

Proposal for the inclusion of working equine animals in future livelihoods baseline studies

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1. Introduction

The objective of this brief – the first of three briefs produced by The Brooke together with the Food Economy Group (FEG) - is to present a proposal for the systematic inclusion of working equids in livelihood baseline assessments. The proposal stems from the fact that, to date, the analysis of livestock as part of households' productive assets has largely ignored the contribution of equids to household food security and livelihoods. The recommendation is aimed at organisations that may programme future livelihoods baseline assessments in rural or urban settings. Such organisations are called upon to provide a more complete picture of household livestock holdings and livelihoods based on productive livestock, which includes the analysis of equid ownership and use.

The brief presents a minimum number of questions to upgrade the data collection tools as well as guidelines on how to treat the new information. The additional questions aim to gather primary and secondary information on: a) numbers of equids and equid-inclusive programmes in the region, b) the availability and use of equids for transporting goods and people to markets and, c) evidence of the importance of equids as a criteria to determine household socio-economic status, as well as the common uses for equids in the area and their importance in supporting household income generating activities. The proposal has been developed with the Household Economy Analysis (HEA) baseline methodology in mind, but could be incorporated into other types of livelihood assessments.

As part of its advocacy work, the Brooke works to strengthen the recognition of the links between working equine welfare and human livelihoods. The organisation has been building the evidence on the roles and contributions of working equine animals in people's lives including through its Voices from Women project¹ and a number of studies on livelihoods.

The organisation has also been working with the FEG in order to conduct HEA assessments. The standard HEA methodology was adapted to target the chosen groups of population: households who own equids and use them to support their income generating activities (IGAs) - directly or indirectly - as well as their domestic chores, and households who rely almost entirely on working equids as their main source of income. Pilot studies were undertaken in India and Pakistan in 2013. The data collection tools were subsequently revised and strengthened in order to better meet the organisation's requirements and a third HEA baseline was carried out in Kenya in June 2014.

1.2 Working equine animals

Working horses, mules and donkeys (equids) make up approximately 100 million of the livestock population in less developed countries². They support the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in a wide range of sectors including agriculture, construction, tourism, mining and transport. Working horses, mules and donkeys support an estimated 600 million people globally often in the poor and marginalised communities³. Whilst a decline in equine population has been recorded in some countries, the number of working equine animals, particularly donkeys, continues to be significant in Africa, South Asia and Latin America.

Working equids are kept and used for their labour force (draught power/traction), not for their meat, milk or fibres (e.g. hides). Working equids offer fundamental support to IGAs by providing valuable transport (e.g. carrying the harvest from the field to the homestead and on to the market) and traction (e.g. transport of construction materials or use for land

¹ Valette, D, Voices from Women - Women's views on the contributions of working donkeys, horses and mules to their lives, The Brooke, London, 2014.

² FAOSTATS 2013.

³ McKenna, C, Bearing a heavy burden, The Brooke, London, 2008.

ploughing). Additionally, working equids play a fundamental role by lessening families', and in particular women's, household chores and labour such as fetching water, and by enabling them to contribute to the life of the communities and its members (e.g. help to build schools, transport of sick to hospital).

Whilst the so called "food production" animals (e.g. sheep, goats, pigs, cows/buffaloes and poultry) are automatically viewed and defined as productive "livestock", working equids are, however, rarely incorporated into institutions' and organisations' definitions of livestock. At best they are included as traction animals but not explicitly, or their needs are not seen as important. This leads to their absence or inadequate inclusion in relevant national policies, strategies, initiatives, budgets and programme interventions such as vaccination campaigns. The lack of recognition is also obvious in policy dialogues and initiatives at the regional and global levels.

Studies measuring the quantitative (i.e. financial) contributions of livestock to livelihoods and food security at the household or national level, including HEA assessments, have only rarely focused on working animals or "working livestock" or included them in their analysis. Ownership of livestock is one of the key criteria used in the definition of different wealth groups in HEA assessments in agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihood zones yet equids had not figured prominently in the assessments.

The invisibility of working equine animals and the findings from the Brooke HEAs are featured in a 2015 Brooke policy report,⁴ which also sets out a number of recommendations to start fill the evidence and policy gaps in the livelihoods related debates and initiatives.

2. Proposal for working equid component in future livelihood assessments

The Brooke would like to achieve a systematic inclusion of working equids in future livelihood assessments. While it would be difficult to carry out such detailed analyses as those performed in Brooke's India, Pakistan and Kenya studies - which targeted specific equid user groups for in-depth discussions - certain questions related to equid ownership can be easily incorporated into currently used livelihoods analysis methods including HEAs.

2.1 Proposal for minimum amount of additional information

As valuable livestock assets, working equine animals should be included in all future livelihoods baselines to help achieve a more accurate picture and a better understanding of the role of all livestock, including food production and working animals, in people's livelihoods. Including equids in livelihood baseline assessments would help ensure that working animals like equids become recognised as livestock in their own right by policy makers and implementers.

