



ADDRESSING CONFLICT WITH GRASS AND WATER

HTDR 002

Land and water are both essential to pastoralists and farmers, but they mean different things to each of them. Where the farmer sees arable land, the pastoralist sees pasture, and both need water for their crops and cattle. Where both (land and water) resources are scarce, tensions fester over access to these scarce resources. The tension has been further exacerbated by climate change and other environmental and religious factors. To the pastoralist the survival of his cattle is intricately tied to his own and the pressure to keep his herd alive is more an existential threat than just an economic one.

Cows need at least 10% of their body weight in feed and at least 3 litres of water to produce 1 litre of milk (and this excludes the water requirement for its maintenance needs). With the increasing scarcity of grazing land, Pastoralists and their cows make long treks in search of grass which is normally high in lignin which impedes digestion thus enhancing the nutritional stress from the long treks coupled with the poor fodder results. All these exacerbate the ingredients for the less than optimum milk yields being experienced by the pastoralist.

As news of Napier grass spread to pastoralists in other areas outside Ladugga, the demand for Napier seedlings also increased. Ladugga pastoralists co-operative began selling the seedlings and have made significant income (over 0.8 million naira) from which they have funded social projects within the community including a nursery school

The startup cost for Napier cultivation is minimal and farmers and pastoralists alike can grow it (see Napier investment profile for more details). One Napier seedling is sold for an average of 20 naira and grows at least 2 meters tall in 15-20 branches, before seed cuttings can be taken from it to grow even more Napier fields. As more pastoralists adopt Napier as alternative feed, the demand for Napier grass, pellets and silage would increase. This prospect creates an opportunity for farmers who can take advantage of this lucrative business opportunity. For farmers, the barriers to entry are minimal as costs are reduced since at the very least, they already have the basic requirement – land for cultivation.

The cultivation and sale of Napier grass if scaled up represents a real opportunity with incentives for both farmers and pastoralists to grow their businesses, enhance better relations and promote peace and security amongst themselves and with crop farmers

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