

LIVESTOCK FARMER MOBILIZATION AS A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS
DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD AMONG SUBSISTENCE FARMERS -
CASE STUDY OF GIDEON CLUSTER AT ELDORADO AGRICULTURAL SERVICE
CENTRE, BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITY

Ofhani Freddy Mudzielwana

MINI DISSERTATION

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Department of Agricultural Extension
School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Faculty of Science and Agriculture
University of Limpopo

SUPERVISOR : PROFESSOR. N.M.MOLLEL

CO-SUPERVISOR: KOKETSO MPHAHLELE

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to evaluate the outcomes of an institutional intervention to mobilize livestock owners in the Gideon Cluster of Blouberg Municipality of Capricorn District in Limpopo Province.

The intervention from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture was in response to the declaration of the study area as a poverty nodal area. Further, smallholder livestock keeping is an important feature of the agricultural landscape. However smallholder land users are poorly organized and essentially utilize natural resources under systems of open access, meaning that there are no community rules that regulate access to and utilization of natural resources. This leads to veld degradation, forage shortages during the post winter period and droughts and regularly results in catastrophic livestock mortalities which represent a huge economic investment. The researcher had a leading role in this mobilization effort and a keen interest to evaluate the outcomes thereof.

A questionnaire survey and semi structured interviews were conducted to assess the perceptions of livestock owners in the study area on a range of topics and subtopics. The aim was to answer the following research questions: (i) Who are the key role players in the mobilization of the farmers? (ii) What was the success rate of the approaches used to mobilize the farmers? (iii) What was the extent of the contribution brought by farmers' mobilization to sustainable livelihoods at the Cluster? (iv) To what extent did farmers network amongst themselves?

The study found that the LDA intervention succeeded in unifying the livestock owners in the study area to function to a certain degree as a team, working together towards shared objectives and to solve problems. Stock theft for instance reduced dramatically and veld utilization improved. These improvements together with the fact that farmers continued to arrange and hold problem solving meetings were regarded as evidence that the approaches used in the mobilization process were effective and produced positive social outcomes. With regards to livelihood improvement no clear indicators could be established. However the study found that livestock owning households did more readily sell livestock at organized livestock auctions. Previously livestock owners were exploited by speculators, livestock buyers exchanging goats and sheep for wheelbarrows and sheets of corrugated iron. The study found that farmers were networking amongst themselves through independently run meetings and collective decision making.

This study concluded that the mobilization process initiated by LDA was successful and had positive social outcomes. This allowed the study to recommend that the mobilization process could be used to mobilize smallholders towards greater self sufficiency, towards solving their problems and to improve the livelihood benefits from their smallholder enterprises.

DECLARATION

I declare that the mini dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Masters in Agricultural Extension has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been dully acknowledged.

Mudzielwana OF

Surname and Initials (Mr)

29 April 2014

Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Vho Tshinakaho Kwinda and my daughter Angel Vhuyelwani Rudzani Mudzielwana and my son Nkhumeleni Gabriel Mudzielwana who never thought that even under hard conditions I will complete my Masters degree. They understood my position and remain at home with their cousin for long periods and some of their privileges were denied because of my studies .I am hopeful that the work that I have completed will inspire my children to further their studies.

ACRONYMS

BLM Blouberg Local Municipality

CDM Capricorn District Municipality

FAO Food and Agricultural Organization

HA Hectares

IDP Integrated Development program

ICRA International centre for Development oriented research in Agriculture

LDA Limpopo Department of Agriculture

PCD Participatory community Development

RDP Reconstruction and Development Program

STD Standard

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CHAPTER1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Livestock production amongst resource-poor livestock owners plays a significant role in food security and as a store of wealth and therefore has to be central to institutional poverty alleviation programs. Beyond ownership, stock keepers groups are important in achieving goals which cannot be achieved by individual livestock farmers. They are central to livestock production because they link farmers with other service providers including cooperatives and research institutions as well as organizing training for its members. Their non-existence would lead to a decrease in livestock production which in turn would increase poverty.

Before the Gideon cluster was formed, stock theft was very rampant in the research area and there was high stock mortalities due to forage shortages and drought. It was therefore critical to introduce this intervention of livestock farmer mobilization by the Department of Agriculture. This study attempts to evaluate the contribution of this intervention

The research area constitutes the Blouberg Local Municipality (BLM) which forms part of the Capricorn District municipality (CDM) of the Limpopo Province, South Africa. It shares borders with the following local municipalities: Makhado in the North East,

Aganang in the South, Molemole in the West, Lephalale in the North West, and Musina in the north and Mogalakwena in the south west. The municipality is composed of 139 villages; Blouberg is home to a population of approximately 161,322 people with an area of 454,084 hectares (ha), which forms 26.8% of the CDM (Integrated Development Plan (IDP), 2005/06).

The study area is situated 88 km North West of Polokwane; it is a semi arid area and therefore makes it prone to droughts and the negative indicators associated with smallholder livestock systems in communal areas. Blouberg receives an annual rainfall ranging between 380 and 550mm per annum. The rainfall falls mainly during summer, November to January. There is one perennial river, Mogalakwena River, which feeds the Glen –Alpine dam (Zwane, 2006).

The majority of the people in the study area are not employed and they adopt different strategies to earn their livelihoods. Among these strategies, there are smallholder farmers who keep livestock mainly to reach their subsistence objectives. Smallholder farmers in Blouberg municipality were not well organized into commodity groups and they experienced problems of overgrazing, non-marketing of their livestock and lack of a proper system of controlled grazing. The result of uncontrolled grazing is harshly felt during the dry season (Kganyego, 2005).

As drought regularly occurs in the area, there is high death rate of animals especially during drought periods. In 2003 to 2004 drought killed 10,277 cattle and 1,255 small

stocks (recorded losses) to the value of R13.1million. This prompted Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA) to declare the municipality as a drought stricken area. As a result of the drought, LDA made provision for fodder to the farmers at a subsidized price (Zwane, 2006).

Following these developments, in 2005 the Blouberg municipality was declared as a nodal area. To address the issues raised so far, LDA mobilized livestock farmers to form an organization that represents the livestock farmers in the municipality. This has resulted in the introduction of a livestock farmer's mobilization program. This program was seen as an intervention that could relief livestock farmers from drought. This paved the way and boosted the processes of supporting farmers' organizations in the municipality.

To organize farmers in Blouberg Municipality, two back stoppers, trained in the Participatory Extension Approach (PEA) from Vhembe District were seconded by LDA to Blouberg municipality to support agricultural technicians during the implementation of livestock farmer mobilization program for a period of twenty months.

The two back-stoppers started their work by drawing up a work plan with ward extension officers and district senior manager. To sensitize the whole municipality a program was launched to inform all the stakeholders in the municipality about farmers' mobilization. The stakeholders included ward committee, livestock farmers, traditional leaders, local councilors and other extension officers working in the municipality. After

the launch, service centres were visited namely My Darling, Eldorado and Boorkom to create awareness of the program, Then village-to-village meetings were conducted to identify farmers' needs and prioritize them together with farmers. Farmers elected task teams to handle issues related to animal production in their areas.

After the above mentioned processes the Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA) came with an idea of clustering villages that are close to each other to easily access and to optimize resources e.g. time, human resources, capital etc. During the facilitation processes three clusters were formed. These clustered villages included: Pax clusters constituted by six villages, Kibi cluster constituted by twelve villages and Gideon cluster constituted by ten villages.

The study focussed on Gideon cluster in the following ten villages, Letswata, Berseba, Top, Gideon, Wegdraai, Eldorado, Isoringa, Motali, Tuna and Slaaphoek.

1.2 Problem Statement

Currently smallholder livestock farmers in Blouberg municipality are not well organized into commodity groups and they experience problems of overgrazing, non-marketing of their livestock which lead to the exploitation of farmers by the speculators and lack of a proper system of controlled grazing. The result of uncontrolled grazing is harshly felt during the dry season. As drought regularly occurs in the area, there is high death rate of animals.

In 2003 to 2004 drought killed 10,277 cattle and 1,255 small stocks (recorded losses) to the value of R13.1million. This prompted Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA) to declare the municipality as a drought stricken area. As a result of the drought, LDA made provision for fodder to the farmers at a subsidized price (Zwane, 2006). In the past most studies have focused on those producers who experience losses due to animal diseases. Little attention has been given to the farmers who losses their livestock because of drought due to uncontrolled communal grazing system which damage the environment and animals are not in good condition because the grazing area is over stocked.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The livestock sector plays a crucial role in the economies of many developing countries by producing rich food supplies, generating vital income and employment, and earning much –valued foreign exchange. Cattle are the most important livestock species in Africa and account for approximately70 percent of its domestic stock (scholtz et al., 1991). For many farmers in the developing world their animals are also a form of store of Wealth, cushion against starvation when food is scarce, source of fertilizer, a means of transportation and a source of traction for crop production (Umali et al., 1994).In the past most studies have focused on those producers who experience losses due to animal diseases. Little attention has been given to the farmers who lose their livestock because of drought due to uncontrolled communal grazing system which damage the environment and animals are not in good condition because the grazing area is overstocked.

1.4 Motivation of the study

The study will assist in developing a model that could be used by the agricultural extension officers and outside stakeholders when facilitating livestock programs of the same nature. Through similar interventions farmers will be able to buy the inputs in bulk and market their livestock in auction sales.

1.5 Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the study was to evaluate the contribution that the institutional intervention had on mobilizing farmers towards self-sufficiency and structured communication to enable the promotion of sustainable livelihoods among livestock subsistence farmers.

