Project report

Assessment of existing and new Animal Health Knowledge Centres

EU - Health of Ethiopian Animals for Rural Development (HEARD) Project

21-24 July 2019, Oromia and Amhara regions, Ethiopia

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European Union - Health of Ethiopian Animals for Rural Development (HEARD) Project

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International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

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Contents

1.   Objective of the assessment

International Livestock Research Institute's (ILRI) Livestock and Irrigation Value chains for Ethiopian Smallholders (LIVES) project has established woreda-based agricultural knowledge centres (AKCs) in Oromia, Tigray, Amhara and SNNP regions. With an aim of transforming these knowledge centres into Animal Health Knowledge Centres (AHKCs), the Health of Ethiopian Animals for Rural Development (HEARD) project conducted a quick phone-based assessment on the status of the centres. The project is jointly implemented by ILRI and the Ethiopian Veterinary Association (EVA).

2.   Preliminary assessment

A preliminary phone-based assessment was made on all the AKCs in Amhara and Oromia. The assessment covered AKCs in South Wollo, West Gojam and North Gondar zones (3 woredas each) of Amhara region and East Shoa and Jimma (3 woredas each) and West Shoa (four woredas) zones of the Oromia region (see Table 1). According to the interviewed heads and experts of woreda and zonal livestock development offices, 40.0% of the centres reviewed are currently existing and functioning well, whereas 13.3% of the centres exist but are not providing full services. Lack of internet access due to failure to make subscription payments, poor internet connection in the woredas and in some cases the computers in the AKCs being used for other office works were mentioned as reasons for failure to providing full services.

Nearly half of the centres (46.7%) for which responses were obtained no longer exist. The reasons vary across zones and woredas. Some woredas lacked budget for internet subscription and others preferred to turn the centres into offices because of shortage of office space. Agricultural bureaus recently underwent institutional changes, where they were split into agricultural and livestock bureaus. The knowledge centres remained with the agricultural bureau. Most of the facilities of the centres are either stored or are being used for other purposes. But there is hope of restoring the some of the centres can be restored according to the respondents.

Table 1. Status of AKCs

Region	Zone	District	Status of akcs
Amhara	South Wollo	Dessie surrounding district	Functioning well
	South Wollo	Kalu District	No longer exists
	South Wollo	Tehuldere District	Functioning
	West Gojjam	Bahr Dar Surrounding district	No longer exists
	West Gojjam	Mecha District	No longer exists
	West Gojjam	Yilmana Densa district	The centre exists, but not functioning
	North Gondar	Dembiya District	Burned down during political unrest
	North Gondar	Gondar Surrounding District	Functioning well
	North Gondar	Lay Armacho District	Well-functioning
Oromia	East Shoa	Bora District	No longer exists
	East Shoa	Dugda District	Functioning well
	East Shoa	Lume District	Centre exists, but not functioning

	Jimma	Dedo	Could not be reached by phone
	Jimma	Kersa	Could not be reached by phone
	Jimma	Seka Chekorsa	Could not be reached by phone
	West Shoa	Ada Berga District	No longer exists
	West Shoa	Ejere District	No longer exists
	West Shoa	Ejere District	Functional
	West Shoa	Wolkite District	Could not be reached by phone

3. Field assessment of AKCs in Amhara region

Field visits were arranged to woredas where promising responses were received from the phone-based surveys. The statuses and requirements for strengthening the centres are presented below.

I. Tehuldere district

The knowledge centre in Tehuldere district is not functional due to space unavailability. The equipment is therefore stored in one room. From the discussions, there is a possibility of getting separate room for the KC in the coming few months upon completion of the construction of new office spaces.

Available facilities/equipment include: 4 computers, 1 television, 1 printer, 10 chairs, 2 tables and internet connection which is assumed to be working once subscription payment is settled.

