

Regional Radio Engagement in Broadcasting Livestock Feed and Forage Innovations

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1. Introduction

- Despite having Africa's largest livestock population, Ethiopia has not realized the full benefits from the sector.
- Among the challenges includes the availability of the feed itself and also the low quality associated with feed and forage management.
- Under the Africa RISING / AICCRA projects, integrated feed and forage development showed promising results in improving Ethiopia's livestock feed system.
- However, many farmers still have limited awareness and knowledge on these livestock feed and forage innovations.
- That is why we need to promote the livestock feed and forage innovations and make farmers aware of the benefits through Mass media.

2. Objectives

Engage media to broadcast research results on climate smart livestock feed and forage innovations and quickly assess feedbacks on broadcasted programs from the beneficiaries (farmers).

5. Conclusion/messages

- Before the partnership, no media houses worked on the livestock sector as a standalone weekly program on livestock other than as a side issue. After the partnership/media training, however, journalists started incorporating some livestock-related issues in their programs and news coverage.
- Radio is the most effective channel to reach out to many farmers and create awareness about new or existing technologies & practices and also support experts easily promoting the technology. Television could also be considered as another channel of communication to reach farmers, especially those who live around cities and have access to electricity. Many farmers also have access to smartphones by themselves or through their children, thus sharing short films online could also be considered as an option to teach farmers.

6. Acknowledgement

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3. Methods/approaches

- Media assessment was conducted in Amhara , Oromia and SNNP regions.
- Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0, OBN FM 96.5, Hosaena FM 95.3 / SNNPR were identified.
- A partnership agreement was signed between the regional media houses and ILRI/ Africa RISING and AICCRA projects to produce and broadcast a total of 29 weekly radio programs (20 minutes each).
- A two days media training workshop on climate smart feed and forage innovations were organized in Addis Ababa.
- Training and field visit were organized for 3 regional media heads, 3 regional media editors and 6 radio program producers.
- Radio program topics were identified in the training workshop.
- Radio programs were produced and broadcasted by media houses.
- Quick assessment was conducted to get feedbacks on broadcasted programs.

4. Findings

Journalists Training

- The training was helpful for them to have a good understanding of the livestock sector in general and livestock feed and forage technologies in particular.
- Radio stations focused only on crop and natural resource-related issues, not giving enough attention to the livestock sector. But, the training helped them, the need to work more in the livestock sector.

Radio Broadcast

- The radio programs were informative and able to reach out to many farmers.
- The radio programs would encourage farmers to use the innovations and support experts easily promote and facilitate adoption.
- The evening time (7:30 to 9:30 pm) is preferable for the farmers to listen to the radio broadcast.
- Doing promotion about the radio program, and the date and time of transmission ahead of time is essential so that farmers save the date and time to tune in and also boost the listenership.
- Television could be considered as another channel of communication to reach farmers, especially those who live around cities and have access to electricity.
- Many farmers and their children have access to smartphones, thus sharing short films through online channels could also be considered as an option to teach more farmers.