

# Evaluation of radio broadcasts on livestock feed and forage technologies

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# Evaluation of radio broadcasts on livestock feed and forage technologies

## Media evaluation report

Accelerating Impact of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA)

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LIVESTOCK

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### **About AICCRA reports**

Titles in this series aim to disseminate interim climate change, agriculture, and food security research and practices and stimulate feedback from the scientific community.

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# Acronyms

Africa RISING Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation

AICCRA Accelerating the Impact of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa

AMICO Amhara Media Corporation

CCAFS Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security

CSA Climate-Smart Agriculture

FBC Fana Broadcasting Corporate

ILRI International Livestock Research Institute

OBN Oromia Broadcast Network

PSA Public Service Announcement

RFP Regional Focal Person

SIMFS Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems

SNNP Southern Nations, Nationalities and People

## Contents

Background .....	7
Media assessment .....	9
Journalist training.....	9
Radio broadcast.....	9
Objective of the evaluation .....	9
Methodology .....	9
Desk reviews.....	10
Key informant interviews .....	10
Focus group discussions .....	10
Limitations of the evaluation .....	10
Findings.....	10
Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 .....	11
Hosanna FM 95.3 .....	16
Conclusion .....	20
Recommendations.....	21
References.....	22

## Background

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The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works for better lives through livestock in developing countries. ILRI is co-hosted by Kenya and Ethiopia and has 14 offices across Asia and Africa. The institute is one of the CGIAR research centres, a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR centres in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector.

Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) is a program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and operates in six African countries (Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Ethiopia). The program aims to contribute to Feed the Future goals of reducing hunger, poverty and under-nutrition by delivering high quality research outputs that are relevant to these goals. Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING is creating opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

In Ethiopia, the main aim of the project is to identify and validate solutions to the problems experienced by smallholder crop–livestock farmers. Some problems arise from the difficulties facing farmers in managing natural resources and achieving efficiencies from managing crops, trees, water and livestock together. These efficiencies are often influenced by other factors such as access to inputs and reliability of markets. To address this complexity, Africa RISING takes an integrated approach to strengthening farming systems. It conducts participatory research that identifies technologies and management practices that work for farmers and takes account of contextual issues like markets for inputs and outputs, community and other institutions and policy environments that influence farm households. The project in Ethiopia facilitates wider scaling of validated crop-livestock-natural resource management technologies to reach and benefit more smallholder farmers.

Accelerating the Impact of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) is a three-year (2021–2023) project that operates in six African countries, including Ethiopia. The project is supported by a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and will enhance the research and capacity-building activities of CGIAR and its partners. AICCRA in Ethiopia aims to strengthen the capacity of targeted national partners and stakeholders of the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) East Africa to access and implement at scale validated climate-smart agriculture technologies, climate information services and climate-informed digital ag-advisories to build the resilience of agri-food systems. The value chains considered for AICCRA's project in Ethiopia include beans, wheat, small ruminants and livestock feed and forage options.

The AICCRA project in Ethiopia has eight research activities, four of which the livestock feed and forage options value chain contributes to. These four are capacity building to support the implementation of climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technology packages; identification of climate, gender and social inclusion-smartness of CSA packages; prioritization and awareness increase of best-bet CSA options and approaches for key value chains; and integration of climate-smart options and tailored climate-smart innovation (CSI) advisory systems for specific value chains.

The Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems (SIMFS) initiative aims to provide equitable, transformative pathways for improved livelihoods of actors in mixed farming systems through sustainable intensification within target agroecologies and socio-economic settings. Through action research and development partnerships, the initiative will improve smallholder farmers' resilience to weather-induced shocks, provide a more stable income and significant benefits in welfare, and enhance social justice and inclusion for 13 million people by 2030. Activities will be implemented in six focus countries globally, representing diverse mixed farming systems as follows: Ghana (cereal–root crop mixed), Ethiopia (highland mixed), Malawi (maize mixed), Bangladesh (rice mixed), Nepal (highland mixed), and Lao People's Democratic Republic (upland intensive mixed/ highland extensive mixed).

