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# Community Conversations in Ethiopia

Photo Credit: Rebecca Doyle

# Community conversations

Participatory, transformative approach that encourages discussion and exploration of issues, and actions to solve them.

Used to create change on gender relations and zoonotic diseases in the highlands of Ethiopia

Now we are trialing it to encourage animal welfare and productivity improvements

Interviews and focus groups to develop content

Development and testing of community facilitator's guide



Photo Credit: Rebecca Doyle

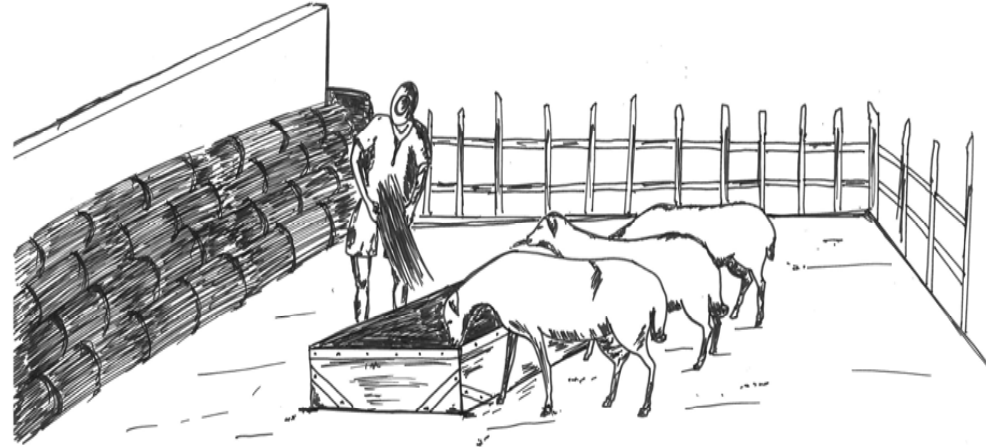
# What animal welfare means for farmers

- Community members readily described situations when animals were happy and sad.
- When asked about what makes their animals happy or sad, the focus was strongly on **feed**.
- Community members, including children, described welfare to include:
  - Biological functioning
  - Natural behaviour
  - Affective states



# What animal welfare means for farmers

- Community members recognized that providing adequate **feed** and **water** and good **health** were critical for happy animals.
- Being outside, having the chance to play and being well fed made animals happy.
- Animals were sad when sick and hungry, and hitting animals made them angry and sad.



