

Feedback from students field work in the PhD course **Restoration of degraded semi-arid landscapes -Livelihoods, Livestock and Land use**

Participatory Evaluation of the Effects of Enclosures on Livestock Management

Use of enclosures in West Pokot has been practiced for more than twenty years having been introduced by Vi Agroforestry. It has been gradually spreading in the communities and it is estimated to have been taken up by more than a thousand households currently.

We assessed the effect of using enclosures on livestock management in the area. The data collected was both quantitative and qualitative and used participatory methods which included semi structured interviewing and seasonal forage calendar as well as direct observation.

We found out that the enclosures had two main grazing systems; the single paddock system and the multiple paddock system.

In the single paddock system, the farmers keep relatively fewer (15-20) and poorer breeds of cattle and more shoats (>30) and had less fodder availability for most of the year. They practiced little or no cultivation of crops and no dry season supplementation on maize stalks/hay. These farmers were generally older and could not afford to pay for cost and the labour for fencing.

The multiple paddocks on the other hand are owned by better-off farmers who own more cattle (>30), some of them with improved breeds, and have more fodder availability throughout the year. They practised rotational grazing, cultivated some crops and did more maize stalks/hay supplementation for the livestock.

Farmers in both categories of enclosure systems suffer equally during severe droughts and have to move the cattle to Uganda in order to cope with the pasture and water stress. No farmers did not practise pasture seeding or tree planting. There was an apparent equal measure of heavy erosion of the landscape in both systems.

According to the study it can be concluded that there is generally more forage availability in the enclosures and that the multiple paddocks afforded more forage to the livestock than the single paddock system.

Identified needs:

- Training/extension to farmers on landscape rehabilitation, like forage seedings, tree planting and erosion control as a package.
- Provision of knowledge and support for the farmers practise dry season supplementation, like proper hay making and preservation.
- Provision of credit and savings mobilization to support farmers who are constrained by lack of capital for investing in the construction and purchase of enclosures.

We are grateful the farmers who volunteered information to this study.

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