management', 'Microenterprise development' and 'The mobile outreach approach'.)

The area

The project area extended from Samburu to Marsabit and Moyale Districts, which are part of the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs). These lands comprise approximately 80% of Kenya's land area and about 75% of its livestock. Soils are characteristically low in fertility, shallow and highly erodable, often coupled with areas of high salinity. Climatic conditions for the districts vary between lowlands and highlands. Rainfall, generally below 200 to 300 mm per year, is usually erratic in season, duration and distribution. Productivity is dependent on rainfall and varies greatly between areas and seasons. The inherent production systems adopt strategies aimed at mutual coexistence between humans and the livestock they depend on, often as their sole means of livelihood.

The project worked with different ethnic groups—the Ariaal, Samburu and Turkana communities in Samburu District and the Gabra, Rendille, Borana, Somali and Sakuye communities in Marsabit and Moyale Districts.
The Gabra, Rendille, Sakuye and Somali are primarily camel keepers; the Borana and Samburu are traditional cattle owners who have increasingly adopted the camel in recent years.

The general problem and how to approach it

It has long been recognized that development interventions in the ASAL regions have often been inappropriate or unsustainable. Because pastoralist areas and issues had been marginalized, the project first needed to identify key priorities. Originally the project, with a fairly strong emphasis on research, had the following objectives:
- to demonstrate the true economic importance of the camel and improve its productivity in milk, meat and transport
- to improve long-term economic security of pastoral communities and their capacity to survive in harsh arid areas
- to bring together the Kenyan pastoral tribes to encourage a unified development strategy and to link this to the Kenyan scientific community and government policy
- to contribute to a more appropriate model of development among pastoral people, centering on camel productivity improvement and education tailored to survival in arid lands

Renamed the Pastoralist Development Project at the end of phase 1 (April 1992), the new name reflected that the project had now integrated education, range management and health components.

Principles

Establish networks
- Plan only after exhaustive discussion with all other organizations and agencies working in the area. Religious organizations have been long in some of these areas and have a wealth of knowledge, even if their philosophies, ideals and outcomes may be very different from those of a development organization.

Ensure sustainability
- Avoid creating dependency. Look for possible consequences of any intervention before implementing it.

- Make sure that communities buy into a project and pay full, unsubsidized costs for services. Alternative methods for dealing with emergencies or the poorest of the poor should be found, for example, vouchers for drugs.
- Build the capability of local personnel to deliver services rather than rely on direct project implementation.
- Help set action plans and review progress regularly with those who set the action plans—at all levels including the grassroots.
- Share training costs. This may slow down the implementation rate of the training, but it ensures better quality training because those attending demand good service.
- Remember that follow-up and refresher courses are as important as the initial training.
- Identify a realistic exit strategy right at the project planning stage.

Pastoral development takes a long time and the priorities of development agency, donor and implementer may change while the project is being implemented.

Use participatory methods
- Plan interventions with ministry officials and with the pastoralist groups themselves. Where possible use community-based planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Build on the knowledge and experience of the local people.
- Include communities in quarterly project reporting and planning meetings.
- Set out a clear strategy for all project components and adopt a logical framework approach.
- Draw up a seasonal activity calendar with the community and the agencies involved and plan activities in accordance with that calendar.

Ensure equity
- Take into account differences in gender roles, wealth distribution, age sets, ethnicity, religion and cultural values.
Camel husbandry and production

The problem and the approach

Pastoralists in northern Kenya have continually suffered from poor food security. The camels they herded produced well below their potential. Government and NGO extension services lacked knowledge about camels. Pastoralists did not have access to suitable camel veterinary drugs. They had no market for excess male animals.

The aim of the project was to improve production from camels by disseminating appropriate information and demonstrating improved techniques through an outreach programme. It sought to do this by providing new, appropriate information about camel husbandry and veterinary drugs to a largely traditional, illiterate people located in remote areas. Expected benefits were

- an increase in camel production in terms of live animals, meat, milk, hides and draught output, leading to less reliance on food relief
- increased local knowledge and capability through training provided both locally and further afield
- less overgrazing of the herb layer and better use of browse plants in the production system
- improved household food security and reduced impact of drought
- improved livelihoods built on improved management of natural resources through the promotion of nomadic pastoralism and increased livestock mobility in a population that was becoming increasingly settled

Methods adopted

At the outset, project staff provided services directly. Although many of the techniques and practices they used were specific to camels, many would be the same for any livestock species raised in pastoral areas. The key approach was the mobile outreach camp. (See FARM-Africa booklet ‘The mobile outreach approach’.)

