

**Constraints to cattle production in a semi-arid pastoral district, Kenya**

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The objective of this study was to prioritize cattle production constraints and to assess diseases that have greatest impact on cattle production in Narok district. Data were collected through focus group interviews organized in different locations and disaggregated by gender. The participatory methods employed included listing of production constraints and diseases, pairwise ranking, proportional piling, disease incidence scoring, disease impact matrix scoring and probing techniques. The proportional scores for constraints and for diseases were used for descriptive statistical analysis. A long list of production constraints were obtained and those that were highly ranked were lack of water (0.19), lack of extension services (0.15), cattle diseases (0.12) and lack of markets and poor prices for cattle products (0.10). There was a significant statistical difference between the mean scores for production constraints with  $P=0.001$ . The cattle diseases with high estimated incidences included FMD (67.9%), trypanosomiasis (27.6%), ECF (6.7%), heartwater (3.9%) and CBPP (0.31%). The other diseases mentioned were malignant catarrhal fever, anaplasmosis, brucellosis, blackquarter, abortions, bovine ephemeral fever, eye diseases, heartwater, mastitis, anthrax, lumpy skin disease and plant poisoning. Diseases with the greatest impact on production according to their proportional mean scores were ECF (0.22), FMD (0.21), CBPP (0.08) and trypanosomiasis (0.07). There was a significant statistical difference between the mean scores for cattle diseases on production with  $P=0.001$ . There were however no significant differences between the mean scores by gender and locations. In conclusion, the prioritized production constraints and cattle diseases can guide policy makers on improvement of cattle production in pastoral areas.