The study has a number of objectives, which include the following:

Objective 1: To determine key players in the mobilization of livestock farmers

Objective 2: To evaluate the success rate of the approaches used when mobilizing livestock farmers at the Cluster.

Objective 3: To establish the extent of the contribution of farmer's mobilization to sustainable livelihoods.

Objective 4: To determine the extent to which farmers networked amongst themselves.

1.6 Research Questions

In order to achieve the aim and objectives of the study, the investigation aimed to answer the following key questions:

Question 1: Who are the key role players in the mobilization of the farmers?

Question 2: What was the success rate of the approaches used to mobilize the farmers?

Question 3: What was the extent of the contribution brought by farmers' mobilization to sustainable livelihoods at the Cluster?

Question 4: To what extent did farmers network amongst themselves?

1.6.1 Clarifications of Concepts

1. Livestock farmer

These are the farmers who breed and raise cattle including bulls, cows and steers .Some of the cattle are sold when there is a need in the family(Lindy, 1960).

2. Mobilization:

Mobilization is a process through which the people come together and have a proper understanding for their own collective benefits (Erm, 1996).

3. Subsistence farming is self sufficient farming in which farmers grow only enough food to feed their families .The typical subsistence farm has a range of crops and animals, needed by the family to eat during the year (Thomas, 1988).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on the literature related to the study with a focus on the following topics: Livestock, the poor and the vulnerable, Farmers Organizations, Mobilization, Group development, Bond and purpose of a group, Group formation, Networking, Approaches used in mobilization and their successes, Farmer group approach and farmer field approach.

2.2 Livestock, the Poor and the Vulnerable

Beyond the technical support, which is covered well by the extension services in Blouberg, there is a need to focus on social support to the farmers. This type of support is not well formalized in institutions working with small-scale farmers or livestock keepers especially those under communal land systems (Lassalle and Mattee, 1994).

Nesamvuni et al (2003, p.1), indicated that animal production constitutes more than half the total income that accrues to the Limpopo province from agriculture. In Blouberg livestock is important in contributing to the increase in agricultural production; it provides farmers with food like milk, manure to improve the soil structure and draught power. Livestock also generates income to the farmers to sustain the rural economy.

Traditional livestock production systems are economically vital but are often poorly understood. In South Africa, men and women play different roles in the management and ownership of livestock. The control of resources, decision-making and labor responsibilities all vary according to gender. (Maeda - Machangu, 1995) In the household males and females have different roles to play, men are responsible for looking after the cattle and search for food for the family, while women are in charge of goats, chicken and weeding in the field but when selling the animals the final decisions is taken by men. It is only in a single headed family that women take the final decision. Livestock is important in supporting the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, traders and laborers.

Animal diseases are crucial constraints in livestock production; the animals of smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to diseases because of the expense, absence or unsuitability of animal-health and production inputs. Small-scale farmers have few animals and few reserves on which to survive during lean times and use for recovery, so the loss of individual animals has a proportionally greater impact, (Maeda-Machangu, 1995). It cannot be disputed that animals are part of farmers' source of livelihoods and if a farmer has few animals and loses some of the animals, livelihood will be tremendously affected. Beside the benefits obtained by the livestock owners, non farmers have options like manure which is essential for sustainable maize production on inherently poor soils with low negligible organic matter levels .It can also contribute to the rehabilitation of degraded fields due to its capacity to improve soil organic level.

The traditional livestock management system allows for uncontrolled livestock grazing during the dry season feeding where livestock may leave the dung's and droppings as they graze, enhancing the soil productivity capacity. However it is difficult to quantify the amount of dung deposited on the fields although it is likely to be sufficient on its own to restore soil fertility. Children of non farmers collect dung's in the grazing area as dung are used as floor polish and the remaining dung is used for compost making. When unprotected dung is exposed to sun, rain and wind, nitrogen escape into the air. Mtambanengwe et al (2007).

2.3 Farmers Organizations.

Agriculture is not only about natural resources ,plants and animals, but it is also a human activity because people engage in it as a livelihood strategy .This means what people produce is not only related to inputs, intensity or techniques undertaken, but also on social ,cultural, physiological and policy factors (INCRA ,2006d) In developing countries ,agricultural activities performed by individual farmers may not yield maximum benefits due to insufficient access and control of resources. It may therefore be advisable to farmers to organize themselves into groups in order to achieve higher objectives that are beyond the reach of individuals (INCRA, 2006d).

According to Babington (1991) Farmers organizations are formed when individual farmers who feel a need to come together and organize themselves to access what they need. Farmers' organizations have emerged in many countries as key providers of agricultural services to their members. They can then become effective channels of

communication between the members of the organization. With a conducive environment, farmers' organizations can serve as vehicles for empowerment of members, where farmers take control of development processes. However they are not a panacea to all farmers' problems. Farmers Organizations are also faced with challenges, which prohibit them from implementing their plans properly in the communities such as uniting all the farmers to work as a team and organizing their own study groups without the involvement of agricultural technicians.

Farmers Organizations are clearly a key in shaping livelihood opportunities and outcomes. Babington (1991) noted that Farmers Organizations could help to build sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor. In Blouberg municipality there is an interim livestock Farmers Organization, which is responsible for coordinating livestock activities such as meetings related to livestock production but the challenge is that the organization is not known by the majority of farmers.

Local organizations are important for sustainable rural development because they can mobilize local resources and regulate their use with a view to maintaining a long-term base for productive activity. Up Hoff (1992) argue that, the fact that people know one another create opportunities for collective action and mutual assistance and for mobilizing and managing resources on a self directed and self-sustained basis. People feel more mutual support and the sense of obligation at the community and local levels than at the district or regional level.

Therefore there is a need to strengthen local farmers organizations when they represent farmers own interests and where they have emerged as a result of farmers' own, real expressed needs not as an imposition of the states. Farmers Organizations can become effective channels of communication between farmers.

2.4 Benefits of Forming Farmers' Organizations

The formation of farmers' organizations is one way of reaping optimum benefits by smallholder farmers in rural areas .These can take the form of associations, commodity groups or cooperatives. Farmers' organizations assist farmers with pooling resources together e.g. Money, labor, collective marketing, minimizing production risks, sharing of information or knowledge, supply of crucial agricultural inputs, sharing of land and other services.

According to (FAO, 1999) in a paper presented at the united Nation conference (UN\) identified the following benefits of forming farmers organization:

- It becomes easy for any service provider to assist organized farmers than to provide services to an individual farmer,
- It saves time and resources,
- Organized farmers can speak to the Government with one voice and together they can resolve some of the challenges without support from outside.
- They help build rural social capital as they strengthen collective self help linkages at local level that encourage broad based community participation, co-operation and collective action on many fronts :economic ,social and political.

2.5 Mobilization

Mobilization is defined by Cameroon (1994) as a process of building enthusiasm and commitment within a community or group of stakeholders to establish a formal working relationship in order to work together to accomplish a common goal. According to Babington (1991) mobilization involves the ability of the people to provide a prevention service, and includes such activities as organizing, planning, inter-agency collaboration, coalition building, and networking. It uses deliberate, participatory processes to involve local institutions, local leaders, community groups, and members of the community to organize for collective action towards a common purpose. People mobilization is characterized by respect for the community and its needs.

Hagmann et al (1998, p.16) notes that If development activities are ever to be owned by a community, two key conditions need first to be in place:

1. Real motivation and enthusiasm within the community, and
2. Effective community organization which can support the process and take it forward.

Without these, there is little chance that development activities will be sustained without continuous external support. Creating this social mobilization is thus a key initial activity.

To motivate the people for learning and action, one has to identify and address their key concerns. Only people themselves can effectively identify, clarify and prioritize these issues and formulate their needs.

It is also important to understand that the community is not homogenous and that it consists of several institutions with different roles and responsibilities. It is therefore important to identify the institutions which can be a catalyst for development to take place in the community (Hagmann et al 1998, p. 16). Nonetheless, the toughest part of Farmer Organization is to mobilize community members and make them to understand the potential for a situation in which everyone can act on their own initiatives. Farmer Organizations have difficulties to bring all the farmers together so that they can raise their needs to different service providers with one voice. Convincing a community is like jumping into a green pasture full of wild horses but motivation is the key to facilitate an action and together working towards an achievable goal or benefit (Angela 2002).

After LDA's intervention in Blouberg, it was recognized that more time was spent on mobilizing the farmers and creating opportunity for the farmers to understand the role of mobilization. There are times when a Farmer Organization is unwanted by the communities because of the influence of powerful members of the community. This is true because the present Blouberg livestock task team is trying its best to bring the farmers together but other farmers are not supporting just because they were not contacted during the formation of the organization. This can be seen as a petty complaint but the effects are very derailing especially where people are not organized.

2.6 Group Development

According to Bembridge (1991, p.95) groups are three or more people interacting to achieve a common goal or objective. Generally a small group is two or more people

communicating with one another. They are better identified by functions rather than their size.

2.6.1 Bond and purpose of a group

Groups have a common bond and purpose. Forming a small group goes more smoothly when groups share similar interests, needs and problems. Groups that share common views and opinion are more willing to work together towards common goals. With a common bond a group can also be served in advisory capacities or are charged with development implementation plan.