The methods used to improve camel production changed over time. The steps were

- direct service provision by project staff
- carrying out of innovative applied research
- practical outreach

Lessons learned

- capacity building
- dissemination and lobbying

- By aiming at new and existing camel owners, the project initially benefited mainly men and usually the wealthier members of the community.
- Mobile extension out of small, highly mobile outreach camps (MOCs) is a cost-efficient and effective method of training and disseminating information in nomadic pastoralist areas.

Providing veterinary services to camel owners

At the start of the project FARM-Africa staff provided veterinary services to camels in the areas that the mobile outreach camps served. They carried out treatment at cost price and provided animal health advice. As they did so, they explained the project’s philosophy and aims.

It was soon realized that camel owners faced many problems apart from camel health, and the project expanded and changed its strategy. It treated all livestock species and addressed broader pastoralist issues such as natural resource protection, income diversification, education and human health.
Points to consider

- Service provision was limited because the area was large and MOC-based project staff alone could not adequately cover it.
- The mobile outreach camps fulfilled a need by providing a quality service at cost. However, the service could create dependency if it was prolonged and if local animal health care workers were not trained to take over. The service would be unsustainable in the long term unless private services were established.
- Veterinary drug supply and camel marketing are better left to the private sector to achieve competition, realistic pricing and sustainability.
- For community members to provide animal or human health services voluntarily is not sustainable, and to ensure long-term sustainability, providers must make modest charges to earn a profit.

Lesson learned

- Community members need to be trained to provide their own services to prevent the dependency that results if project staff provide them.

Using demonstration herds for research, extension and training

The camel herds acted as a living example of better husbandry. Maintaining the animals forced the project to be practical and realistic. The herd was used as a training and learning tool, and on occasion its bulls were used for breeding with local stock. The camels provided transport and milk for the mobile outreach camps and could deliver famine relief to places that were difficult to reach.

Each mobile outreach camp had a demonstration herd of up to 30 camels of different breeds, ages and sexes. Although initially based with the outreach camps, the herds often had to be kept long distances away to provide them with adequate pasture and water and assure their security. But they still served as a demonstration herd for local herders.

Points to consider

- Camels can be used as a practical tool for training in animal health and husbandry. The herd can demonstrate diversified uses of the camel, such as for ploughing and pulling carts.
- Keeping the herd identified the project with traditional values and livelihoods. The local population also felt that having the herd nearby gave them added security.
- Working with the herd gave staff a better understanding of the limitations local problems posed, which they experienced first-hand.
- The herd was useful for generating income and as a public relations or advertising tool.

BUT . . .

- The demonstration herds competed with local herds for limited water and grazing resources, which could be a serious problem during drought years.
- The herd was expensive to establish and incurred maintenance costs.
- If the animals were not well managed, they would provide a poor example rather than a good one, thus shedding doubt on the project's capability.

Lessons learned

- As the MOC increased in size it became more dependent on mechanized transport and covered larger areas. The time needed to move the herd often meant that it was separated from the mobile outreach camp.
- The need for the herd diminished as the project moved from its initial phase of making the communities aware of the value and uses of camels and training in camel husbandry to more diverse training in human health, social development and microenterprise, for which frequent follow-up and refresher courses were required.

Camel improvement groups

Camel improvement groups (CIGs) were formed within locations and sublocations to
- pool their resources and afford wholesale veterinary drugs
- leave behind a sustainable local structure
- act as a contact point for further development and training initiatives
- act as extension agents, trainers, and monitoring and supervisory bodies

During the course of the project, 17 CIGs were formed and raised assets worth 8500 US dollars. 15 were involved in trading in veterinary drugs, 12
in livestock trade, and 9 in the hides and skins trade. Because of the high rate of illiteracy in the groups, 7 adult literacy classes were established within the CIG framework.

All CIGs formed were to trade in veterinary drugs, replacing the unsustainable provision of veterinary services by project staff. Start-up capital was from membership fees ranging from KES 200 to 500. The CIGs, if well motivated, acted as good, cost-effective extension agents and promoters of camel production and management. But much depended on the initiative of individuals within the group. The Kisima CIG, for example, held refresher training courses for members of a neighbouring CIG and established their own exhibiting stand at the Samburu agricultural show to explain their activities and promote camel husbandry in Samburu District.