The inclusion of the equid component would add a small amount of additional time to field interviews, but require no additional financial or human resources. The FEG and Brooke's proposal that follows is based on the fieldwork phases involved in HEA baseline assessments. It could be tailored to suit other livelihoods based research methods and tools.

2.1.1 Secondary data and literature review

Background information is gathered at the initial stages of a livelihood analysis. Generally, a brief literature review is conducted and, once in-country, initial interviews with technical personnel working for local public institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and

⁴ Valette, D, "Invisible Workers: The Economic Contributions of Working Donkeys, Horses and Mules to Livelihoods", The Brooke, London, 2015.

other key informants are arranged. Information collected at this preliminary stage should include the following two types of information:

Table 1. Secondary data	
Number of equids in the region/ district (disaggregated by type of animal whenever possible)	Horses: Donkeys: Mules:
Evidence and description of any programmes and interventions that include these types of animals (e.g. vaccination programmes, local service provision such as health, farriers and saddlers available, education, education and capacity building training provided on livestock, provision of emergency feed and water).	Programme description & implementing institution:

Evidence of numbers of equids and equid-inclusive programmes can be collected in the form of official reports and data bulletins, interviews with relevant stakeholders or simply through oral accounts. Visits to local government offices provide an opportunity for assessment teams to collect equid population data at the Ministry of Livestock. Most government offices collect disaggregated data of the livestock population in their locality, which may provide some initial insight into the use of working equids in the area under study.

2.1.2 Market questionnaires

HEA baseline assessments include a visit to one or more local markets during the first days of fieldwork. The market visit provides a key opportunity to verify the use of equids by traders to transport their goods to market and to verify the use of equids to transport goods and or/people to and from the market by consumers.

Table 2. Market questions	
To traders: what types of transport do you or your suppliers use to transport goods to the market? Do these include equids or equids and carts?	Types of transport of goods:
To traders and/or customers: do people commonly use equids or equids and carts to travel to and from the market with their goods for sale or their purchases?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

The answers to these questions would provide some insight for future, more in depth lines of inquiry related to equid-user groups. This is essential for laying the groundwork for future equid user group specific studies, as it is in this domain – transporting goods and people – that the presence of working equids is most concentrated. The same questions will be asked again during the village visits.

2.1.3 Village interviews – community leaders

Community leader level interviews serve as an optimal point to collect information on equids' roles in local IGAs and households' domestic activities. Though the level of detail on equids may be limited, the information collected during this step of the HEA baseline assessment can provide a good point of departure for subsequent equid-user livelihood studies.

Community leader interviews - and most specifically the wealth group breakdown HEA exercise⁵ - can provide information on the following topics:

- Evidence of equid ownership and/or rental of equids to support livelihoods in the area.
- Common uses for equids, both for IGAs (e.g. ploughing) and homestead chores (e.g. carrying water).
- Particular focus on the use of equids to transport goods and people to and from market and/or to pay for transport by donkey/horse/mule and cart, as evidence of the importance of equids in the market chains.
- Existence of households who depend solely or largely on equids for their livelihoods and details of their socio-economic status.
- Role of working equids in livestock keeping and management (e.g. milk production and distribution)

The following questions would be included in HEA baseline form 3, which is used during the first of two visits to sampled communities and uses a focus group discussion format.

Table 3. Community leader questions	
Do the majority of households in each wealth group own donkeys, horses and/or mules? If “yes”, proceed to the questions below. Otherwise, jump to the last question.	WG 1 : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No WG 2: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No WG 3: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No WG 4: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What is the number of equids typically owned by the majority of households in each wealth group? (Use ranges if necessary). (Record information for each wealth group)	Horses: ____--____ Donkeys: ____--____ Mules: ____--____
Do households use equids for income generation? For example, transporting goods for a fee. (Record information for each wealth group)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please list the activities for which households use equids. For example: transporting bricks inside a kiln, transporting people to the nearby town for a fee, transporting goods to the market for a fee.	Activities:
Approximately how much does the income generated from working equid activities represent of a household’s total income? ⁶	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 75% <input type="checkbox"/> Roughly 50% <input type="checkbox"/> 25% or less
Do any households in the area <u>depend</u> on working equids for their livelihoods? (i.e. working equids provide their main or only source of income) Please describe these households. What kind of activities do they carry out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Description:
Do households use equids for household tasks? (e.g. collecting water).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

⁵ Assessment teams divide the Community Leader focus group (typically comprised of 9-12 individuals) into 3 to 4 sub-groups. The wealth group breakdown represents one of the smaller focus group discussions.

⁶ This information will be collected via semi-structured focus group interviews at the community leader level of a typical HEA assessment. Its purpose is to help direct future detail livelihood studies targeting equid users.

If yes, please list the activities for which households use equids. e.g. fetching water or firewood for the household.	Activities:
Do households use equids to take goods to the market for sale (or to places where it can then be sold (e.g. milk cooperatives)?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If the majority of households do not own an equid animal, do they commonly pay for transport by horse/mule/donkey? If yes, note the type of activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Activities:

2.1.4 Household level cross-check

The final level of enquiry in HEA baselines is the household. Focus group discussions are organised with wealth group representatives to, first, verify the information collected during the community leader interviews and, secondly, to delve deeper into the description and quantification of the livelihoods of each of the locally defined wealth groups. The questions presented in Table 3 should be repeated at the household level to be able to contrast the answers and record further details.