In Blouberg there are livestock farmer groups found in certain villages usually they meet at the dipping tanks. These groups though not well organized discuss issues related to animal production such as purchasing of dipping compound, disease control, stock theft, bush encroachment and control of poisonous plant

2.6.2 Group formation

When a group is forming, participants can feel anxious not knowing how the group will work or what exactly will be required of them. Unlike the human being a group goes through several stages as described by Botha and Sheveroon (2003).

1. Storming, as the word suggests, is when things may get stormy. Conflict can emerge, individual differences are expressed and the leader's role may be challenged. The value and the feasibility of the task may also be challenged.

2. After the storm, comes the calm, where the group starts to function harmoniously and where participants cooperate and mutual support develops.
3. This enables the performing stage to occur where the work really takes off and the group accepts a structure and method for achieving the common task. When the group retires or adjourns, much learning happens through informal chat and feedback about the group Performance.

There are many factors that motivate the formation of the groups including an efficient means for communication and transmitting information, sharing information, evaluation and identifying group techniques, improving on farm linkage, encouragement and empowering of the farmers. Farmers groups provide the ideal organizational structure to work collectively toward change at farm level and to the agricultural system in general (Rolling, 1987).

2.6.3 Networking

Cameroon (1994) defines networking as a process resulting from the conscious effort of certain actors to build relationships with each other in order to enhance sustainable development. However for a better functioning of a network, members should have the same mission or goals because the concept of networking is about sharing of ideas and experiences.

These social groups increase the level of communication, commitment within groups and individual progress. Working with groups helps the extension officer to keep in touch with individuals and the community as a whole. Farmers' network is formed when

a group of two or more farmers come together to discuss or exchange ideas. Farmers on their own have to feel the need and call a meeting and in the meeting they exchange whatever they want to exchange depending on their needs. The platform for information sharing can be formed and these can influence the spirit of working together as a team and it improves the relationship amongst the farmers (Cameroon1994).

A social group's success or failure depends in large part on the dedication of each of its members to the group as a whole. A group is a concept based on its members' belief that they are alike in some essential way. And through the group, individuals are able to achieve a certain synergy. The group becomes more than the sum of its parts. But if the members of the group do not have that belief, this synergy will never be obtained. (Heemskerk and Wennink, 1994).

Farmer's network can be strengthened through meetings, workshops, farmer's day, farmer to farmer visits, field days and group discussions which focus on a specific problem (Mattee and Lassalle, 1994). In Blouberg municipality farmers hold meetings after dipping their animals and such meetings are not attended by all farmers. Networking are particularly good at combining talents and providing innovative solutions to possible unfamiliar problems, in cases where there is no well established approach/procedure, the wider skill and knowledge set of the group has a distinct advantage over that of the individual. Mattee and Lassalle (1994) noted a number of advantages derived from networking:

1. Networking can be seen as a self-managing unit.
2. Skills are provided by the members.
3. Self monitoring which makes it possible to delegate responsibilities.
4. Opportunity to participate in achievements beyond the individual.
5. Enhancement of self perceived level of responsibility and authority.
6. Shared accountability, which provides motivation through enhanced self-esteem coupled with low stress.

Networking facilitates joint learning among stakeholders in order to face the challenges they meet and create continuous shift in intention and perceived opportunities (Cameroon, 1994).

2.6.4 Approaches used in mobilization and their success

The most used approach of farmers mobilization has been the (Baraza) which is a Swahili word which means gathering of farmers on a given day for teaching .It is widely used in many countries where the people gather in chiefs kraal at the village level to listen to the chief, village elders, politicians or government officials.

It is the concept that has been used by the government to mobilize the communities particularly when there is information to pass to the populace. In order to get a gathering, information is passed using the assistant of chief's office who then passes it to religious leaders to announce to their congregation.

The Baraza is a quick method of passing the information to the entire community. However it falls under top down approach because the expert comes with information to

pass down to the rural community. The group being big leaves little room for interactive talks, questions or other topics outside the schedule set for the expert (Catherine, 2005).

In Blouberg, community gathering takes place outside the yard of the headman's kraal usually the petty headman invites the community members a day before the meeting .Such meetings take place once per month or when there are specific issues to be discussed.

2.6.5 Farmers Group Approach

A farmer group is a collection of farmers interacting with one another towards achieving a common goal. Usually, the interaction between the members of the group is more than those outside the group. Members of a group vary, and it is advantageous to have a small number of people forming it. A group size of between 20 and 30 is ideal and manageable in order to provide face-to-face interaction, better communication and the free flow of information (Madukwe, 2006). Madukwe, (2006) further noted some other benefits of farmer groups, which include:

1. Making agricultural extension services more clients driven and efficient.
2. Strengthening farmers bargaining power with traders.
3. Reducing transaction costs for input suppliers and output buyers.
4. Economies of scale (e.g. from bulking up in output marketing or storage) facilitating savings and access to credit.
5. Reducing public – sector extension cost.

6. Farmers support each other to learn and adopt.

Formation of small farmer group is now finding acceptance in agriculture and other organizations that are interested in community development, as it is easy to work with groups than individuals. The disadvantages of the farmer group is that it is usually more difficult to gain a general or uniform acceptance of an idea with certain groups and it may be difficult to get a group together frequently because of distance or other interests, but at later stages the reverse applies and progress will be more rapid than with individuals (Murton, undated p 42).

2.7 Farmer Field School Approach

Farmer field schools are schools without walls where groups of farmers meet periodically with facilitators during the crop or animal cycle .It is a participatory method of technology development and dissemination based on adult learning principles and experiential learning (FAO, 2001).

In Blouberg farmer field schools are conducted at the dipping tanks or crush pens. The owner of the cattle has an opportunity to share experiences with other farmers; the extension officer in this method does not have the answers. The farmer field schools transform farmers from recipients of information to generators and manipulators of local data.

One important issue in farmer field schools is that of sustainability without outside funding. It is a participatory approach, which facilitates farmer demand for knowledge, and offers opportunities for the end users to choose test and adapt technologies according to their needs. Through participation in farmer field schools farmers develop skills that allow them to continually analyze their own situation and adapt to changing circumstances (Madukwe, 2006).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the study was conducted. It includes attention given to the pilot study, data collection methods, sampling procedure, interviewing procedure, data analysis as well as ethical considerations. The study was conducted under the communal grazing land system where there was no control over grazing. The area was characterized by overstocking which contributed towards overgrazing, stock theft and lack of formal marketing of livestock.

The study was conducted in Blouberg Municipality, which is under Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. The area was chosen due to the severe poverty experienced by livestock farmers and its close proximity to the researcher's working area. Blouberg is home to a population of approximately 161,322 people with an area of 5054 square kilometers and is comprised of 118 settlements in 16 wards (Capricorn District Municipality IDP 2005).

3.2 The study area

The actual study area is Eldorado Service Centre situated 102km North West of Blouberg Municipality. (Service Centre is a term used in a municipality for municipal sub-offices located in the villages instead of at district level). The study focused on one

cluster established after livestock farmer's mobilization, the Gideon Cluster comprised of 10 villages under Chief Maleboho.

Gideon cluster is a sub-arid area with high drought hazard, a rainfall range of 380 to 550mm per annum (Zwane, 2006). The main livestock kept are goats, sheep, cattle and donkeys. During winter there is a need for supplementary feeding. The area is usually overgrazed due to high stocking rate and lack of grazing camps to practice rotational grazing.

The main crops that are planted are maize, sorghum, watermelon and babala. A limited number of farmers plant cash crops like tomatoes and depend mainly on underground water. Mainly white commercial farmers use the Mahalakwena River, which flows from the South to the North. Forty-two (42) km of the road from Kgubakganani to Eldorado Service center has been up graded from gravel to tar and this would improve access to the service centre by the majority of community developing workers.

3.3 Pilot Testing

Before the actual study was carried out a questionnaire was developed, piloting of the survey instrument was done on the 26 August 2009 at Vuvha village under the Thengwe Tribal authority. Ten (10) farmers organized by the local extension officer participated in the pilot testing of the research questionnaire. The interviews were conducted by three extension officers who volunteered to assist. A day before testing the questionnaire a mini-workshop was conducted to familiarize the extension officers with the research questionnaire. After evaluating the results obtained from piloting the

survey instrument the researcher made some changes in the research questions by removing some of the questions that were found not to be relevant.

After being satisfied the researcher started to make preparation for conducting the research in the actual study area. People who were involved in piloting did not form part of the actual study. Meetings were held in all the wards of the different headmen of the area and the tribal authority. The chief of the area was consulted to obtain permission from him to undertake the study and to request him to inform his people of the study and to request for their co-operation.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The methods used for data collection included the questionnaires and focus group discussions. A questionnaire with open and close-ended questions was used to collect information from identified households in the ten (10) villages of the study area. The interviews started In August, 2009 and ended in October 2009. One hundred (100) livestock farmers were targeted for interviews but only 85 individual farmers were interviewed as the other nine (9) farmers got employment in cities while two farmers got temporary employment in the construction of the RDP houses in other villages in Limpopo Province. The remaining four (4) farmers declined to be interviewed.

Focus group discussions were conducted with the following groups:

1. Traditional leaders(5)
2. Livestock Umbrella body (7)
3. Extension officers who facilitated (5)

4. Interview with livestock Health Inspector (1)

3.5 Interviewing Procedure

The head of the household was interviewed but in his absence his wife or relative were not interviewed if they did not participate during the mobilization of livestock farmers. The respondents were interviewed individually in household and in the agreed place with the enumerators. The questionnaire was printed in English but the interview was conducted in Northern Sotho. The local enumerators assisted the researcher by interpreting some of the research questions as the researcher only speaks Tshivenda.