Points to consider
- The groups are community based and owned. Building on a community's own resources or those of its members gives a group a sense of ownership. It promotes new, non-traditional cohesiveness. It is sustainable, depending little on outside aid.
- The group acts as a contact for bringing in new skills and introducing diversified uses. A group serves as a good forum for training.
- Group activity helps create a business-like attitude, less dependent on relief.
  BUT . . .
- Ethnic and political divides can lead to vulnerability, infighting and search for personal gain.
- Members often expect to be paid dividends.

Lesson learned
- When a project encourages group formation, communities may form bodies artificially simply to please the project or donor rather than address community priorities. In the long term, such groups fail, as they lack true identity and the sense of community ownership. Or they may evolve into other more effective associations.

Group efforts are not suitable for all activities, especially for low-profit activities, which are better done by individuals.

Contact herders
In Samburu District, eight herders who were respected opinion leaders in their communities were selected to be 'contact herders': people who would remain in the community after the mobile outreach camp moved on. A contact herder would be a model for others to follow and act as a demonstration within the community. These herds would serve as demonstration herds, receiving different treatment or management regimes that people could evaluate over an extended period.

After 2 years, the approach was discontinued as there was insufficient follow-up or long-term input, and the contact herders showed signs of becoming dependent on the project or expecting too much from it.

Points to consider
- Contact herders living in the community act as a contact point, role model and extension agent.
  BUT . . .
- Follow-up must be sufficient or these herders tend to become dependent on the project or donor.

Lessons learned
- To work effectively with contact herders, all parties must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Instead of targeting individual contact herders, target contact families, as men, women and children are all involved in camel husbandry.

Improving breed through local stud bulls
To increase production by improving local stock, 21 Somali-type breeding bulls were distributed to CIGs and schools in Marsabit and Samburu Districts. Although minor improvements in production may have been achieved, the attempt had many weaknesses. The recipients lacked financial commitment, and the scheme was seen as a free handout. The more productive bulls did not always thrive under prevailing local conditions, and the breeding rate was slow. Some recipients were unable to handle the large bull camels, which were then left to roam unsupervised and were not treated properly. The scheme lacked planning and prior experience, and monitoring and follow-up were insufficient.
Promoting camel uptake and offtake

Camel marketing

For a short time the project was involved in buying and selling camels. The intent was to provide camel owners with quality stock, promote camel keeping and link camel owners to markets.

Many of the pastoral groups in northern Kenya suffer from frequent intertribal and interclan conflicts, and thus they find it difficult to market their camels. A few entrepreneurs do trade in camels across tribal borders, but as the business is risky their prices are high. PDP acted as a conduit, helping CIG members and other interested parties buy and sell their camels.

After a study on camel marketing was carried out, new outlets for excess male camels were explored. As a result, there are now 12 camel butcheries operating in Nairobi alone.

Lesson learned

• A marketing component carried out by a project is unsustainable in the long term. Such services are better handled by the private sector.

Lessons learned

• Ownership of groups, activities, resources or animals must be very clear.
• Recipients or stakeholders must set priorities and buy into the activities.

Free handouts and subsidies should be avoided.

Improving breed by introducing Pakistan breed camels

In 1994, FARM-Africa in partnership with three other agencies contributed to the cost of importing 24 camels from Pakistan, 4 of which were FARM-Africa's share. The aim was to increase production rapidly by introducing high-potential imported genetic stock. Most of the purebred Pakistan camels were kept outside the working area as the very arid lands of Marsabit were considered too harsh for the imported stock. Only crossbred stock was sent to Marsabit, Moyale and Samburu Districts.

Points to consider

• The growth rate and the potential for increase in production are high.
• Some areas achieved higher milk yields.
• The large male calves provided bigger, stronger working bulls and more meat.

BUT...

• The initial investment was expensive, and it was difficult to maintain genetic purity. Only about 20 purebred animals now remain.
• The imported animals were not suited to very dry environments.

Overall, some improvements in milk yield and growth rates were observed, but not in the very arid districts. Importing highly productive Pakistan milk camels was not suitable for most of the arid pastoralist areas in Kenya, but their crossbred offspring are likely to increase productivity in many areas.