Africa RISING, AICCRA projects and SIMFS initiative contracted a consultant to undertake media and communications-related activities. These included media assessment, facilitating media partnership, training radio journalists on livestock feed and forage technologies, and monitoring the radio broadcasts.



## **Media assessment**

A media assessment report, which was fundamental to guiding further engagements, was completed and submitted to the Africa RISING, AICCRA projects and SIMFS initiative. Based on the assessment, three appropriate regional media institutions (Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 from Amhara Region, Bale OBN FM 96.5 from Oromia Region, and Hossana FM 95.3 from Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region, SNNPR) were identified. Partnership agreements were then signed with the identified radio stations.

## **Journalist training**

The assessment reports from the three regions showed that journalists' awareness of livestock feed and forage innovation was very limited. Many of them also responded that they had never produced stand-alone programs on both livestock and livestock feed and forage technologies. They therefore requested an awareness raising training to help them understand the sector. Thus, after the identification of the radio stations, journalists (radio station heads, program editors and producers) were trained on livestock feed and forage technologies. Radio program content was also identified during the training.

## **Radio broadcasts**

Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 and Hossana FM 95.3 started producing and broadcasting the agreed radio content immediately after the journalists' training. The first radio programs at both stations were aired on the evening of 21 June 2022. On Debre Birhan FM 94.0 eight weekly programs, each lasting for 20 minutes, and on Hossana FM 95.3 thirteen weekly programs, each lasting for twenty minutes, were aired. The programs focused on Eight and thirteen, 20 minutes on livestock feed and forage technologies. Due to internal factors within Bale OBN FM 96.5, the station broadcasted the first program on 24 October 2022. Afterwards, Africa RISING, AICCRA projects and SIMFS initiative hired a consultant to evaluate the radio programs broadcasted by the three media houses.

## **Objective of the evaluation**

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the radio broadcasts on livestock feed and forage technologies amongst farmers/beneficiaries in Debre Birhan town in North Shewa and Hossana town SNNPR.

## **Methodology**

The consultant employed qualitative methods, including desk reviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with selected stakeholders.

## Desk reviews

Various documents, online and paper, on livestock feed and forage technologies were reviewed, including articles, training manuals and project briefs.

## Key informant interviews

In-depth interviews (face-to-face and telephone) were conducted with purposively selected key and representative stakeholders, including farmers, agriculture and livestock experts, journalists/radio program producers, Africa RISING field coordinators and regional media station heads in North Shewa (Debre Birhan) and SNNPR (Hossana).

## Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were also conducted with randomly selected farmers/beneficiaries in North Shewa and Hossana.

## Limitations of the evaluation

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Bale FM 96.5 is a branch of Oromia Broadcast Network (OBN) situated in Bale Robe Town. It was identified as one of the appropriate radio stations to produce and broadcast programs focusing on livestock feed and forage technologies for farmers living in Bale and the surrounding areas. The projects signed an agreement with the media institution to produce and broadcast radio programs for eight weeks but due to internal issues at the radio station, they could not proceed as scheduled. With the first program being broadcasted on 24 October 2022, four months after the other two stations, the evaluation did not include broadcasts from Bale FM 96.5.

## FINDINGS

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### Summary

<b>Journalist training and radio broadcasts on livestock feed and forage technologies</b>	
<b>Journalist training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The training was helpful in giving a good understanding of the livestock sector in general and livestock feed and forage technologies in particular.</li><li>▪ Radio stations focused on crop and natural resource-related issues, without giving enough attention to the livestock sector. The training highlighted the need for more broadcasts on livestock.</li></ul>

<b>Radio broadcasts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The radio programs were informative and reached many farmers.</li> <li>▪ These programs encouraged farmers to use the technologies and supported the experts in promoting the technology and facilitating adoption.</li> <li>▪ Farmers preferred to listen to the broadcasts in the evening (1930–2130 hours).</li> <li>▪ Promoting the radio programs and providing the date and time of transmission ahead of time boosted listenership.</li> <li>▪ Television could be considered as another channel of communication to reach farmers, especially those who live around cities and have electricity.</li> <li>▪ Many farmers also have access to smartphones by themselves or through their children, thus sharing short films through online channels could also be considered.</li> </ul>
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### **Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0**

This is a branch of Fana Broadcast Corporate (FBC) and one of the prominent sources of information for residents of North Shewa Zone and the surrounding areas. The media house is based in Debre Birhan Town and broadcasts in the Amharic language. According to station manager Solomon Ayele, the radio frequency covers a 100–150 km radius. About 12.2 million people live within this radius, of which 2.5–3 million are estimated to listen to Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 radio programs.