3.6 Sampling procedure

It is difficult to give precise rules on what sample size is suitable. The suitable sample does not depend on the size of the population nor does it have to include a minimum percentage of that population. However, Bless and Achola (1995) argue that one of the major issues in sampling is to determine samples that best represent a population so as to allow for an accurate generalization of results. Simple random sampling was used to select 100 respondents from the population of 273 livestock farmers through the help of headmen of the villages. The lottery method was used to select 100 respondents. The sampling procedure entailed numbering of the cards equal to half of the total number of the identified livestock owners who will be present in the sampling meeting.

The numbers of marked cards was mixed with equal numbers of unmarked cards. The cards was mixed in the box and individual farmers were called forth to pick up the card

by inserting his/her hands in the box. Livestock farmers who picked up the marked cards were included to participate in the study and their names were registered so that it could be easy for the enumerators to make follow-ups when conducting interviews.

All protocol observed an appointment was made with the acting senior manager of the municipality to discuss with him how the research would be conducted and to get permission from him to allow the extension officers in the research area to assist during the interviewing of the farmers .After the discussions with the acting senior manager the researcher drew a plan on how the identified communities would be visitedto sensitize the leaders and the community members about the research.

Places like the dipping tanks, chiefs and headmen's kraals, Civic organization meetings, beer drinking spots, agricultural and animal health offices were visited to gunner for support. Enumerators who had passed Standard 10 and above were identified from ten villages to participate in the research. Two (2) enumerators were finally identified and a workshop was conducted to familiarize them with the research questionnaire and to agree on the payments after the completion of the questionnaire.

The workshop covered the following topics:

1. How the enumerators should behave when conducting interviews with farmers
2. How to probe the participants to respond to the questions.

3.7 Analysis Procedure

Data from the questionnaire was quantitatively processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This was done only for the first part which included subheadings such as Gender, composition, marital status as well as educational levels. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used for data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND INTEPRETATION.

4.1. Introduction

As was set out in Chapter One, the primary aim of this study was to evaluate the contribution of farmer mobilization towards developing sustainable livelihoods among livestock subsistence farmers of Gideon cluster Eldorado service centre. The main objectives were to identify who the key players in the mobilization of livestock farmers were, to determine success rate of the approaches used when mobilizing livestock farmers, to determine the contribution of farmers mobilization to sustainable livelihoods and to determine the extent to which farmers net work amongst themselves . The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the study.

4.2 Presentations of the Findings

The findings of the research are organized under the following stipulated headings

- Key players in the mobilization of the farmers
- Success rate of the approach
- Contribution of farmer mobilization
- Networking of farmers
- Findings from individual farmer interviews
- Findings from focus group discussions
- Conclusion and recommendations

4.3. Demographic Characteristics of Gideon Cluster

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the participants of Gideon cluster under Eldorado service center focusing on gender, marital status, age and educational levels of the respondents.

4.3.1. Sex of Head of Household

In most farming communities women are the de-facto heads of households and they do all agricultural labor and this affects the quality of the work that they could do in the family as they are always over burdened with many activities. The situation for the study area is summarized below in table 4.1

Table 4.1 Gender Composition of respondents

1.GENDER OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	63	74%
Female	22	26%
Total	85	100%

In (table 4.1), 74% of the households were men and 26% were women. It can be assumed that the standard of livestock production should be of high level on account of the high percentage of male heads of households as livestock keeping are usually men

task although there is speculation that small stock management is women's responsibility.

4.3.2 Marital Status

Marriage is of economic importance as Lobola plays an important part with cash or cattle exchange being involved. Married men are likely to progress in agriculture than unmarried men as they get solid support from their family members. Generally in African societies the men are always absent for the greater part of the year and the wife and the children conduct farming operations involving ploughing of fields, looking after the cattle and other activities that are agricultural related. (Mudzielwana, 1989, p.14) The situation for the study area is summarized in Figure 4.1 below

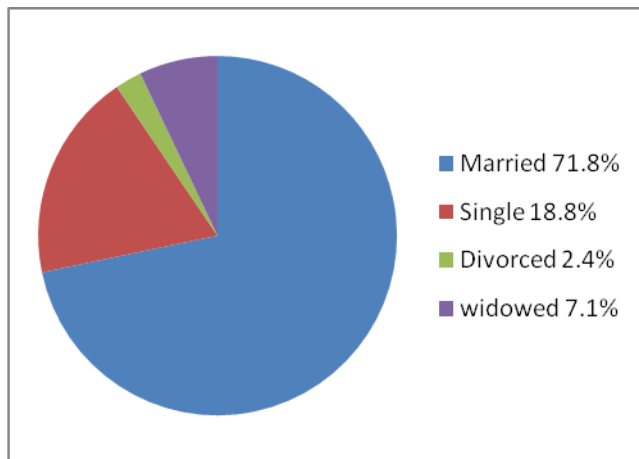


Figure 4.1 Marital status of respondents.

In this study (fig 4.1) nearly 72 % Percent of the respondents were married, close to 19% were single, a little over 2% of the respondents were divorced and only about 7% were widowed which indicates that the population is fairly stable as divorces are not common.

4.3.3. Age of households heads

Age has an effect on the physical ability of a farmer, and also on the managerial ability. Over the age of 65 years old, farmers are afraid to take risks or to experiment and it is not easy for any facilitator to change their attitudes towards the adoption of new technology and some are not prepared to be led by the young generation. (Personal communication September 2009).

Farmers of different age groups have different perceptions and interest towards development. Any intervention to be designed should take age into consideration. This is very essential for targeting the relevant beneficiaries. The age distribution of households' heads is summarized in figure 4.2 below.

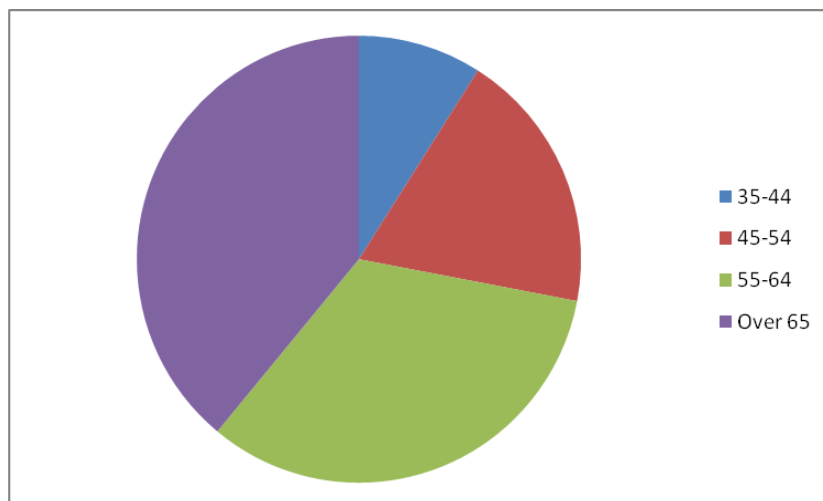


Fig 4.2 Age distribution of respondents

In this study nearly 33 percent of the livestock respondents were between age 55 and 64, close to 39 percent were over 65 years of age while nearly 19 percent were between 45 and 54 years of age. The younger group (between 35 and 44 years of age)

constitutes only about 9 percent .This is the Indication that animals are still in the hands of old age group who are afraid to take a risk and cannot initiate new innovation in the community.

4.3.4 Level of Education of heads of household

Education is the investment of life which cannot be taken away from any individual person, education determines the rate of adoption of farming practices, It is usually believed that early adopters have more years of schooling than late adopters, (Rogers and Schoemaker 1971, pp354 - 356) .According to Kirsten et al, (2000), households behavior in agricultural practices can be influenced by the level of status of education. Education plays a role in accessing information. The level of education of heads of households is summarized in figure 4.3 below

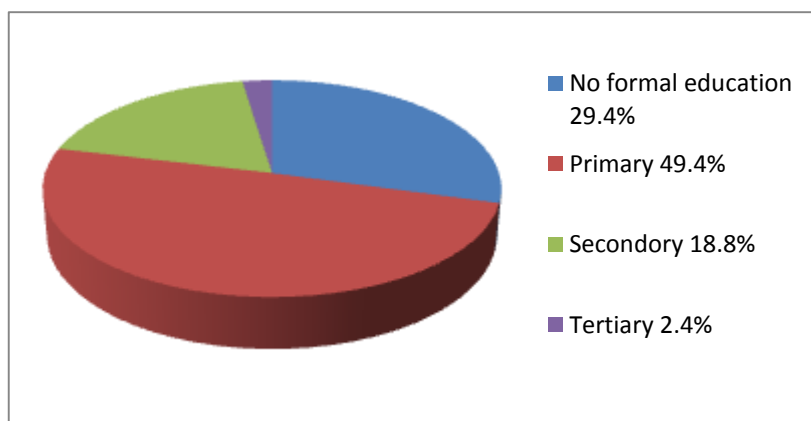


Figure 4.3 Educational level of the respondents

According to Figure 4.3 nearly 30 percent of the respondents are illiterate while a little over 49 percent received primary education and close to 19 percent received secondary school education. Only about 2 percent have tertiary education.

The literacy level of the respondents is fairly high but the percent of respondents with tertiary qualification is relatively low due to growing up in poor families in the midst of apartheid.

4.3.5 Ethnic Group

Communities that are constituted by different ethnic groups have good opportunity to make progress because diversity has positive effect on development, new innovation can be initiated, case studies can be developed, and effective and implementable decisions can be taken.