The bulls were perceived as belonging to the project, not the community. For such a scheme to succeed, the community or group needs to buy into the bull and must consider itself the owner.

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Camels for slaughter

One aim was to improve the economics of camel keeping through promoting the consumption of camel meat. During a drought, FARM-Africa also started slaughtering excess male camels as an emergency measure to supplement school feeding programmes. Added benefits were that the increased offtake of excess males reduced grazing pressure.

Points to consider

- Providing camel meat to schools during the drought made school attendance higher and retention of learning better with improved nutrition for the students.
- Creating a demand for meat started an attitudinal change towards marketing male animals.
  
  BUT . . .
  
  - The programme could increase or create dependency as the meat was provided for free.
  - In some cultures, such as in Gabra society, slaughtering male breeding camels broke tradition.

Lesson learned

- Emergency response agencies should be encouraged to use local sources of protein, particularly male camels, in famine relief programmes.

Promoting production of value-added products

Despite the project's work in promoting camel husbandry and improving production, which increased yields, food security is still linked to seasonal availability and food storage. Livestock owners need to improve production, storage and marketing, including adding value to products.

Condensed milk

Condensing milk preserves surplus milk in the wet season for consumption in the dry season.

The technology is simple: mix 1 part of sugar with 4 parts of milk and boil over an open fire until the mixture is reduced to half its original volume. The milk can last for 6 months or more without refrigeration.

The project made about 2000 kg of condensed milk for demonstration and sale. However, people have been slow to take up the technology.

Points to consider

- Condensing surplus milk in the wet season will store the milk into the dry season when food is in short supply. The process is easy to carry out.
  
  BUT . . .
  
  - Surplus milk is available only seasonally.
  - The process requires firewood, which is scarce in supply.
  - Finding an adequate supply of storage containers is difficult.

Triplets

Sometime in 1991/92, in North Horr, Marsabit District, a young Gabra widow named Kame gave birth to triplets—a very rare occurrence among nomadic peoples. It was during the prolonged drought when most pastoralists were surviving on relief food and had nothing else to turn to. A researcher saw the mother and sympathizing with her plight, he bought 15 kg of condensed camel milk from FARM-Africa. The mother and all three children survived on a diet of condensed milk mixed into the relief porridge. This was perhaps the first time in Gabra history that a mother and all her triplets have survived.

D’enge Tullu, PDP, Marsabit and Moyale

Meat products

The activities with camel meat had two aims:

- to increase the value of camel meat products and assess public acceptability through market surveys
- to store the meat using traditional technology to improve food security in the dry season

Camel meat was processed traditionally by Somali and Gabra communities into nyiri nyiri (deep-fried meat) and stored for later consumption. Other products such as sausages, biltong and smoked meats were prepared at the Ol Maisor abattoir, a popular venue for study tours from the PDP working area. Producing nyiri nyiri and biltong was acceptable to many camel owners, but they considered making sausages and smoked meats too expensive a technology for them to undertake, even though such processing would increase the retail value.
Points to consider

- The sale of camel sausages and camburgers at agriculture shows and the Derby proved popular.

BUT . . .

- Although biltong and nyiri nyiri were well accepted and an appropriate technology, many camel owners considered processing meat into sausage too expensive for them to undertake.

Lessons learned

- Encouraging or promoting traditional or appropriate methods of preserving camel and other livestock products can improve food security.
- Excess male camels can be used successfully as emergency protein supplies in arid lands if the animals are slaughtered and the meat is consumed immediately, dried as biltong or deep-fried in the hump fat.

Promoting diversification in using camels

**Traction, ploughing, transport and leisure**

People in pastoral areas need to find ways to diversify their income. Using the camel's power potential for traction can increase the animal's usefulness. The project trained five camels to plough and pull carts and included demonstration of these activities in the training workshops.

In conjunction with a local engineering firm, the project staff designed a two-wheeled cart suitable for remote areas. Features included puncture-proof tyres, wooden bearings and a high clearance. All parts were designed so they could be easily replaced in the rural areas. Ten artisans from various districts, including Tanzania, were trained how to design and build the carts.

Although the technology was of much interest, only a handful of camel owners were known to have taken it up. With project support, one dam was desilted using camel-drawn scoops.