Regarding the journalist training, Ayele noted that it gave the broadcasters a good understanding of the livestock sector and facilitated close collaboration with farmers, agricultural experts, scientists and others. From the engagement, he added, the radio station learnt a lot on how to raise awareness on livestock feed and forage technologies.

‘Previously, our station focused only on crop-related issues, without giving enough attention to the livestock sector. But now, the training has enabled us to give attention to the livestock sector and make it one of the main agendas for the radio station,’ Ayele observed.

Abebe Yeshewaleul, editor at Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0, participated in the media training in Addis Ababa in June 2022. He said the station had not been airing livestock feed and forage-

related content but the training was an eye-opener on the magnitude of the sector as well as its potential to benefit a significant portion of the Ethiopian population.

‘We started to incorporate livestock-related issues, not only in the radio programs on the projects but also in other broadcasts, including news coverage. Previously, the agricultural content focused on crop and natural resource-related issues but we have now realized the need to broaden the scope.’ Yeshewaleul said.

There was no challenge in accessing interviewees and collecting inputs for the eight radio programs that were produced and broadcasted at Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 in close collaboration with Africa RISING. According to the feedback Yeshewaleul collected from farmers, farmers were ready to share their experiences and to try the technologies learned from the programs. The reactions also showed that in some parts of the zone, farmers had very limited awareness of livestock feed and forage technologies. For instance, during the radio program focusing on fodder beet, some listeners asked what the crop was and where they could get the seed.

To improve the feedback collection mechanisms, Yeshewaleul recommended working in collaboration with service providers such as Ethio Telecom. He also proposed that media leaders be made aware of the value of the livestock sector and that journalists team up with agriculturalists to address critical issues for the benefit of the country. Instead of treating the sector as a side issue, he suggested that broadcasters air longer standalone programs in different formats to bring about the desired impact on livestock matters.

Alayu Geremew produced four of the eight radio programs focusing on livestock feed and forage technologies at Debre Birhan Fana FM. He said the training made him realize that the media had not been giving enough attention to the livestock sector. Commending the participatory nature of the radio programs, Geremew said the approach eased planning of the broadcasts and access to the experts and application of the innovations in the field. On the flip side, he added that though many farmers have started using the technologies, he was unable to have them in the radio show as some were unavailable and the rest live far away and thus inaccessible. As a result, only few model farmers were interviewed for the programs. There was a problem in accessing many of them, thus few model farmers were interviewed for two or three programs.

Having visited several areas of North Shewa to collect information, Geremew pointed out the need to ensure that all farmers received adequate knowledge on livestock feed and forage

technologies. For instance, in Angolela Kebele, he found that most farmers knew about these technologies and even hosted experience-sharing sessions for their counterparts from other places. But in places like Moret and Jiru, many farmers lacked information on beneficial crops such as fodder beet and tree lucerne and faced difficulty accessing feed and forage seed.

‘Radio is the best channel to share information with farmers, as witnessed from the impacts of the radio programs we have aired,’ Geremew said. ‘After the broadcasts that focused on fodder beet, farmers who implemented the lessons reported increased milk production and this served as an incentive for others. In Moret and Jiru woredas, more than 1,000 farmers have constructed feed troughs and others have asked about the technology.’

Geremew did not ask for feedback after the transmission from Angolela, Moret and Jiru but later, when he went to Jiru to gather input for the next radio program, the farmers told him they had listened to the broadcast on fodder beet. This feedback was unstructured, therefore difficult to compile. In the future, he recommended putting in place a well-structured feedback collection mechanism and doing some promotion of the date and time of upcoming programs.