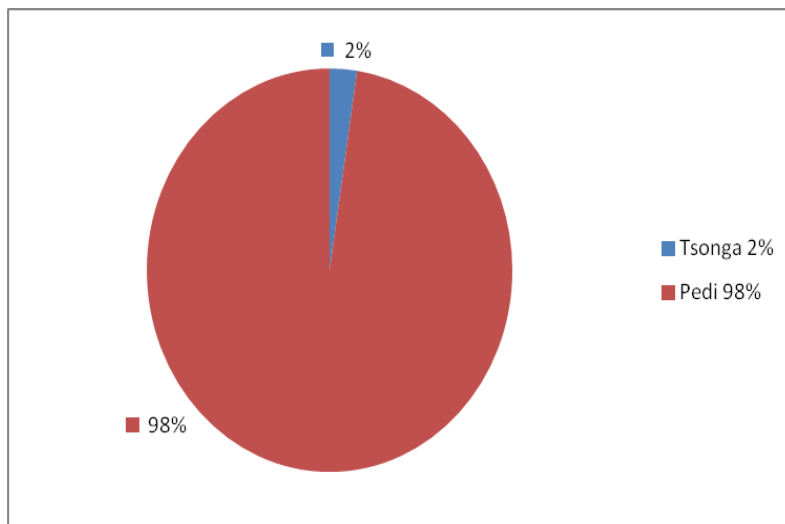


Figure 4.4 Ethnic group of the participants

The above (figure 4.4) revealed that the majority of the farmers interviewed were the Pedi speaking farmers that formed 98 Percent and the remaining (close to) 2% speak Tsonga as result of settlement in the area since 1949. Their fore fathers arrived in Gideon village with a white farmer who stayed in the area for a

long time and after the death of their father the remaining family members decided to settle in the village of Gideon (personal communication September 2009). One can conclude that separate developments are still in place as the area is dominated by people of the same ethnic group (i.e. Pedi)

4.3.6 Family Size

The size of the family plays the most important role in Agriculture, especially in rural areas where the family is involved in the farming enterprises which are being practiced. The result of the survey shows that the Gideon cluster had an average family size of five members which is reasonable as the family can provide their own labour. Labour time in a household for livestock is divided among other activities which require labour, for example, cropping. The division of labour within a household is more distinct in summer during school vacation. In the morning more time is devoted to ploughing the fields.

4.3.7 Number of Employed Members in Each Household

Except for the old men who are on pension, the survey indicated that the minimum number of family members working either in the public sector or private sector is one person per family and the maximum is four members per family. The situation for the study area is presented in figure 4.5 below

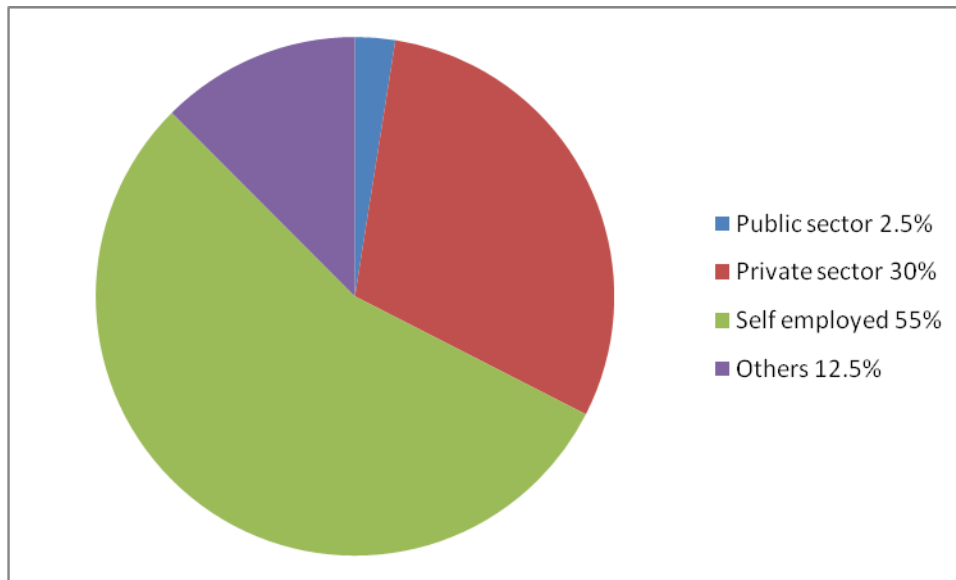


Figure 4 .5 Area of work of the participants

Figure 4.5 shows that 2, 5% of the participants are working in the public Sector, while 30% are working in the private Sector and the majority is self employed running tuck shops, builders while others use animals for traction for transporting sand, ploughing fields for planting crops, looking after their animals, selling of fire wood and about 12.5% depend on the piece job in the community like spraying of mosquitoes' in the household, digging of toilets pits and weeding during summer.

4.3.8 Sources of Household Income

Figure 4.6 shows that close 65% of household income is derived from government pension fund, while about one percent receive monthly salary, about two percent of the respondents sustain their livelihood by running business in the community, One percent of the farmers receive their income from stockvel while close 12% derive their income from farming i.e. through selling of animals and cash crops and nearly19% derive their income through piece jobs and any intervention that could create job opportunity to the

community members could alleviate the frustration experienced by the community members.

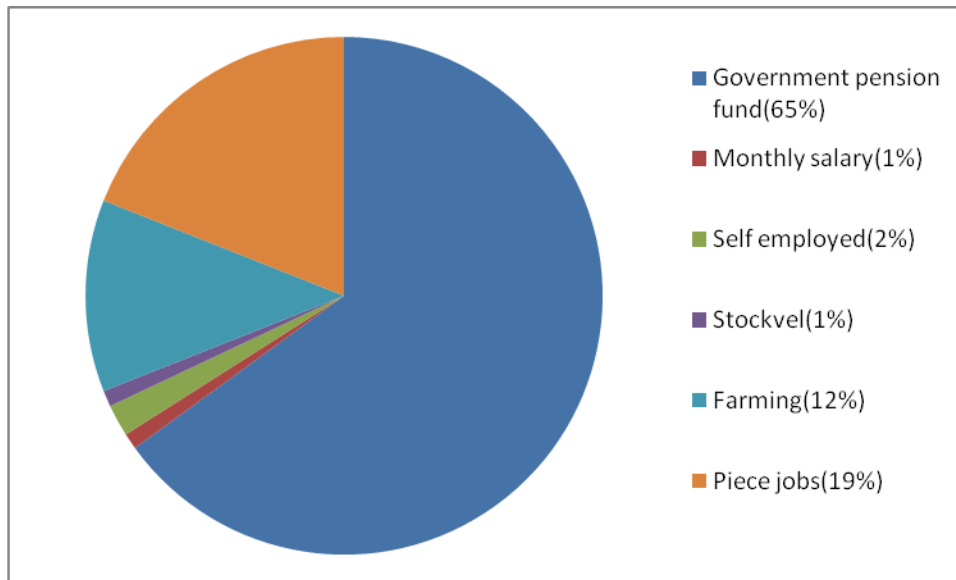


Figure 4.6 Sources of household Income

4.3.9 Source for Maintenance of Livestock

The results of the study (Figure 4.7) twenty five percent (25%) of the respondents obtained their income from livestock by selling some of the animals and close to 32% of the participants indicated that their main source of income to maintain their animals is derived from social grants, while 43% collect money in a group and purchase remedies for their animals and this support the statement in the literature review (paragraph 2.2,p9) that livestock of small holder farmers are vulnerable to diseases due to the fact that some cannot afford to buy the most expensive remedies which are effective to treat their animals.

If farmers depend on social grants and collecting money in groups therefore social mobilization is required to create a platform where the poorest of the poor can be able to participate in the contribution of money for purchasing their inputs in bulk

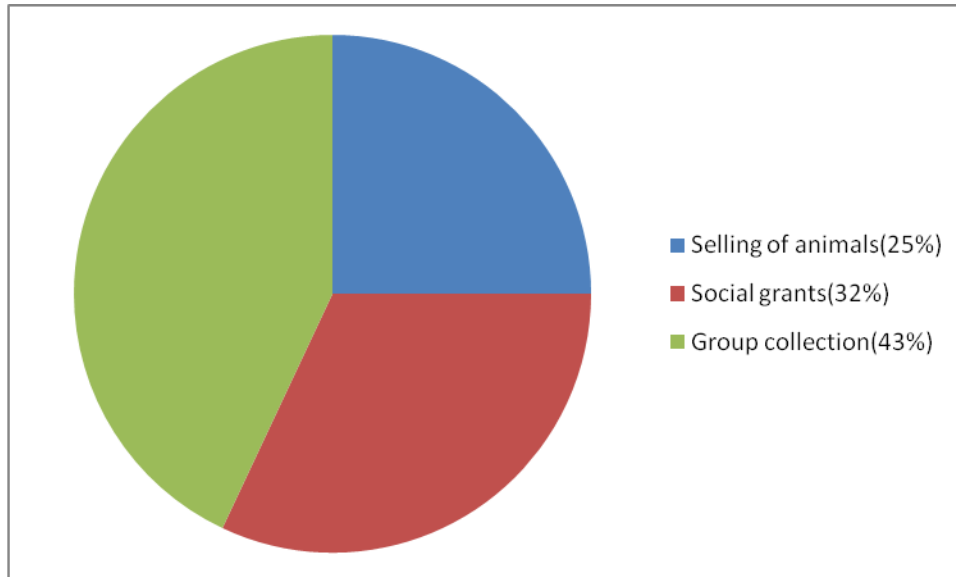


Fig. 4.7 Sources for maintenance of livestock

4.3.10 Sources of Income for Children's Education

Sale of livestock only contributes 18% towards school requirements while pension and salary contribute 45 % and cash saved and other activities contribute 37% respectively. This shows that cash saved by parents while they were still working in private companies played a role in the education of their school children.

