



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Somalia Camel Leasing to Impact Resilience Activity

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



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Summary of Findings

The Feed the Future Somalia Camel Leasing to Impact Resilience Activity was a multi-year mixed methods research study funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by RTI International. Part of Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, the study looked at the potential impacts of camel leasing on the resilience and well-being of Somali camel-herding pastoralists, pastoralist communities, and camel milk dairies.

Camel leasing is a formal arrangement between camel owners and dairy companies. The camel owner provides camels to the dairy for an agreed-upon period of time in return for payment. The dairy feeds and cares for the camels during this time. When the lease is finished, the camels are returned to the owner.

The Camel Leasing study included longitudinal mixed-methods research aiming to learn about:

- The impact camel leasing has on the welfare and resilience capacities of pastoral households and communities;
- The “business case” for the camel leasing model for dairy companies; and
- The extent to which Somali social networks influence the camel leasing model.

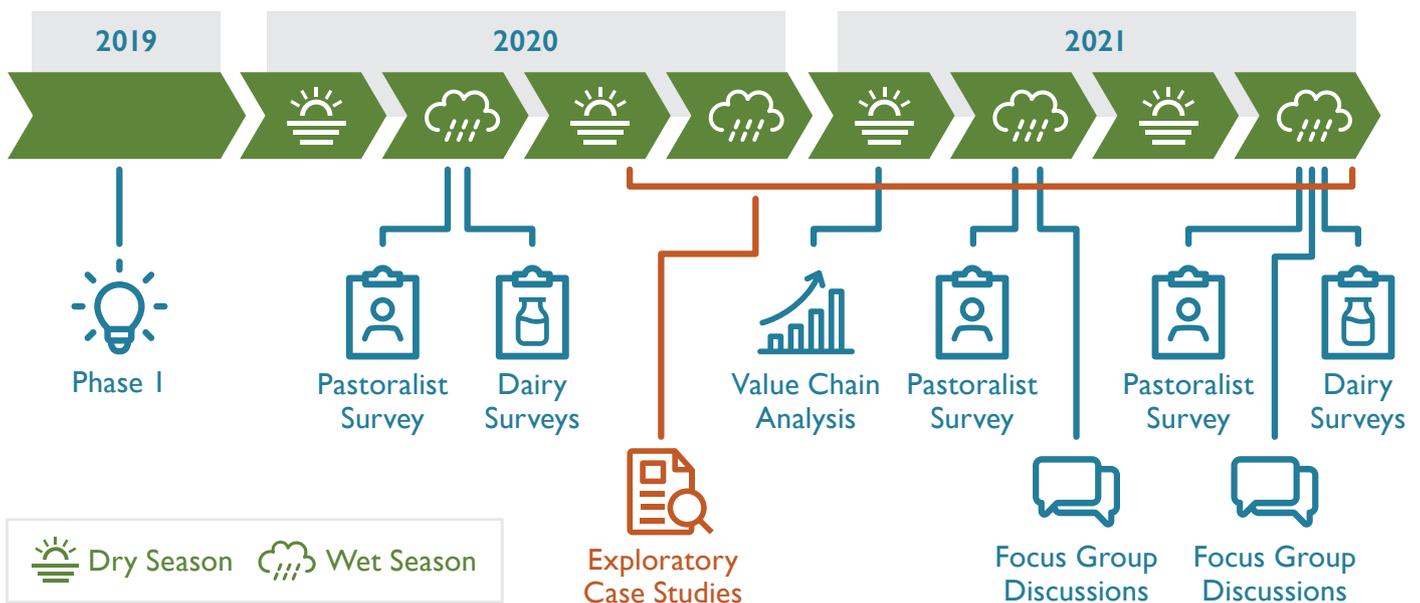
Methodology

The activity involved two phases over 33 months. The first phase helped the research team understand how camel leasing works in the region. The research team reviewed data sources and conducted interviews with experts in camel pastoralism, livestock leasing, and resilience. Through a mapping exercise, the team identified the Woqooyi Galbeed region as having the highest concentration of camel leasing dairies and pastoralists; therefore, the remainder of the study focused on this region. The Phase I brief can be [found here](#).

The Phase I findings were incorporated into the Phase 2 longitudinal exploratory study design, which involved a value chain analysis, a series of quantitative surveys, focus group discussions (FGDs), and exploratory case studies. The findings outlined here include quantitative data from 46 camel leasing pastoralists, 51 previously leasing pastoralists, and 594 non-leasing pastoralists over three rounds of data collection, and from 40 camel leasing dairies, 25 previously leasing dairies, and 48 non-leasing dairies over two rounds of data collection. The findings also include qualitative data from two rounds of FGDs among these groups of pastoralists and dairies, as well as community members and milk market committee members.

Because of the limited sample of leasing participants included in this study, the findings outlined here should not be interpreted as evidence of impact, but rather learnings to inform future work.

Camel Leasing Study Timeline





Primary Findings

What impact does camel leasing have on the welfare and resilience capacities of pastoral households and communities?

- Camel leasing pastoralists generally felt that participating in camel leasing helps them to better react to shocks compared to when they were not leasing camels.
- While most pastoralists indicated that they did not have plans to prepare for future shocks, those who did were most likely to purchase assets and save money. Such adaptive capacities included constructing community water points and hiring vehicles to look for grass and feed for their herds.
- For most leasing pastoralists, leasing camels provides at least half of their monthly household income and they report being able to save more money due to leasing.
- Most leasing pastoralists report sending their children to school because of income generated from leasing and more pastoralists who lease send girls to school than those who do not lease (54% compared to 46%).
- Camel leasing creates job opportunities in communities that contribute to welfare and resilience.
- Camel owner associations are emerging and pastoralists express a greater willingness to work together, creating an increased ability to maintain or invest in communal assets.

What is the “business case” for the camel leasing model for dairy companies?

- The main reason dairies choose to lease is to increase milk production and milk sales, which in turn increase profit.
- Leasing dairies appear to produce more milk than non-leasing dairies and leasing dairies have increased their milk production over time.
- Leasing dairies report having accumulated more assets since leasing, which most commonly include more camels, water reservoirs, and fodder production equipment.

To what extent do Somali social networks influence the camel leasing model?

- Social networks established with pastoralists are important for dairies, as these relationships can provide opportunities to access other pastoralists and grow their leasing business.
- Pastoralists emphasize the need for due diligence by taking the time to assess the capacity of the dairy farmer before establishing a lease.
- Social networks with community members can serve as brokers in the establishment or contest of agreements to reduce conflicts between pastoralists and dairies.

Observations of Potential Unintended Consequences

Experiences among pastoralists were not universal, and responses from FGDs reflected some of the negative attitudes toward leasing.

- Some pastoralists are dissatisfied with the overmilking of their camels and the care provided by the dairies.
- Pastoralists report that their household's camel milk consumption has decreased.
- Because dairies buy grazing land and fence-in pastures, grazing land decreases for pastoralist use.
- Dairies are vulnerable to the various shocks and risks that threaten the resilience of their herd.

Small-scale milk sellers are being pushed out of the market (particularly women who used to get their milk from pastoralists to sell). The competition between dairies and milk market traders also extends to donor support and funding; milk market traders and dairies are both vying for the same donor support to grow their businesses.



To learn more about the Camel Leasing study and read the final report, [click here](#).



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