Management is mentioned as the main challenge for reopening the KC. The centre was inherited by the agriculture bureau following the new office structure that split the livestock health and agriculture departments. This has left the livestock health department with no say in the knowledge centres. Agreement was reached with the two departments to agree on ways of using the facility together and start the re-establishment process of the knowledge centre.

Support needed if the challenges are addressed include:

- Monthly internet subscription payment
- ICT personnel
- Wireless internet connection
- Two of the computers need ILRI ICT administration password to upgrade software

Table 2. Available and requested equipment

Available	Requested	Remark
1 TV, 1 printer, 2 tables	LCD projector with laptop	2 computers need ILRI ICT administration password to upgrade software
Office furniture	Internet payment, WIFI not broadband connection	backlog payment
4 computers	Laptop for the LCD	

Internet router	Reading and audio-visual materials	
	ICT professional	

II.   Dessie surrounding district

The KC in Dessie surrounding district is partially functional. Due to shortage of space in the campus, there is no possibility of getting separate room for the KC.

Facilities /equipment available include: 4 computers (on sight are 3 computers), 1 television, 10 chairs, 2 tables and a functional internet connection.

Space is the main challenge raised as the KC is sharing space with the irrigation office. The new office structure which split the livestock health and agriculture departments has put the knowledge the centres under the later. This has left the livestock health department with no access to the knowledge centres.

Agreement was reached with the two departments to agree on ways of using the facility together and start the re-establishment process.

Support needed if the challenges are addressed include:

- Shelfs
- Chairs
- Separate room for the knowledge centre

Table 3. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remark
4 computers	LCD projector with laptop	shortage of space- less likely to get a room
1 TV, 2 tables	shelfs, chairs	
Internet connection	Reading and audio-visual materials	
Office furniture	ICT professional	

III.   Yilmana Densa district

The knowledge centre in Yilmana Densa district is functional. It has its own room with the equipment.

Facilities/equipment available include: 4 computers (from LIVES project) and additional 2 computers (from Sasakawa), 1 printer, 1 television, 3 chairs, 3 tables and a working internet connection. The modems from the LIVES project were taken by the AGP project and distributed to all the offices during the separation of the livestock from the agriculture department. This has left the knowledge centres to have one modem for one computer – the other computers are left idle. The main challenge this district is facing is

the aging of the building (causing leakages) and the distance of the knowledge centre from the livestock office.

The support required include:

- Modem
- Chairs
- Additional KC room
- Copy machine
- Dividers
- Stationary materials (such as paper, printing inks)
- Toolkit for maintenance of computers and printers
- Operation system (OS) software and
- Training on computer and printer maintenance and networking

Agreement was reached with the livestock health representative and the ICT personnel to discuss ways of setting up a convenient KC room. And to find out the cost for internet modem and installation.

Table 4. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remark
4 computers from LIVES, 2 computers from Sasakwa	(operation system (OS) software)	Not enough capacity
1 printer, 1 TV,	LCD projector with laptop	Room needs maintenance
Office furniture	Internet modem	
ICT professional	Laptop for the LCD	
internet modem	Reading and audio-visual materials	
Room	Copy machine, stationaries like paper, dividers, tool kit for maintenance for both computers and printers, printing inks	
	Trainings on computer and printer maintenance and networking.	

IV.   Gonder surrounding district (Maksegnt)

The knowledge centre in Gonder surrounding district is functional but it does not have its own room.

Facilities/equipment available include: 2 computers (out of the 4 computers from the LIVES project - the rest was distributed for office use to the agriculture office), 1 printer, 1 television (in the store to be checked if it is functional), shelf with a few books, 3

chairs, few tables, ICT professional and a functional 2 MB internet connection that is shared with the AGP project. Currently the KC is using one cable for one computer.

The main challenge for this district is not being able to use the centre as needed as it is sharing space with other offices.

Agreement was reached with the agriculture department head to let the KC have own space by getting a new space for the other department.