4.3.11 Income of Household per Month

The cash income levels of the majority of the farmers is less than the figures (1000-1999) reported by Schwalbach et al. (2001) in their study quoted by Nthakheni (2007). This difference implies that source of income differ from place to place.

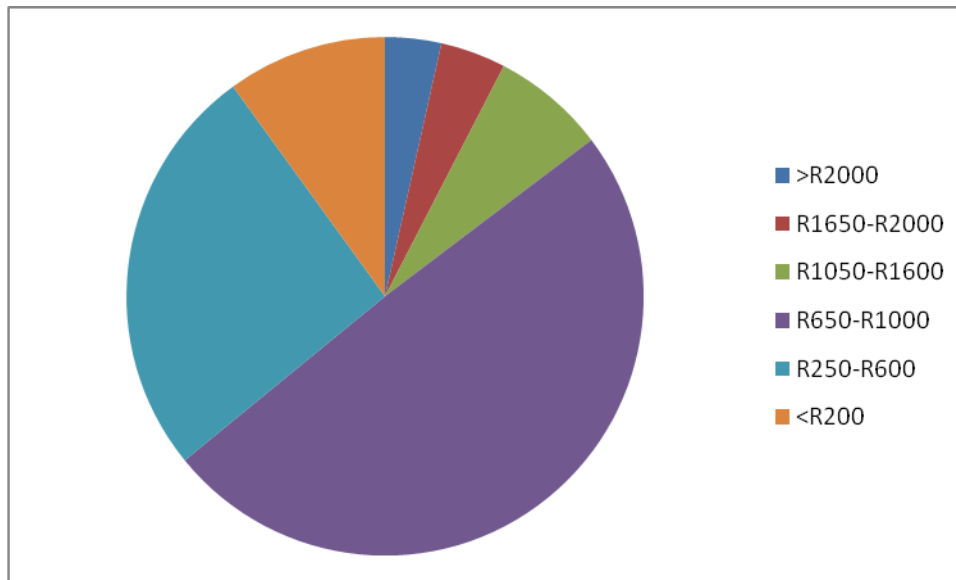


Fig 4.8. Income of households per month

The results of Figure 4.8 show that 10% of the respondents earn less than R200 while 25,9 % earn between R250-R600 , 49,4% earn between R650- R1000, 7,1% earn R1050-1600 and 4.1 % earn R1650-R2000 and 3,5% earn more thanR2000 .These results show that the majority of the farmers depend on the government social grants, this makes life to become difficult as the grant that they are receiving is far less than their needs. From the interview the results show that about one percent of the respondents generate their income from selling cow dung, while the rest 99% do not sell cow dung. The results further indicated that 16, 5 % of the respondents generate their income through selling milk while 83, 5% do not milk their cows

4.3.12 Milk Production

The survey result shows that minimum milk production is 2 L per cow while the maximum production is 5 L. The milk produced is mainly used for home consumption as only one percent of the participants sold the surplus to other members of the

community at R6.00 per litter. The low milk production may be influenced by the fact that mixed breed cattle cannot yield milk better than the pure dairy cattle and the other factor is the lack of grazing suitable for milk production like Lucerne in the local area. Milk can play a pivotal role for income generation if the management of cows and grazing conditions can be improved.

4.3.13 Household Expenditure

The household expenditure varies from household to household and it is determined by activities that are taking place. The results show that about 46% of the respondents spend much of their money on buying food while 35% of the respondents spend their money on buying animal feeds especially during drought period and close to 19% spend their money on buying livestock remedies. The expenditure on livestock is influenced by the change of government policy since 1994 as the government discontinued supplying free dipping compound to the farmers and farmers had to start purchasing remedies on their own. This was a strategy from the government to train farmers to become self-reliant and encourage the spirit of self-organization and form village livestock cooperatives.

4.3.14 Labour

In the study area the labour for attending to the cattle is derived within the household and in some well-to-do households they have hired herdboys to look after their cattle and paid in cash. The average payment is R912,00 per month. Other households have hired farms from their neighboring white farmers at the rate of R50.00 per herd of cattle others offered two heifers per annum as payments but that also depended on the

number of cattle in the farm. It is only during school vacation and during summer where the labour division could be visible as boys could be seen looking after the animals and the parents plough the fields and the girls will be doing the kitchen work.

4.3.15 Key Role Players in the Mobilization of Livestock Farmers

The study found that the key role players in farmer mobilization were

1. Limpopo Department of Agriculture,
2. Blouberg Municipality,
3. The premiers office,
4. German technical Cooperation(GTZ)

4.3.16 Time Taken to Mobilize Farmers

The focus group discussions held with the farmers indicated that the mobilization process took more than six months before implementing any activity on the ground due to unforeseen circumstances. The following pertinent issues were recorded during the study.

- 1) High expectations by the community members that the mobilization process will create jobs for the people. Such an impression created unfavorable environment which led to a decline in attendance at meetings when farmers expectations were not met.
- 2) Conflict of village to village boundaries caused a delay on the implementation of the identified activities, because to resolve such conflicts needed time.
- 3) The local extension officers were highly committed to many agricultural activities to be implemented and this prolonged the period for mobilizing livestock farmers.

4) Poor understanding of the concept of mobilization by the farmers also played a role in delaying the implementation of the program and lack of support by other divisions within the Municipality in provision of fencing materials.

5) The language was also a barrier more particularly to the back stoppers as they could only hold meetings with farmers through the assistance of the local extension officer who acted as a translator.

4.3.17 The Role of Support Institutions to Farmer Mobilization

The interviews and focus group discussions with livestock committee revealed that the Limpopo Department of Agriculture received the report about the high death rate of animals in Blouberg Municipality through the office of Department of Agriculture and the interim Blouberg livestock farmers association. In 2003 to 2004 drought killed 10,277 cattle and 1,255 small stocks at the value of 13.1 Million Rands (Zwane 2006). This prompted the Limpopo Department of Agriculture to come up with a strategy in which farmers could be better organized and establish one organization that could serve as the mouth piece of the farmers.

Before the area was declared as nodal area a task team from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture went out to make an assessment of the animals that died and the grazing conditions and wrote a report which was presented to senior management of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture. This led to the introduction of livestock farmers' mobilization program as an intervention by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture to assist the farmers to organize themselves.

The Blouberg political Municipality: played a role during the process of mobilizing the farmers. Their role was to give encouragement to the farmers to participate in the program; the ward councilors assisted the facilitators in resolving conflicts among the farmers over the issue of boundaries and stock theft cases.

The Premiers Office: through Community Development workers (CDW) identified the most crucial needs and linked the farmers' needs with the relevant department. During the process when there were misunderstandings amongst the farmers and the facilitators the intervention by the CDW had a good impact in resolving some of the crucial issues as they were local people known by the farmers.

The German Technical Cooperation (GTZ): assisted the farmers through compiling the Business plan which was presented to the European Union for funding the development of the project activities. The money donated to the farmers was not directly given to the farmers NOVA Africa company based in Pretoria was behind the management of the funds i.e. R4.1Million used to train farmers, purchasing of computers and the vehicle which is used by the farmers when performing their activities.

4.3.18 Success rate of Approach

Different approaches were used to facilitate the mobilization of livestock farmers as communities are not homogeneous. The Baraza approach was used at the initial stage especially when creating awareness about the program to the entire community. The approach is a quick method of passing information to the people although it follows the top down approach. The mobilization program was adopted by the local traditional leaders, structures that are operating in the villages, farmers and non farmers who have

a stake in the revitalization of the grazing camps. Farmer group approach was used more specifically for the farmers affected directly by the program.

The success rate of Baraza

The success of the Baraza approach depends on the support from the community leaders. The use of Baraza approach was very effective because it brings farmers and none farmers together. Through the use of baraza it makes the mobilization process to be understood by the majority of the community members and stake holders who use veld for other purpose. Community needs were identified and prioritized. The prioritized needs were linked to relevant service providers. The approach makes the facilitators to be famous and accepted by the community members and leaders like sivic, community development workers and traditional leaders. In Gideon cluster the use of Baraza approach is common as is a quick method of passing information to the people. In Tshikonelo the Baraza approach was used to mobilize livestock farmers to identify their challenges and channel their needs to the relevant service provider. Crush pen was constructed and farmers organized themselves to buy livestock remedies in a group. (PEA training process 12-14 November 2002). In Uganda Human Rights commission, the involvement of communities and loacal leaders in the mobilization and conducting of the community Baraza has promoted community ownership and management of Baraza (Human Rights Baraza 2007)

Success rate of farmer groups

Farmer group approach was used more specifically to the farmers affected directly by the program. Livestock farmers formed groups in their villages to deal with challenges that were identified. Groups developed a platform of information sharing. The formation of village livestock groups makes farmers to have a structure that represent the interest of livestock farmers in the villages. Ten farmer groups were formed in Gideon cluster, eight groups are functional. An umbrella body has been formed constituted by two members from each group. Each group hold one meeting per month and the umbrella body hold meeting once per quarter to discuss issues raised by group members. Crucial challenges are linked with the relevant service providers.