Based on his interaction with farmers in the zone, Geremew indicated that evening was a suitable time to air the programs on feed and forage. In addition to the radio programs, he suggested airing spots/short radio messages on a daily basis, establishing listener groups to easily capture feedback and considering television programs for farmers with access to electricity.

‘The best time for the radio programs on feed and forage technologies is 1930–2130 hours,’ agreed Assefa Tekletsadik, one of the farmers interviewed on Debre Birhan Fana FM. ‘I listen to the radio on my mobile phone as I wind up my evening chores, such as feeding the livestock. When there is some promotion ahead of time, I save the date and time of the program so that I remember to tune in.’

Tekletsadik has a farm in Angolela Kebele in North Shewa. He considers the radio broadcasts a valuable platform where farmers can share their experiences and inspire each other: ‘I was already implementing some of the innovations introduced by the Africa RISING project in our kebele, such as feed trough and livestock feed and forage technologies but I have discovered more through the radio programs. For instance, I’m planning to produce more tree lucerne after listening to a female farmer talking about how it has fattened her goats and increased milk production in her cows.’

Many farmers in this area listen to the programs and discuss them, Tekletsadik added. Some of these discussions happen as the farmers deliver milk to the kebele milk shop. Thus, he recommended marketplaces as an ideal place to reach many farmers..

His sentiments were echoed by Bekele Tesfaye and Getnet Adefres, farmers from Enewari in North Shewa Zone. They had listened to one of the radio programs on livestock feed and forage technologies broadcasted on Debre Birhan Fana FM and found it educational. They said that they had no prior information about the radio program but came across it as they tuned their radios. They also agreed that evening was a convenient time to listen the broadcasts.

Temesgen Alene, Africa RISING field coordinator, listened to all eight radio programs broadcasted on Debre Birhan Fana FM. From his interaction with farmers, he reported that they had found the programs informative and educational, especially those focusing on tree lucerne and fodder beet. Including farmers, experts, scientists, zonal and woreda government officials made the broadcasts more engaging, he said, and training the journalists contributed to the production of good programs and improved coverage for the sector.

‘Even though the Africa RISING project has been going on for some time and has included numerous activities, the radio shows only started last year. In the future, such media engagement should start from the beginning of a project so that it covers activities such as field days and experience-sharing to create awareness on the interventions and technologies,’ Alene proposed.

Sasu Tadess, a livestock expert in Gudo Beret Kebele, also suggested the inclusion of unique experiences in the radio programs: ‘Unlike in other kebeles where livestock are fed green tree lucerne directly, the farmers here use it to make hay and flour. This would be a good lesson for other farmers in North Shewa Zone.’

Tadess said she had not received feedback from farmers on the radio broadcasts. One reason she mentioned was the fact that many farmers in her kebele had access to electricity and preferred to watch television. However, she insisted that radio was still the most viable media channel to reach the majority of livestock keepers.

‘We can encourage farmers to listen to the radio program through raising awareness. There are 1,034 farmers in this kebele, grouped into 38 development groups, each with a leader. The agricultural experts have the group leaders’ phone numbers, which can be used to pass information about the radio programs. In addition, kebele experts also have Telegram groups

through which they communicate with woreda and zone experts and this could be another channel to reach even more farmers,' Tadesse noted.

Another livestock expert, Zegeye Wondimagegnehu from Basona Woreda, said he had tuned in to the two radio programs that focused on tree lucerne and feed trough. He agreed that there was need for more promotion ahead of the programs to boost the listenership. Additionally, he advocated the use of experience-sharing visits and capacity-building training to promote the technologies introduced by the project.

Zenbaba Telila, who is the livestock sector bureau coordinator in North Shewa Zone, also said that he has listened to two of the radio programs and was interviewed for the one focusing on livestock feed and troughs. He informed woreda and kebele experts in Moret, Jiru and Baso to listen to the radio program and collected some feedback afterwards. Telila believes that such radio programs encourage farmers to use the technologies and supports experts in facilitating adoption. He recommended increasing the broadcast duration, saying 20 minutes per week was too short.



