



Tropentag, September 17-19, 2013, Stuttgart-Hohenheim
“Agricultural development within the rural-urban continuum”

Determining Feed Resources and Feeding Circumstances: Usefulness and Lessons Learned by Applying FEAST in Tanzania

FRED J. WASSENA¹, BEN LUKUYU², WALTER E. MANGESHO³, GERMANA H. LASWAI⁴, JULIUS
M.N. BWIRE², ABILIZA E. KIMAMBO⁴, BRIGITTE L. MAASS¹

¹*International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Tropical Forages Program, Tanzania*

²*International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Improving Market Opportunities, Kenya*

³*Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRI), Tanga Centre, Tanzania*

⁴*Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Animal Science and Production, Tanzania*

Abstract

Feeds and feeding for livestock are among the major constraints towards improved productivity in smallholder systems. This drove the need to devise a rapid, systematic and technical tool that addresses feed issues. The Feed Assessment Tool (FEAST) was developed to aim for optimising feed utilisation through designation of intervention strategies based on available feed resources. The tool collects both qualitative and quantitative information through focus group discussions (FGDs) and brief interviews. FEAST is among the components of the IFAD-funded ‘MilkIT’ project that runs in India and Tanzania. In Tanzania, over 22 FEAST half-day meetings involving 300 farmers (52 % male, 38 % female, 10 % youth) in FGDs and 101 individual interviews have been conducted in the regions of Pemba, Morogoro and Tanga since first training of trainers took place in July 2012. Thirty seven staff members from various institutions were trained on applying the tool. Application of FEAST in the field enabled identification of local feeds and feeding practices in the context of the dairy value chain. The tool enabled participating livestock keepers to identify key constraints and opportunities through pairwise ranking, providing crucial entry points for strategizing future interventions. Among the key issues raised by participants were land and water shortage, gender aspects, marketing, breeding bulls and child labour. Despite the obvious lack of feed, particularly in the dry season, livestock keepers rarely ranked this among the five most important challenges. An additional instrument may have to be developed to identify the links of these other challenges to and the indirect effects of them on feeds and feeding. Further experiences obtained during the FEAST sessions were that a short training on the tool benefits facilitators and interviewers. FGDs should not be held with more than 20 people because otherwise different views may not be expressed. It is equally important that local leaders or extensionists need to choose FEAST participants meaningfully to represent the full array of wealth classes, gender and production systems in a village. These and other experiences will help to improve the tool that is readily available on the internet under <http://www.ilri.org/feast>.

Keywords: Dairy value chain, feed, feeding, focus group discussion, seasonality, Tanzania,