4.3.19 Organization of Farmer Groups

The results of the discussion with the extension officers who facilitated the program revealed that organizing farmers group is a process. In this regard the process was as follows:

1. To sensitize the whole municipality the mobilization program was launched at FET College in Blouberg municipality on the 15 February 2005 to inform all the stakeholders in the municipality. The stakeholders included ward committee, livestock farmers, traditional leaders, local councilors and other extension officers working in the municipality.
2. After launching, service centers were visited to create an awareness of the program, namely My Darling and Eldorado. Traditional leaders were visited to inform them on how the program will be facilitated.

3. Structures operating in the villages were identified. The idea was to familiarize with them and create a platform of mutual understanding.
4. Then village-to-village meetings were conducted to identify farmers' needs and prioritize them together with farmers. To make farmers understand the contents of mobilization different codes were facilitated and decoded by the farmers like the River code which shows self reliance and the stick code which shows unity and cooperation; these codes are still well remembered by the individual farmers and the community leaders. During the facilitation process farmers and leaders realized their problems, limitations, the vision and the goals they wanted to achieve. Based on the challenges that were identified farmers decided to form their village livestock committees to take the step further in addressing the identified challenges. The challenges identified included lack of grazing camps, Lack of markets, high death rate of animals due to poisonous plants more especially towards the end of September, lack of water for animals in the grazing areas and animals are forced to travel long distance to get water, high stock theft and poor cooperation amongst the farmers.

For better service delivery, the facilitators with the agreement of the village leaders and the farmers started to form village clusters. The idea was well understood even by the community members as it improves the relationship amongst the farmers, that is villages that are close to each other could better work together and agree on the common venue for holding meetings. Clustering of villages did not consider the demarcation of the areas by the municipality. To form an umbrella body that represents

the cluster, each village nominated two members from their village livestock committee to constitute the umbrella body. The responsibility of the two representatives from each village is to attend meetings of the umbrella body and to give feedback to its members

The results further revealed that the facilitators use to hold fortnight meetings with the umbrella body at the initial stage but during the process when the umbrella body members understood their roles, meetings were held once per month. The focus discussions with farmers and community leaders revealed that livestock farmers appreciated the process on how they were mobilized because there were certain values that were instilled in the minds of the farmers such as ownership and self reliance, Unity and cooperation, Self organization, Conservation of natural resources and value of local knowledge.

Through participatory approach which allowed the farmers to articulate their needs three clusters were formed and all the clusters were functional. The focus group discussion with the facilitators, individual farmers and the leaders revealed that reflection meetings with the representatives of different sub groups from the villages made the groups to be more sustainable.

4.3.20 Changes Brought by Farmer Mobilization

The results revealed that livestock farmers as a result of mobilization are different from the past as their relationship amongst themselves and service providers e.g. Vleisetral, NTK has improved. This is because farmers know each other better than before; the

communication and sharing of experience amongst the farmers has tremendously improved; they have formed an organization that represented livestock farmers and they could share their needs with the government with one voice. The other indicator revealed by the leaders during the focus group discussion is that the rate of stock theft has declined. The attitude of farmers towards their local extension officer has improved when farmers were called for a meeting their response was positive as they attended meetings in large numbers. Farmers held their own meetings in the absence of extension officers.

4.3.21 What Farmers have that they did not have Before Mobilization?

The results from individual farmers, focus group discussion with livestock committees and village leaders revealed that each village had a livestock committee, livestock farmers had stock register books, farmers were utilizing their grazing camps together and the vandalization of the fence had stopped completely. The grazing condition had improved and the high death rate of animals due to drought had declined as farmers were utilizing their grazing camps properly which was not there before the mobilization of the farmers. Farmers are members of Blouberg livestock farmers association which was the expectation by the Department of Agriculture to see farmers forming village livestock committees, forming an umbrella body which in turn is affiliated to the mother body Farmers have developed the sense of ownership by taking care of the resources supplied by government like the fencing material, Dipping tanks, Sales pen, Boreholes, Camps and other infrastructure. Formation of livestock co-operatives which is the legal entity. At the end of the year they evaluated the activities that they have achieved and

developed an operational plan for their enterprise with the assistance of the local extension officer.

4.3.22 Activities Initiated After the Mobilization of Farmers

The results of individual farmers and group discussions with livestock committee revealed that the following activities were initiated after mobilization of farmers:

- 1) Community members and the farmers volunteered to open fence lines,
- 2) Digging of holes and the installation of poles,
- 3) The erecting of fences was done by the farmers,
- 4) Farmers were supplied with poles and they constructed their own crush pens in each village,
- 5) Dipping tanks were constructed with the involvement of the farmers,
- 6) One (1) auction sales pen for their livestock was constructed as a result of being mobilized,
- 7) Four(4) boreholes were drilled and equipped, tanks were installed and old boreholes were revived,
- 8) Farmers were provided with engines to pump water.
- 9) Temporary workers were hired, 15 per village under Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP). This is the Government program aimed at creating jobs for local people who are not employed.
- 10) Auctioning of cattle started after the construction of sales pens
- 11) A feed lot and an abattoir were constructed,

12) Farmers through sharing of information started to make their own fodder banks in their back yard and some cut grass and store them in a better place to feed their animals during winter period

13) The constitution which is followed by all the farmers was drafted

14) Organizing information days on livestock production,

15) Training of farmers was done on the management of grazing camps

4.3.23 Achievements of Farmers Groups which cannot be done by an Individual Farmer

During the focus group discussions with the livestock committee and the traditional leaders it was clearly revealed that farmers in the study area have changed as they could sit together when solving some challenges. A cooperative has been formed and the joining fee is R50.00 per farmer. Apart from that, farmers have formed some sub groups for buying remedies in bulk from the service providers. Farmers are also auctioning their animals in a group something which was not practiced before. Farmers were exploited by the speculators as they were buying animals from the individual farmers not using a weighing scale, at present they sell their animals in groups.

4.3.24 Indicators That Show That the Group Is Sustainable

According to Hugmann (1998) strengthening means to improve leadership through better communication, through clarifying the goals and putting up criteria and requirements for the leaders to follow and to choose leaders accordingly if possible. The umbrella farmers' organization indicated that they wanted to be trained on: Conflict management, leadership quality, team building record keeping while individual farmers are interested on the training on veld management, breeding, branding and diseases

control. The only workshops conducted for the farmers were on Veld management, leadership qualities and branding of animals.

The result from individual farmers and livestock committee interviews shows the following indicators:

- 1) Farmers are still holding their own meetings without the involvement of the local extension officer
- 2) The organization of the auction sale is done by the farmers with the support of the agricultural officer from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture.
- 3) The fence around the grazing area is well protected by the farmers (Ownership of the infrastructure).
- 4) Stock theft has been reduced,

4.3.25 Strengthening of Groups

According to the results from the focus group discussions with the livestock committee, training of farmers has strengthened the groups. The other issue that motivates the groups is when they saw their neighboring villages at Ga-Kibi making good progress in their livestock project. Attending meetings with different stake holders and sharing of information contributed to the strengthening of the group. Reflection of the activities with their local extension officer and re planning has strengthened the group and placed them where they are.

4.3.26 The Benefits that have been derived by the Members of the Group

The members of the group have different views in terms of the benefits they have derived by being part of the livestock group. The benefits included the following

- 1) Sharing of knowledge on livestock production with other farmers
- 2) Bulk buying of livestock remedies as a group at a low cost price.
- 3) Free training organized by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture of Agriculture
- 4) Selling of animals in auction sale in a group reduced the exploitation of individual farmers by the speculators
- 5) Participation of individual farmers in the exposure visit widens the relationship amongst the farmers.

4.3.27 The Extent to which Farmers Network among Themselves

Result from focus group discussions with individual farmers' show that farmers have no common understanding on the meaning of the concept networking; others indicated that farmers can only network through phones. Cameroon (1994) defines networking as a process resulting from the conscious effort of certain actors to build relationships with each other in order to enhance sustainable development. When discussing with the traditional leaders the result indicated that farmers as members of the community have their own social gathering where they share ideas like during farmers' days on demonstration on branding, vaccination of animals against diseases and dehorning of calves. They further indicated that during their livestock meetings they share more information. The other means of communication amongst the farmers is through the use of cell phones and if the umbrella body wanted to invite farmers they write letters and

use school children to distribute the letters. The result of the discussion with the animal technicians revealed that farmer to farmer networking is practiced in the villages.

4.3.28 Sharing of Information by the Farmers

The result from discussions with the animal technicians indicated that livestock farmers share their information in the dipping tank .The results further revealed that immediately after dipping, farmers hold their own meeting to discuss issues related to animal production like purchasing of remedies and control on the use of crush pens, selling pens and other differences. Further it was indicated that during workshops or information days farmers had an opportunity to share their experiences. This results show very well that even though farmers are perceived not to know what networking is, they own networks as they share more information besides being called for meeting i.e. farmer to farmer visits.

4.3.29 Benefits of Networking

The result of focus group discussions with the livestock committee and individual farmers' interview shows the following benefits from networking:

- 1) Networking promotes the sharing of information amongst the farmers,
- 2) Through networking farmers exchange visits and farmers can learn from each other
- 3) Farmers are in a position to access markets.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine key players in the mobilization of livestock farmers;
2. Evaluate the success rate of the approaches used when mobilizing livestock farmers at the Cluster;
3. Establish the extent of the contribution of farmer's mobilization to sustainable livelihood; and
4. Determine the extent to which farmers networked amongst themselves.