The support required include:

- Chairs
- Copy machine
- Additional 1 MB connection to upgrade the existing capacity
- Dividers, stationary materials (such as paper, printing inks)
- Toolkit for maintenance of computers and printers
- Operation system (OS) software.
- Training on computer and printer maintenance and networking
- Books and reading material for high school and college students given students are using the KC for research paper writing.

Table 5. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remark
2 computers	(operation system (OS) software)	Shortage of space- less likely to get a room
1 printer, 1 TV	Reading and audio-visual materials	Room shared with office
Shelf with few books	LCD projector with laptop	
	Internet connection	
Office furniture	Room	
ICT professional	Office furniture	
	Copy machine	
	Copy machine, stationaries like paper, dividers, tool kit for maintenance for both computers and printers, printing inks	
	Trainings on computer and printer maintenance and networking.	
	Books and reading material for high school and college students	

V. Lay Armacho district

There is a functional KC in Lay Armacho district although the room is ageing and needs maintenance.

The KC has 1 television which is being used for trainings, 2 computers, 1 copy machine, no printer, 1 GB internet connection, ICT professional.

The main challenge for this district is low capacity of the internet.

The support required include: additional computers, chairs, tables, copy machine, additional 2 MB connection to upgrade the capacity, financial support for monthly payment, dividers, stationaries like paper, printing inks, tool kit for maintenance for both computers and printers as well as operation system (OS) software. Respondents suggested if computer and printer maintenance and networking training can be provided to the staff.

Table 6. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remark
1 TV, 1 copy machine	2 computers (operation system (OS) software)	Not enough capacity
2 computers,	ICT professional	Needs maintenance
	Reading and audio-visual materials	
	Internet connection	
	Room	
	LCD projector with laptop	
	Copy machine	
	Office furniture	
	Dividers, stationaries like paper, printing inks, tool kit for maintenance for both computers and printers,	
	Reading and audio-visual materials	

4. Field assessment of AKCs in Oromia region
I. Lume district

Dr Solomon Gizaw, HEARD project coordinator, introduced the project and the objectives of the current assessment.

The topics raised during the discussions on the status of the KCs with the heads of district agricultural and natural resource office and livestock and fishery development office include:

- The centre has not been working for the last 4 years because of unpaid internet subscription fee
- The centre is managed under district agricultural and natural resource office
- All materials; 4 computers, internet modem, television, LCD projector, digital camera, office furniture, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are currently available
- It would be better to have an internet access on individual working stations.
- Centre is currently being used as a conference room

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre

- The centre is not well maintained
- All equipment is found within the centre.
- The space looks like a meeting room than a knowledge centre
- The district is not interested much on the strengthening activity of the centre
- The room is not clean and unpleasant for reading
- No personnel working in the centre
- Generally, the centre is not satisfactory to go with strengthening activity

II. Bora district

Dr Solomon Gizaw, ILRI-HEARD project coordinator, introduced the HEARD project and the objectives of the current assessment. The points raised during a discussion with the head of livestock and fishery development office include:

- The centre is not functioning because of lack of space, termination of support from the project and absence of budget to sustain the internet service.
- All equipment was divided among the 3 sectors (agriculture, irrigation and livestock sector) after the project phased out.
- The projector is currently used by the woreda administration office
- The room is being used for other purposes

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- The centre doesn't exist
- The room is utilized for other purposes
- Only 1 computer and TV are observed in livestock office.
- It is not satisfactory to go with strengthening activity.