**Profit-making camels**

Thomas Lekiso is a farmer at Lodokejek in Samburu District who formerly had the following problems:

- In the dry season when his animals had to travel to distant areas to graze, he was forced to buy milk from other sources.
- He did not have enough milk for family consumption.
- Income from the sale of sheep and goats and milk was inadequate.
- He lost up to 50 sheep and goats annually through mild diseases.
- Worm loads led to low milk production and poor body condition of his animals.

Mr Lekiso had PDP training and joined a local camel improvement group. He is now using his camels in a number of ways.

- He is hiring them out to tourists for KES 500 per animal per day.
- In the dry season, he transports the camel milk over 30 km from his herds to his home.
- He ploughs his fields using his camel and supplies vegetables and grains to Maralal town. He charges neighbours KES 1500 per acre for ploughing with his camel.
- He earns money as a contractor, supplying sand and ballast by camel to building sites.
- Using his training in animal health care, he treats camels and small stock in the community, earning about KES 200 per day. He has now opened his own shop.

And from the Ngurunit CIG, Wambile Ladariakache, having trained his camels for riding, is regularly contracted by international tourist companies for camel safaris. He and his sons enter the camel derbies every year and he has received more than KES 100,000 in prize money.

Felix Ngelese, mobile camp supervisor, PDP Samburu team

**Points to consider**

- The technology can diversify income, and it has earned some owners extra income.

BUT . . .

- The technology is of limited suitability as it is doubtful whether people should be attempting agriculture in the arid areas where camels exist.
• Learning about the herd and its management would be appropriate education for children in ASAL pastoralist areas.

Initially 5, then a further 25 schools in Marsabit, Moyale and Samburu Districts received herds of 10 camels each, most of them on a cost-sharing basis with the school or community paying 30%.

The programme was specifically directed towards young pastoralists, and pastoralist youth clubs were formed in schools. The aim was to make it possible for students to remain within the pastoral system and contribute to it. They could also disseminate their newly learned skills and information when at home. Parents also became part of the programme when parent-teacher association members were trained as community-based animal health workers (CAHWs).

Points to consider
• The scheme was equitable as everyone in the school benefited from the herd.
• It generated income.
• It improved nutrition and school attendance.
• It helped curb the brain drain that would occur when educated pastoralists migrated to the cities to find work, because their basic training in animal and camel husbandry gave them skills they could use at home.
• The pastoralist youth clubs were responsible for monitoring the herd.

BUT . . .
• The scheme was not suitable for schools in environments that were extremely arid as the camels had to spend long periods in grazing lands that were far from the schools.
• The workload could become too heavy for teachers, students and project staff.
• Because the rate of turnover of both students and teachers was high, the scheme suffered from a lack of continuity.
• Initial costs before the herd was productive increased the financial pressure on the school for the first few months.

Lessons learned
• The more involved the schools were in purchasing the camels, the better the result. The school must be recognized as owning the camels. Schools

• There are concerns for the animals’ welfare if they are used too strenuously.

Lessons learned
• Look for alternative uses for livestock that can lead to income diversification, which can help maintain pastoralist livelihoods.
• Camels are well evolved to provide the transport and power that can generate income.

Targeting young pastoralists within the Schools Camel Programme

During the later phases of the project, FARM-Africa established the Schools Camel Programme in partnership with the Kenya government. The plan was based on the following tenets:
• Schools should attempt to produce their own food to replace the WFP school feeding programme.
• School camel herds would improve income generation and food security and promote a self-help philosophy within the school system.
• The herd would act as an educational tool for demonstrating good camel husbandry.

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• The herd would act as an educational tool for demonstrating good camel husbandry.
Workshops were therefore held to train camel owners or potential camel owners, government field officers, CAHWs, school committees, and parent-teachers associations. Workshop content was tailored to fit local needs, but generally it covered such topics as livestock management, nutrition, breeding; handling, loading, draught use of camels; marketing; and disease diagnosis, control and prevention. Regular refresher training workshops were recognized as being essential.

Over 2500 pastoralists were trained at these workshops; 197 CAHWs were trained and remained active, treating up to 30,000 animals annually, 10% of which were camels.

Points to consider
- The workshops were held in the community itself—village, camp or field—and addressed local priorities. The community posed the problems to be solved. The psychosocial methods of training used ensured full participation.
- The training was practical. It included local trials and demonstrations and was held in the local language and Kiswahili.
- Because workshops were held on site, their cost was low. Participants helped share the costs, either directly or by providing milk, meat or firewood.
- Workshops involved government and staff of other NGOs. Follow-up and refresher workshops were held.

