2. Over sowing

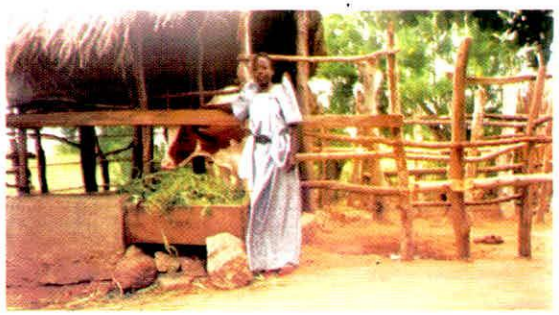
This involves the introduction of new pasture species into the already existing pastures. Legumes are usually used. Legumes are plants that have swellings on their roots and add nitrogen in the soil from the air. They improve both the quantity and quality of pastures because they have a high protein value. Legume species to be used include: *stylo, centosema, desmodium*, and *lab lab*.

3. Use of alternative feed sources.

These are other plant species other than the natural existing pastures that are used to feed the animals. They can be used as sources of feeds especially in the dry season when there are inadequate feeds.

They include:

- Crop residues such as: sweet potato vines, cassava peelings, ground nut residues ,banana peelings
- Other plant species like Ficus (mutooma)



Sweet potatoe vines as a source of feeds

Benefits

- Improved quantity and quality of feeds for the animals
- Improved growth rate of animals
- Improved milk yields
- Increased incomes

For more information contact

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IMPROVING LIVESTOCK FEEDING IN TESO FARMING SYSTEM (TFS) RANGELANDS

Strengthening the contribution of women to household Livelihood through Improved Livestock Production Intervetions and Strategies in the Teso Farming System(SCWLP)



NARO

March 2003

Introduction

The Teso farming system is characterised by poor performing breeds that give low yields of milk and other animal products. This is because animals are fed on natural pastures that prevail in rangelands infested with weeds, overgrown and scaly grasses. The Department for International Development (DFID) is funding a project to strengthen the contribution of women to household livelihood through improved livestock production interventions and strategies.The project is aimed at creating awareness and providing skills among the rural women about issues affecting them such as:

- Livestock management issues
- Environmental issues
- Gender issues
- Leadership skills
- Business skills
- Credit /loan access and management.



Teso farming system rangeland

Training needs assesement

At the start of the project, a training needs assessment was carried out to identify and document the existing gaps in the skills of women in carrying out gainful livestock production in the districts of Pallisa, Kumi, Soroti, Kaberamaido and Katakwi.

The study was conducted by: -

- Interviewing 126 representatives from 14 women groups.
- Holding 2 workshops that brought together all the stakeholders i.e. Serere Agricultural and Animal Production Research Institute (SAARI) Namulonge Agricultural and Animal Production Research Institute (NAARI), African Women Economic Policy Network (AWEPON) and the rural women.
- More views were gathered by bringing together the local leadership and women groups in a focus group.

Findings

The study revealed that women lacked skills and required skills development in the following areas:-

- Livestock feeding
- Disease control and prevention
- Selection of breeds
- Credit/loan management
- Marketing of produce
- HIV/AIDS
- Home sanitation
- Soil fertility management
- Family panning
- Storage techniques and
- Leadership.

However there were fears in accessing and subsequent repayment of loans. The project has sought to address the feeding constraints with interventions that will improve the quantity and quality of forage in rangelands.

Recommendations

The following interventions were recommended:

1. Control weeds: weeds are the plant species existing in pastures that are not eaten by the animal. They compete with pastures/grasses for space thus reducing the quantity and are particularly a nuisance in the dry season when feeds are inadequate. The most important ones include kahere/emopimo, solanum and mutete. However weeds can be controlled within these pastures using the following:

- Uprooting
- Using a hoe locate the weeds and uproot them

- Spot burning
- Selective burning of the areas where the weeds are existing.