III. Dugda district

Dr Solomon Gizaw, ILRI-HEARD project coordinator, introduced the HEARD project and the objectives of the current assessment. Discussions on the status of the KCs were held with district expert who oversees the KCs. The points raised include:

- The centre is partially working and managed by the livestock and fisheries development office

- Printed and audio-visual materials are available for users
- The LIVES project phased out before the internet was connected to the centre
- All materials including: 4 computers, internet modem, LCD projector, television, digital camera, office furniture, audio-visual materials, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are available
- All equipment is functional except camera and LCD projector
- There are one personnel working in the centre
- Shown great interest to relaunch the centre

Support required include:
- Laptop computer to provide mobile training for DA
- Bookshelf
- Books related to animal health and production.
- Wider space

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- The centre and all equipment are well maintained
- Shown interest in the strengthening activity of the centre
- The room is narrow but clean and provides enabling environment for reading
- Generally, the centre is satisfactory to go with the strengthening activity

Table 7. Available and requested items

Available resources	Requested additional requirements	Remark
4 desktop computers	Laptop for the LCD	LCD require maintenance
LCD projector	Internet payment	No backlog payment
Internet modem	Books related to animal health and production	Used for other purpose
Office furniture,	Room	
Reading and audio-visual materials	Digital camera (optional)	
ICT professional		

IV. Ejere district

A discourse on the status of the agricultural knowledge centre previously established in the district was given by the livestock and fishery development office head of district, after Dr Solomon Gizaw introduced the HEARD project and the objectives of current assessment. The topics that were discussed include:

- The centre is not functional because of lack of space, termination of support from the project and lack of budget to sustain the internet service
- Computers are divided among the 3 sectors (agriculture, irrigation and livestock sector) after the LIVES project phase out
- Reading materials, audio-visual materials, shelf, TV and other material are left for the agricultural office
- The room is being used for other purposes

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre

- The centre is non existent
- The room is being used for other purposes
- The centre is not satisfactory to go with the strengthening activity

V. Ada-Berga district

The topics that were discussed with the head of livestock and fisheries development office include:

- The centre is not functional because of lack of space, termination of support from the project and lack of budget to sustain the internet service

- All equipment is divided among the 3 sectors (agriculture, irrigation and livestock sector) after the project phased out
- Currently woreda administration office is using the projector
- The room is being used for other purposes

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- The centre is non existent
- The room is being used for other purposes
- The centre is not satisfactory to go with the strengthening activity

VI. Meta-Robie district

The topics that were discussed with the head of livestock and fisheries development office and experts include:

- The centre is partially working, and printed materials are available for the users
- All materials: 4 computers, internet modem, TV, LCD projector, digital camera, office furniture, audio-visual, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are available
- All equipment is working except the projector
- The centre is managed by the livestock and fisheries development office

The support required include:

- Veterinary books
- Budget to manage the centre

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- It is well maintained, and all equipment are found within the centre
- Shown interest in the strengthening activity of the centre
- The room is clean and provides enabling environment for reading
- The centre is in satisfactory state to go with strengthening activity

Table 8. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remarks
4 computers	Laptop for LCD	LCD require maintenance
LCD projector	Internet payment	No backlog payment for internet
Internet modem	Books related to animal health and production	
Digital camera		
Office furniture		
Reading and audio-visual materials		
Room		

VII.   Seka-Chekorsa district

The topics that were discussed with the head of livestock and fisheries development office include:

- KC is there but not functional because of lack of internet access
- All materials: 4 computers, internet modem, TV, LCD projector, digital camera, office furniture, audio-visual, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are currently available
- All equipment is fully functional.
- No internet connection due to unpaid subscription payment of 34,000 Birr
- The centre is managed under livestock and fisheries development office

The support required include:

- Veterinary books
- Budget to manage the centre

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre

- Its floor needs minor maintenance.
- All equipment is found within the centre
- Shown interest in strengthening activity of the centre
- The room is wide and provides enabling environment for reading

- The centre is in satisfactory state to go with strengthening activity

Table 9. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remarks
4 computers	Internet payment	Backlog internet subscription payment
Internet modem	Laptop for LCD	
LCD projector	Veterinary books and additional reading materials	
Digital camera	Maintaining the floor	
Office furniture		
Reading and audio-visual materials		
Room		

VIII. Dedo district

The topics that were discussed with the head of livestock and fisheries development office include:

- The centre is partially working and is managed under the livestock and fisheries development office
- Printed and audio-visual materials are available for users
- Currently internet is not connected to the centre
- All materials: 4 computers, internet modem, TV, LCD projector, digital camera, office furniture, audio-visual materials, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are currently available
- All equipment is functional except camera

Support required include:

- Laptop computer to provide mobile training for DA
- 2 additional desktop computers
- Books related to animal health and production

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- The centre and all equipment are well maintained
- The room is clean, wide and provides enabling environment for reading
- Shown interest in strengthening activities of the centre
- The centre is in satisfactory state to go with strengthening activity

Table 10. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remarks
4 computers	Digital camera (optional)	No backlog payment for internet
Internet modem	Internet payment	
LCD projector	Laptop for LCD	
Office furniture		
Reading and audiovisual materials	Books related to animal health and production	
Room		
ICT professional		

IX.   Kersa district

The topics that were discussed with the heads of livestock and fisheries development office and district agricultural and natural resource office and district vet-clinic manager include:

- The centre is partially working.
- Only printed materials are available for the users
- All materials: 4 computers, internet modem, TV, LCD projector, digital camera, office furniture, reading materials and room for the knowledge centre are currently available.
- All equipment is working
- One personnel working in the centre
- The internet connection is currently disconnected due to unpaid subscription payment of 12,000 Birr.
- The centre is managed under district agricultural and natural resource office. The district livestock and fishery development office staffs have full access to the centre.
- The computers are locked with password and need to be fixed

Support required include:

- Veterinary books.

Personal observation and opinion on the agricultural knowledge centre;

- The centre is well maintained, and all equipment are found within the centre
- Shown interest in strengthening the centre
- The room is clean and provides enabling environment for reading
- The centre is in satisfactory state to go with strengthening activity

Table 11. Available and requested items

Available	Requested	Remark
4 computers	Internet payment	Backlog payment
Internet modem	Laptop for LCD	
LCD projector	Books related to animal health and production	
Digital camera		
Office furniture		
Reading and audiovisual materials		
Room		

Summary and recommendations on existing knowledge centres

- Field visits were conducted between 21 April and 24 July 2019 in 14 districts of Oromia and Amhara regions to assess the status and needs oh AKCs. And to sustainably re-establish the centres.

- From 9 districts in Oromia region, 5 of them have shown strong interest on the re-establishment of the knowledge centres. The centres selected for strengthening in Oromia are: Dugda, Meta-Robie, Seka-Chekorsa, Dedo and Kersa.

- All the 5 districts of Amhara region have shown interest and are in good condition, except Dessie-Surrounding. The centres selected are: Tehuldere, Yilmana Densa, Gonder Surrounding and Lay Armacho

- The HEARD project team discussed with the woreda heads on the sustainability of the centres.

5. Site selection for new AKCs in Oromia, Amhara and Somali regions

- Ten new centres were proposed, and sites were selected. One centre in each of the six-HEARD health intervention woredas in the three regions, plus one in each of Oromia and Amhara and two in Somali region (see Table 12)

- Resource requirements to establish new centres were identified.

- To ensuring the sustainability of the centre in Dire-Inchini, the woreda administration office (woreda budget holder) was approached and promised to pay for internet subscription fee. ILRI will cover the cost for the first 3-6 months.

- The other woredas also promised to find means to cover the costs, such as transferring the centre to run by youth groups. All the other woredas also expressed commitment to cover internet subscription fee sometime in the course of the project. The plan is to encourage them to take over as soon as possible so that they would be accustomed to run the centre after the project phases out.

Table 12. New Animal Health Knowledge Centres

Region	Woredas	Remark
Amhara	Bati	New
	Banja	New
Oromia	Negele Arsi	New
	Dirre-Inchini	New
	Delo-Mena	New
Somali	Deghabour	New
	Hargele	New

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