



## DREAM II - Learning Event



# The Rangeland Fodder Nexus as seen by Afar Pastoralist Development Association

Tuesday 9 March 2021

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# Introduction

- ▶ APDA began the use of fodder in emergency projects associated with overcoming malnutrition in 2005/06 when vast numbers of cattle died in Teeru and Awra in a severe drought. The organization has used firuska and nutrition blocks as made in Sifra and more recently, 2020/ 2021 locust - imposed drought problem, alfalfa hay the government (BoLANR) produces in Dubte. Distribution has been undertaken in Bidu, Eli Da'ar, Northern Dubte and Teeru reaching around 15,000 goats in almost destitute households. In association with animal treatment, milk production reached up to 2 liters/ per goat/ day.
- ▶ Growing indigenous grasses in deliberate plots near the pastoralist house is promoted through DRR training in Kori, in Erebti, Eli Da'ar
- ▶ In projects where APDA has successfully got the community to grow food crops from available water as in DerGeera in Sifra and Ragden in Uwwa, the communities have chosen to grow grass and now have hay for their animals, sharing with neighbours and selling in the market as of discussions in February.
- ▶ In Uwwa, Awra, Guulina, communities have constructed new grass-huts called 'golli' from grasses that grew after the main rainy season rain with the idea of breaking down the house and feeding it to animals when the season is so dry and it is required.
- ▶ Fodder production is now part of 2 newly - opened livelihood projects aiming to rehabilitate both the damaged rangeland and the community livelihood in Sidiha Malif, Awra and Daaba, Kori as well in the rehabilitation and improving of traditional farming methods in Garani using channeled water from the Awash River. Both these new livelihood projects have community disaster risk reduction planning and implementation as a core element.

Thus in summary, APDA is devising its community - level fodder production activities along the major rivers of the Region as well as in the dry hinterland.

For sustainability and availability enabling a change in community perspective and practice toward fodder in their animal husbandry traditions, APDA is looking to enabling local production of animal feed in large enough amounts that all herdsmen plan to purchase it for the milking and breeding animals, keeping it as reserve for the dry - seasons.

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# Lessons Learned

- ▶ Fodder needs to be an essential part of the pastoralist plan in Afar Region, not just to secure animals in the dry season but to secure maximum milk for the household and possibly the market. However the concept of fodder needs to be enabled through awareness, promotion and practical facilitation
- ▶ Once aware and the pastoralist actually plan for and produce fodder from available grass, they will then lessen their herd size and have a more sustainable herd.
- ▶ More needs to be done to research local available fodder that is affordable. Work was done some years ago on the use of ground *prosopis juliflora* pods but this needs deliberate direction and investigation

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# Up-scaling

- ▶ Through local cooperatives, the production and sale of fodder/ animal feed can become innate to the culture of the herdsmen. These cooperatives should also be linked to animal fattening and marketing so that the population can benefit from the entire economic cycle of animal production. Fodder marketing should be deep into the hinterland and not reserved to the roadside. Again, it should be linked to veterinary services for the community to experience the full benefit.
- ▶ Starting milk - production cooperatives will also generate the scale-up of the use of fodder.
- ▶ Animal fodder and human nutrition needs to be intrinsically linked and women need to have involvement in the process so that they are seeing the outcome flow to their children. Adequate water for livestock should also be part of the equation as well as stable link to markets.

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# Picture that tells it all



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Fodder  
produced in  
Sifra in  
November/  
December  
ready for the  
dry season