2.2 How the information should be recorded and analysed

The recording and analysis of the data will depend on the sampling method used and the way the data have been collected. HEA baselines use a purpose-built excel database to record the quantitative data collected by the field teams. It is crucial that the additional data on equids are recorded in the same database as the rest of the livelihood data. Secondary information, such as reports and information gathered at the district level must be saved and included in the bullet-point profile description format, which accompanies the HEA database.

In terms of the analysis, answers to open-ended questions will require careful re-reading and interpretation by the data analysts, while quantitative data can be analysed mathematically in the same way that data on other types of livestock and productive assets are analysed during the HEA baseline analysis stage.

The main aim is to build up a body of evidence on first, the existence of equids in many rural and urban communities throughout the world and, second, their economic (i.e. financial) and non-economic value to these communities. Collecting a minimum amount of information on working equids allows to complete the household livestock asset picture and provides some important background information on the support role played by equids in local livelihoods.

3. Benefits of having this additional information

3.1 Better understanding of livelihoods and providing a complete picture of role of livestock

Livelihoods assessments usually start with an analysis of productive household assets and how ownership of these assets, among other variables, determines levels of wealth. This picture is not complete without including working animals, in particular equids in the productive assets category. In HEA in particular, it is important to consider equids as part of the wealth grouping criteria and to quantify any income derived from the use or ownership of equids in those zones where this type of income generating activity is common to the majority of households in a particular wealth group.

Furthermore, assessing the importance of equids, as well as other types of livestock, will help to better understand the tacit support offered by equids in accessing food and income, outside of direct income generation. Equid ownership increases market access, making it easier to take goods to the market and to access more distant markets (including labour markets), which can improve livelihoods. Additionally, having access to a household helper frees up time away from household chores to devote to other productive activities. For example, using equids to transport water or firewood allows household to collect more per trip, reducing the number of trips to the water source or the forest.

3.2 Support comprehensive livestock interventions that reflect local contexts and livelihoods

Building a body of evidence on the existence of equids in rural and urban contexts and their role in supporting livelihoods will allow animal welfare organisations and related government bodies to advocate for the inclusion of equids in livestock interventions and for the development of equid specific activities.

3.3 Insights into gender dynamics

There is a particular link between working equids and livelihoods from a gender perspective. In rural areas where equids are commonly used for transport, the majority of households may not depend entirely on their donkey for their livelihoods but will make use of their equine animals to support their IGAs and many household chores. Household chores are overwhelmingly carried out by women and in rural economies these tasks occupy the majority of the working day and require a good amount of their labour power and physical force.

In May 2014, Brooke published a study¹ which explored the contributions of working horses, mules and donkeys to the lives of women from the perspectives of the women themselves. This report was based on research carried out in four countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, India and Pakistan. Although there is an assumption that women do not generally manage larger livestock, the research showed women use and drive working equids for household chores, income generation and social events. In particular it showed the extent to which women rely on working equids for support in fulfilling their many roles within the household and, as a result, the special affiliation between women and equids.

The support offered by equids included help with domestic chores, enabling savings by providing transport for goods, water, firewood, animal feed, manure and other produce and providing an income for women and their families. The equids' role also extended to the social sphere of women's lives. The study found that working equine animals that are used or owned by women play an important role in supporting them to carry out social functions and raise their status - and their voice - within the community.

4. Next steps

The Brooke has mobilised the support of the Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire (CNSA) and the HEA working group in Senegal to pilot the modifications of the baseline assessment questionnaires in the next HEA baseline assessment to take place in the country. This pilot will provide an opportunity to verify the suitability of the questions, the interpretation of the questions by the interviewees and the validity of the answers. The Brooke will accompany this initial pilot, however, it is intended that organisations are able to incorporate the additional equid related questions into future baselines without the need for additional support during the field process.

Additionally, The Brooke and FEG have produced two further briefs, which continue the

reflections on how to best assess the importance of equids for livelihoods. These documents are available on the Brooke's website or by request. The second brief describes the field application by The Brooke of the HEA methodology in three countries, India, Pakistan and Kenya, between 2013 and 2014. The Brooke and FEG worked together to tailor the standard baseline approach and field tools to include an analysis of income and expenses related to ownership and/or use of working equids - thereby collecting a much larger body of data than what is proposed in this brief. Much of the fieldwork focused especially on households who rely on working equids as a major source of household income.

The third brief presents a new tool to collect data on target population groups (working equid users and/or owners) without the need to conduct full-length baselines. This tool is based on the rapid HEA methodology, normally used in rapid onset crises, and has been adapted to include specific equid related questions. The new tool will allow The Brooke to conduct baseline studies in areas of special interest where the use of working equids as part of the local livelihoods is very common. The upgrade for customary HEA baseline assessment presented in this report will help to point out those geographical areas around the globe where an in-depth targeted study would be most pertinent.