Photo credit: Hailemariam Mesfin. Farmers listening group listening to the recorded radio program and providing comments

On 22 September 2022, the consultants held a discussion attended by 20 farmers (15 men and 5 women) in Gudo Beret Kebele. These farmers said they had not listened to the radio programs because they had not been informed beforehand and they had electricity so they preferred television programs. Only one participant said he had listened to a radio program focusing on

agricultural/crop issues on his mobile phone. Agricultural experts and kebele administrators were the main sources of livestock-related information for the attendees.

Regarding television programs, the farmers responded that they mainly watched 'Yearsoaderoch wog' (Farmer's conversation) on Amhara Media Corporation and the news. They recommended that programs be aired on both television and radio but admitted that radio had a wider reach among farmers. To boost listenership, they also recommended provision of prior information.

After the initial discussion, the farmers were invited to listen to three recorded radio programs focusing on livestock feed and forage technologies, including tree lucerne, fodder beet and feed troughs. They all agreed that the programs would raise farmers' awareness and knowledge of the technologies.

One of the discussion participants said she was interviewed by a journalist from Debre Birhan Fana FM, who also informed her of the date and time of the radio program. However, she had been unable to tune in due to personal problems and was happy to have a second chance to hear her interview. Another participant said he had adopted three of the technologies and farmers from the surrounding area visited his farm for learning purposes. Through the radio programs, he said, livestock keepers would access more information about the technology and get support from experts.

Participants supported the idea of Africa RISING and AICCRA continuing the radio broadcasts to introduce innovations and encourage engagement between farmers and agricultural experts. They also pointed out that radio's wide reach made it a more effective scaling tool than in-person meetings.

### **Hossana FM 95.3**

Hossana FM 95.3 is a branch of SNNPR Radio and Television Agency situated in Hossana Town. It began transmission in 2017 and is one of the key information sources for residents of Hadiya Zone and surrounding areas, reaching close to 12 million people in SNNPR and Oromia regions. The station broadcasts 42 hours per week in five languages: Hadysa, Siltiegna, Halabisa, Kembatisa and Tembargna.

Station manager Silesh Haile said the partnership they had with the ILRI/Africa RISING/AICCRA projects was effective because intense preparation went into the production of the radio programs. This planning included field visits and awareness training on livestock feed and



forage technologies so that the journalists had a good understanding of the issues before they broadcast 13 weekly radio programs, aired on Tuesday from 7:20 –7:40 PM .

Tamrat Alemu, a radio program producer, and Abraham Goro, a reporter, credited the training with increasing the staff's know-how on livestock-related issues. They also commended listeners for sharing their feedback and questions through the station's telephone number.

'Most farmers asked if the technologies could be expanded to their respective kebeles. There was also a lot of interest in Tesfaye Tefera, a returnee, who received many visitors to his farm after the station featured his success story. We aired two re-runs of the program due to popular demand and people came from Siltie, Halaba, Kenbata and Hadya to learn from his experience,' Alemu said.

Tefera was born and raised in Hossana but left for South Africa illegally in 2006. His journey ended prematurely when he was caught in Kenya and detained for more than a year. Upon his release, he returned to his hometown and went into business with nine friends, starting a cattle breeding enterprise with a loan from the government. After some of the partners left, Tefera continued to work alone. Currently, he has about 60 improved cattle and has sold more than 200. He also has 3.8 hectare farm big farm full of vegetables, fruits and forages.

Alemu made the following suggestions to improve the project: 'The radio programs should be aired in other languages in addition to Hadysa, such as Halaba, Silte, Halaba and Temaro. This coupled with expanded training will spread the innovations to other woreda and zones.'

Another farmer in Hossana, Zenie Dendie from Jawie Kebele, has neither television nor mobile phone and uses radio as his primary source of information. He prefers programs in his native Hadysa language because he finds them easier to understand.