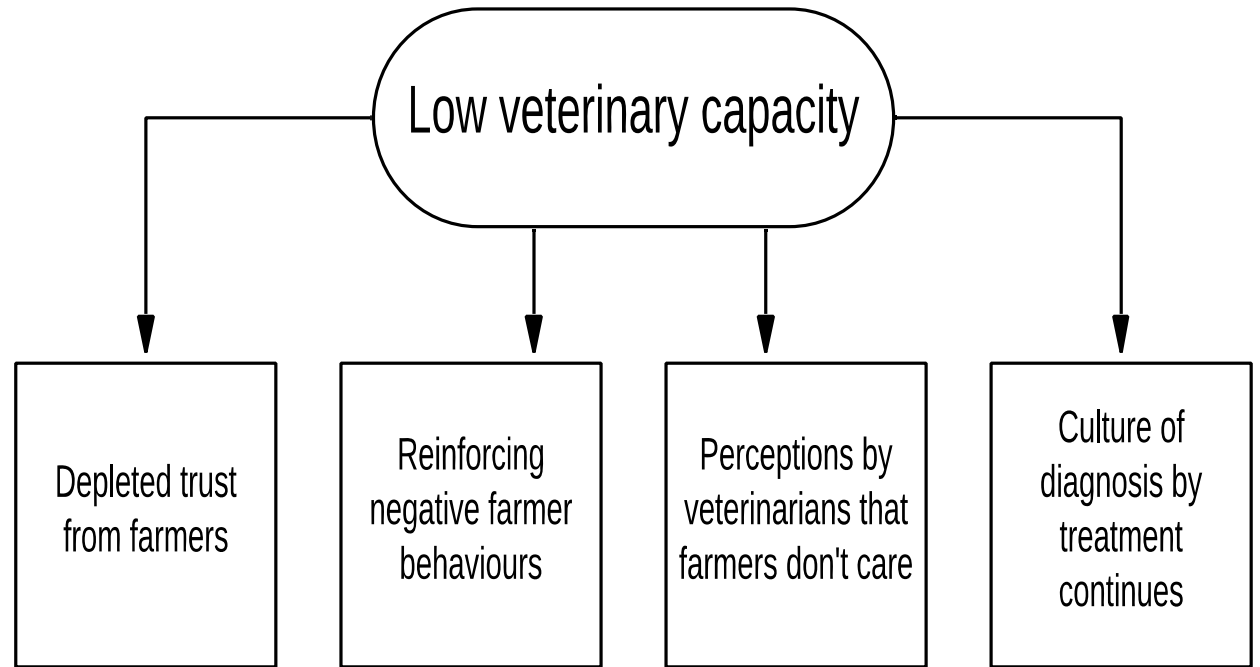
# Farming challenges

- Community members described **feed** as their greatest production limitation
- The priority for care, and feed in shortage times, always goes to cattle.
- Free access to water was not common practice
- Injuries and castration are common practice, but wound caring is not
- Community members reported that vet support came from government veterinarians.



# Disconnect between service providers and farmers

Government veterinary service providers described their own capacity as a constraint to animal welfare.



Reduced animal welfare and increased risk of antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

# Discussion issues for welfare community conversations

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## Knowledge

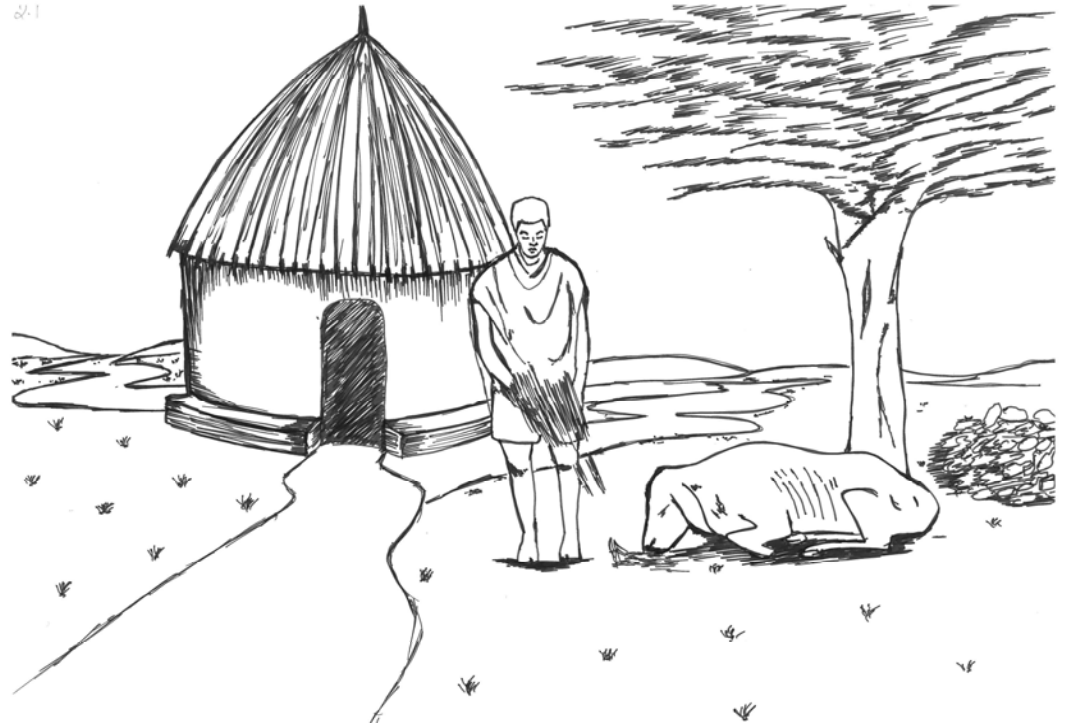
- Understanding the concept of animal welfare, and that it includes handling and fear for all animals in their care, not just highest value animals
- That animals can experience thirst, and water provision increases milk production (focus on large ruminants)
- That body condition influences dam reproductive efficiency, neonatal mortality and price at sale, and increases the likelihood that farmers are using any supplementary resources effectively
- Castrating later increases pain and risks disease/long recovery



# Discussion issues for welfare community conversation

## Attitude

- All animals can experience pain and fear
- Animals, especially lactating cows, get thirsty and increasing water access is a valuable practice
- Monitoring animal condition is a useful tool
- All animals experience pain. Treating injuries is important in all animals.





# Discussion issues for welfare community conversations

## Practices

- Using lower stress handling practices
- Increase the amount of water access animals have, particularly in dry season.
- Body condition scoring of animals
- Cleaning wounds and revising castration practices