BUT . . .
- The workshops were gender insensitive and often dominated by men.
- Because workshops were popular, and as both FARM-Africa and other NGOs tackled more pastoralist issues such as health, water and microenterprise management, some areas had many workshops taking place at the same time and participants became ‘over-workshopped’.

Lessons learned
- Action plans should be set at the end of each workshop and progress reviewed at each subsequent meeting. Refresher training every 6 to 12 months is essential.
- Practical demonstrations should be included in all workshops. Training courses should be both practical and theoretical.
Monitoring and follow-up have been found essential in any development or capacity-building programme. Initial one-off inputs are insufficient. Regular refresher courses should be held every 6 months and progress monitored even more frequently. All CAHWs, community-based human health workers and other trainees or groups should receive support after their initial training. Management and business advice is often required.

Points to consider

- Monitoring and follow-up ensure continuity and improve the chances of success in project activities.
- Using CBPM E shows that recipients are committed to the project.

BUT . . .

- Extensive follow-up is expensive, and it can create dependency in the beneficiaries.

Study tours

Carefully planned tours took the visitors to areas climatically and environmentally similar to their own, giving them the opportunity to see what others living under conditions similar to their own were doing. Some tours were designed to show other uses of camels such as the Ol Muisor abattoir and the Kisma camel butchery, or the management and use of the Pakistan breed of camels in Kenya. Participants, who were expected to contribute towards the costs, were charged KES 1000 per person for a tour.

Points to consider

- Well-planned and appropriate study tours expose people to appropriate technology.
- The visit bestows upon the community visited a recognition of its achievement.
- Those on the tours are expected to share in the costs.

BUT . . .

- The tours are expensive.
- Sometimes the same people repeatedly sign up for study tours, in effect becoming ‘study tourists’, although the requirement of cost sharing can reduce this risk.

Lesson learned

- Study tours should be planned so that they are appropriate for the origin from where the visiting participants originate. Where possible, they should coincide with agricultural shows or special events such as the camel derby to maximize the opportunity.

Monitoring and follow-up

Monitoring and regular follow-up have been found essential in any development or capacity-building programme. Initial one-off inputs are insufficient. Regular refresher courses should be held every 6 months and progress monitored even more frequently. All CAHWs, community-based human health workers and other trainees or groups should receive support after their initial training. Management and business advice is often required.

Training communities, groups or individuals in community-based planning, monitoring and evaluation (CBPM E) right at the start of any project is recommended.

Points to consider

- Monitoring and follow-up ensure continuity and improve the chances of success in project activities.
- Using CBPM E shows that recipients are committed to the project.

BUT . . .

- Extensive follow-up is expensive, and it can create dependency in the beneficiaries.
Lessons learned

- Communities should be included in project planning through community-based planning, monitoring and evaluation, and community attendance should be encouraged at project planning meetings.
- Refresher courses should be held every 6 months and follow-up meetings monthly. Communities need to be trained in planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Monitoring and frequent, long-term follow-up are important and need to be planned for and budgeted sufficiently.
- Research needs to be community led and must include the herder in its design, data collection and analysis.

Conclusion

Promoting camel husbandry has improved food security for many pastoralists. One of the most significant aspects is how camel husbandry and production have now been taken up by many hundreds of Samburu and Maasai pastoralists. Although they herd their camels in a different manner, their herd productivity is often much higher than that of traditional camel owners.

Abbreviations

CAHW community-based animal health worker
CIG camel improvement group
KES Kenya shilling, valued at about 75 to 1 US dollar
MOC mobile outreach camp
NGO non-governmental organization
PDP Pastoralist Development Project

Notes


2. The mobile outreach camps (MOCs) were the centre of operations for FARM-Africa’s pastoralist development project. The camps consisted of staff houses and offices made of local materials built in traditional round Somali-style tukuls (huts), which could be dismantled and reassembled within hours when moving camp. The houses were built around a camel boma (pen) where the demonstration herds were corralled. All training workshops and extension activities were based in or from the MOC. In most aspects the camp resembled a local traditional manyatta (encampment) and moved every 3 to 6 months to a new community. (See FARM-Africa booklet ‘The mobile outreach approach’.)

3. KES - Kenya shilling, valued at the time at about 75 to 1 US dollar.