After coming across the Hossana FM 95.3 program on livestock and related issues one evening, he tuned into the two subsequent programs focusing on feed and forage technologies and was happy to hear one of his neighbours interviewed. Some of the topics that interested Dendie were fattening, livestock feed collection and storage and modern animal husbandry. Afterwards, he underwent project-funded training then planted various forage crops, including oat grass, desho and sweet lupin.

Likewise, Ayele Tibebu, whose farm is in Misha Woreda, Muma Kebele, began to cultivate forage crops after listening to the radio programs and participating in the project-led training. He also

had no prior information about the programs but once he had listened to the first one, he added them to his listening schedule between 1900 and 2100 hours.

‘My village has no electricity or television so we rely on radio for information. As long as my radio had batteries, I listened to every episode of the programs on feeds and forage because they were very educational. More people would benefit from the broadcasts if the media houses adjusted the timing to suit the farmers’ listening time in the evening and promoted the programs through channels such as church meetings and other social gatherings,’ Tibebu said.

The other farmer who gave his views on the radio programs was Fikre Fokere from Misha Woreda, Buma Kebele. Not only did he start to plant forage after receiving training, but also began to apply knowledge on fattening oxen, which he expects to sell at a good price.

‘We received positive feedback from farmers about the radio programs focusing on good practices and improved technologies. The use of Hadiya language made the information easier to grasp for many listeners,’ said Workneh Dubale, the Africa RISING project coordinator in Hossana. ‘The Hadiya Zone agricultural office should use their channels to raise awareness on the date and time of the programs so that more farmers tune in. Such announcements improved listenership in Misha Woreda.’

In addition, Dubale suggested that each episode on key topics air twice or more times a week so that the audience has alternatives in terms of listening time. He further proposed the inclusion of experience from other initiatives such as Digital Green, especially on best practices that could also be shared at farmer training centres through audio-visual materials.

‘The government has been distributing tablet computers to development agents at kebele level. These gadgets could be used to share audio-visual material with farmers. Short documentary films can be shared via flash drives or smartphones, which the farmers in Hossana access by themselves or through their children, or aired on television,’ the project coordinator said.

Ashenafi Abera is a livestock feed expert in Hadiya Zone, Misha Woreda. He said he had listened to both the live and recorded (from the Telegram group) programs on livestock feed and forage-related issues. Ahead of the transmissions, he informed farmers in the area of the date and time to tune in by putting an announcement on the agriculture office noticeboard. Once the programs had been aired, he collected feedback, which he said was positive.

Like other listeners in the area, Abera recommended that the broadcasts be scheduled for evening, between 2000 and 2100 hours because that is when most farmers get back home. He also supported the ideas of increasing the program time from 20 minutes and producing television programs for farmers with access to this facility.

Tsedeke Zewudie , coordinator of the Department of Livestock Feed Development at the Hadiya Zone agricultural office, not only listened to most of the radio broadcasts but was interviewed for three of them and facilitated the identification of other interviewees in the area. Because of the role of radio as a primary source of information for many farmers, he emphasized the need to announce the programs ahead of time through channels such as kebele experts and model farmers.

'Technology adoption would be easier if many farmers listened to such programs. We should also consider having television programs on these innovations to help farmers visualize what is being said. To maximize reach, all the programs should be aired from 1930–2000 hours because this is the most convenient time for the target audience.



Photo credit: Hailemariam Mesfin. Farmers during the radio program evaluation in in Hossana Town, Jawe Kebele

The project consultant held a group discussion with 12 farmers, 4 of them female, in Hossana Town, Jawe Kebele. Some of the participants mentioned that had tuned into Hossana FM 95.3 programs that focused on livestock feed and forage technologies. Among those who had not, some had not heard about the radio programs while others had access to electricity and were more inclined to watch television programs.

From the results of the discussion, radios were found to be a good channel to reach many farmers. Even though television stood out as the medium of choice in areas with electric power, farmers with access to TV also listened to the radio, some on their mobile phones. The discussion also brought out experience sharing visits as a way to learn from one another.

In the course of the discussion, the participants were also invited to listen to three of the radio episodes focusing on livestock resources, experiences in Debre Birhan and livestock feed and forage technologies. After listening, the group agreed that the content was useful and asked that the station continue to air the programs.