The study was conducted in the Gideon Cluster at Eldorado Service Centre which is within the Blouberg Municipality under the Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. The cluster comprised of 10 villages.

The method used for data collection included questionnaires and focused group discussions. One hundred livestock farmers were targeted out of 273 but only 85 farmers were interviewed.

The results of the study show that:

- Males dominated the population by 70%.
- The majority of the participants were married.

- The majority of the population was the Pedi speaking people and there were reasonably high levels of literacy.
- The average family had 5 members.
- The Majority of the population are self employed.
- The livelihoods were pension driven.
- The livestock maintenance funds were derived from different sources.
- Pension and salary were used to fund children's education.
- Farmers provided their own labour to look after the livestock.

The approaches used to mobilize livestock farmers brought the following successes : the formation of livestock committee, Identification of the challenges by the farmers, Formation of village cluster, improved cooperation amongst the farmers, formation of the umbrella body, holding regular meetings, changing the mindset of the people and instilling values like: Self reliance, ownership, cooperation and sharing of information amongst the farmers.

The mobilization process brought the following changes in the community:

- Internal and external relations improved;
- Sharing of experience amongst the farmers improved;
- Livestock theft controlled; and
- Change of attitudes by the farmers towards extension agents and making farmers more independent.

Activities initiated after farmer mobilization included:

- The formation of livestock committee;
- Acquiring stock register;
- Efficiency in use of the camps;
- Reducing fence vandalization ;
- Low death rate of livestock;
- Formation of livestock association formed and improved accountability;
- Job creation as a result of mobilization;
- Initiation of new innovations;
- Bringing access to different Government resources; and
- Drafting of the constitution and more capacity building of the farmers.
- Networking of farmers improved in the study area

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The conclusions in the previous section allowed the study to recommend that the mobilization process could be used to mobilize smallholders towards greater self sufficiency solving their problems and towards improving the livelihood benefits from their smallholder enterprises.
- Milk is the only farm crop that can give farmers an income throughout the year and the only product which can be processed on the farm and sold as a finished product to enhance earnings. Therefore farmers need to be encouraged to

embark on milk production through improvement of grazing area and management of cows that are good in milk production.

- Awareness creation to livestock farmers about the value of selling cow dung to generate income that could be used for purchasing livestock remedies and other livestock farmers needs
- It is also recommended that the model of farmer mobilization be converted into a practical activity and be replicated in other villages.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the project by the facilitators and the local extension officers should be implemented as a way of supporting the farmers.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Research Questions.

LIVESTOCK FARMER MOBILIZATION AS A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD AMONG SUBSISTENCE FARMERS– CASE STUDY OF GIDION CLUSTER AT ELDORADO AGRICULTURAL SERVICE CENTRE, BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITY

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

MUDZIELWANA O.F

Hi, my name is Ofhani Freddy Mudzielwana. I am a Masters (Agricultural Extension) student at the University of Limpopo, Turfloop campus and I am conducting research here in Gideon cluster. The topic of my research is as stated above. I would really appreciate if you could spend the next 45 minutes responding to the questions. Feel free to ask any question. The information exchanged between us will be used to compile a Master research report.

Interview data

2010

Interview/questionnaire no

Interviewer's name

Name of village

Village Head

Respondent's name

House no

Initial time

Ending time

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Sex of respondent

1. Male

2. Female

2. Sex of household head

1. Male

2. Female

3. Marital status of household head.

1. Married

2. Single

3. Divorced

4. Widowed

5. Separated

4. If married, how many spouses do you have?

1. One

2. Two

3. More than two

4. None

5. Age of the household head, (If known, judge by probing asking historical events)

1. > 65 years

2. 55 – 64

3. 45 – 54

4. 35 – 44

5. 25 – 34

6. 15 – 24

7. > 14

8. Do not know

6. What is the highest educational level you have attained?

1. None

- 2. Std 1 – Std 6
- 3. Std 7- Std 10
- 4. Diploma
- 5. Degree

7. Ethnic group

- 1. Venda
- 2. Tsonga
- 3. Sotho
- 4. Others (Specify).....

B. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

8. Household structure

HOUSEHOLD MEMBER	AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE
	> 65 years		
	55 – 64 years		
	22 – 54 years		
	19 – 21 years		
	15 – 18 years		
	7 – 14 years		
	7 years		
Total			

9. Children educational profile (Write numbers)

Level	MALE	FEMALE
Never attended		
Primary		
Secondary		
Tertiary		
Post Graduate		

10. Household members working (Number).....

11. Areas of work

- 1. Education
- 2. Health
- 3. Correctional service
- 4. South African Police service
- 5. Civil service
- 6. Metropolitan
- 7. Private
- 8. Factory
- 9. Shop
- 10. Self
- 11. None
- 12. Others (Specify)

12. Pension members of the household

- 1. Father to the house
- 2. Mother to the household
- 3. Both father and mother to the household
- 4. Household head
- 5. Household head spouse
- 6. Both household head and spouse
- 7. Sons
- 8. Daughters

C. INCOME

- 13. Source of income
- 1. Salary / Wages
- 2. Pension
- 3. Business
- 4. Stockvel
- 5. Sale of crops
- 6. Sale of livestock
- 7. Slaughtered meat
- 8. Remittance
- Others (Specify).....

14. Source of income for maintenance of livestock

- 1. Salary / wage
- 2. Trade
- 3. Remittance
- 4. Stockvel
- 5. Bank saving
- 6. Sale of livestock
- 7. Sale of crop
- 8. Pension
- 9. None
- 10. Others.....

15. Source of income for children's education

- 1. Salary / wage
- 2. Pension
- 3. Remittance
- 4. Stockvel
- 5. Bank savings
- 6. Bursary
- 7. Sales of livestock
- 8. Sale of livestock products
- 9. Sale of crop
- 10. None
- 11. Others (Specify)

16. Income per month

- 1. < R200
- 2. R201 – R600
- 3. R601 – R 1000
- 4. R1001 – R 1600
- 5. R1601 – R2000
- 6. > R2000
- 7. None

17. How much money do you generate from the sale of live stock per annum?

- 1. Chicken: R.....
- 2. Cattle: R.....
- 3. Goats: R.....

4. Donkeys: R.....

5. None

18. How much money do you generate from the following crops?

1. Maize: R.....

2. Millet: R.....

3. Sorghum: R.....

4. Groundnuts: R.....

5. Watermelon: R.....

6. Tomatoes: R.....

19. Do you sell cow dung from your kraal?

1. Yes

2. No

20. If yes, how much do you sell per unit (R)..... /

21. Do you milk cows?

1. Yes

2. No

22. If yes, how much do they produce? .Litres.

23. Do you sell the milk?

1. Yes

2. No

24. If yes, how much per litre? R.....

D. EXPENDITURE

25. Expenditure per month.

- 1. 100 – 300
- 2. 301 – 600
- 3. 601 – 900
- 4. 901 – 1200
- 5. 1201 – 1500
- 6. 1501 – 1800
- 7. 1801 – 2000
- 8. 2001 – 2400
- 9. 2401 – 2700
- 10. 3000
- 11. None

26. What do you spend your money on most in your household?

- 1. Food
- 2. Clothes
- 3. School
- 4. Hired labour
- 5. Maintenance of vehicle
- 6. None
- 7. Others

27. On what aspect did you or do you spend most on maintenance of your livestock?

- 1. Feeding
- 2. Medicine
- 3. Dipping
- 4. Labour
- 5. Water supply
- 6. None

28. How much did you spend on the following?

- 1. Feeds: R.....
- 2. Medicine: R.....
- 3. Dipping: R.....
- 4. Labour: R.....
- 5. Water supply: R.....

6. Other..... R.....

29. In what form do you pay workers who look after your livestock?

1. Money (Indicate the amount) R.....

2. In kind (Specify)

30. How much do you spend on your source of energy?

1. R.....

2. None

3. Do not know

E. Key players in the mobilization of livestock farmers

31. Indicate which institutions were responsible for formation / mobilization of your group?

- 1. Department of Agriculture
- 2. Department of health
- 3. NGO
- 4. The chief
- 5. Village herd man
- 6. Extension officers
- 7. Other.....

32. How many farmers are in your group?

33. How long did it take to mobilize you?

34. Why did it take this long?

35. How does the institution know about your need to be mobilized?

F. Success rate of approaches

1. Describe how institutions mobilize your group?

2. How often did the institution meet with your group?

3. Were you satisfied with the way you were mobilized?

4. How many groups have been formed using these approaches?

5. How many groups are still functional?

6. What made the groups to survive?

7. Which approach is common?

8. How different are livestock farmers as a result of being mobilized ? Are they better of?

9. What do they have that they did not have before mobilization?

G. Contribution of mobilization

1. What are the activities initiated after the mobilization of the farmers?
2. What have the farmers done that cannot be done by those who have not been mobilized?
3. What are the indicators that show that your group is sustainable?
4. What has strengthened your group?
5. What are the benefits have you from being in such a group?

H. NETWORKING OF FARMERS

1. How do farmers communicate with each other?
2. How do you share information?
3. Do livestock farmers groups have the same interest?
4. How are they dedicated to the network?

Please ranks:

Low	Medium	High	Excellent

5. Do they derive any benefits from networking?
6. Is there joint learning?
7. What are constrains to networking?
8. What are your challenges?
9. How can your groups be strengthened?

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this study