Instead of 1920–1940 hours, the participants recommend amending the program time to after 2000 or 2100 hours, when many farmers had finished their daily routines. Finally, they indicated that one episode a week was insufficient and asked that the programs be aired twice a week and in the Hadiyisa language.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Based on the key informant interviews and focus group discussions, the training on livestock feed and forage technologies helped journalists to have a good understanding of the livestock sector in general and livestock feed and forage technologies in particular. Previously, radio stations focused on crop-related issues without giving enough attention to the livestock sector but the training helped them see the need to work more in the livestock sector. Some of the journalists mentioned that media stations treated livestock matters as a side issue rather than a standalone concern. Therefore, they recommended that every media leader be made aware of the sector's relevance and give it prominence for the ultimate benefit of the country.

Journalists collected positive feedback from the farmers, indicating that the radio programs were educational. However, they suggested that the project set up a more structured feedback mechanism in future, for instance by partnering with Ethio Telecom on a text message service. They also recommended promoting the date and time of upcoming programs and airing the broadcasts in the evening, when more farmers were likely to tune in. In addition to the radio programs, they also suggested broadcasting spots/short radio messages on a daily basis and establishing listener groups to reach farmers easily and capture feedback.

Farmers who listened to the radio programs broadcasted on Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 and Hossana FM 95.3 said the episodes were informative and educational. These programs provided a platform to share experiences and inspire each other on the use of the livestock feed and forage technologies introduced by Africa RISING and AICCRA projects. Regarding the best time for the radio programs, most farmers said evening (1930–2130 hours) was most preferable. Some also recommended marketplaces and churches as other avenues to reach more farmers.

Agriculture and livestock experts recommended continuation of the livestock-related programs on Debre Birhan Fana FM 94.0 and Hossana FM 95.3 to support promotion, adoption and expansion of new technologies. To reach farmers who live around cities and have access to electricity, some experts proposed the use of television as an alternative means of communication. However, they agreed that radio was the most viable channel because it had a wider reach. They also suggested promoting the radio programs through government channels and development agents so that farmers could save the date and time in advance..

Other proposals included the use of government-issued computer tablets to distribute audio-visual information and sharing of short documentary films through flash drives. Since many farmers in Hossana area access smartphones by themselves or through their children, sharing short films through online channels could also be considered. Experience-sharing visits and capacity-building training were the other suggested modes of expanding the technologies.

In the focus group discussions the consultant held with randomly selected farmers, most of them said they mostly watched television programs because they had access to electricity. They did not listen to the radio programs that focused on livestock feed and forage technologies because they had no prior information and asked that future programs be promoted in advance. If possible, the discussion participants suggested that the programs be broadcasted on both television and radio to reach a wider audience, but concurred that radio was more likely to reach more farmers, including those not connected to electricity.

Discussion participants were invited to listen to three recorded radio programs focusing on livestock feed and forage technologies. Afterwards, they agreed that the broadcasts were beneficial in raising farmer's awareness and knowledge of the technologies as well as encouraging engagement.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The following recommendations are based on the points listed above and the outcome of the key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

- The attention given to livestock in the media is insignificant and stations are treating the sector as a side issue rather than a standalone matter. Therefore, every media leader should be made aware of the sector's benefit and the need to promote it for the ultimate benefit of the country.

- Farmers are more likely to tune in to the radio programs if there is advance promotion, including the date and time of transmission. The announcements can be made through government channels, development agents and development groups.
- The radio programs should focus on key topics and air twice a week or more so that the audience has alternative listening times.
- In addition to the radio programs, it would also be beneficial to employ other communication channels, including government channels, daily spots/short radio messages and short online films. Marketplaces and churches could also be used to reach many farmers.
- Television programs should be considered for farmers who have access to electricity.
- If possible, the programs should be broadcast both on television and radio, but if not, radio is more accessible to most farmers.
- Evening is the best time to reach farmers.
- A well-structured feedback mechanism that includes text messages needs to be set up.

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**AICCRA**  
Accelerating the Impact of CGIAR  
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