



Livestock Pass-On

PROSPER Intervention Learning Brief

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February 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Building Resilience and Adapting to Climate Change (BRACC) programme funded by the Government of the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Empowered Resilience (PROSPER) conducted livestock pass-on programmes in its four target Districts – Balaka, Chikwawa, Mangochi, and Phalombe. The PROSPER livestock pass-on programme was aimed at helping households initiate livestock rearing as an alternative income source, as well as a store of wealth that could be utilised in the case of shocks. In each targeted community, a group of households were selected to receive livestock. After the livestock reproduce, the offspring are passed on to other households in the community. To address risks related to livestock illness, PROSPER provided training and starter supply packs for local animal health workers, to enable them to provide vaccines and other care for the livestock. Participants also received training related to livestock's benefits and care. The impact of this intervention was evaluated as part of the BRACC Hub's midterm evaluation.

Overall, PROSPER's livestock pass-on programme appears to have been extremely popular among participants. While only reaching a minority of households in PROSPER-targeted communities, the programme has the potential to have a sustained, transformative impact on the households that did participate.

The programme was not without its challenges. Some participants reported receiving animals in poor health or that were too young, consistent with implementing partner reports of issues with the supply chain and suppliers meeting procurement numbers. Even when participants received healthy animals, some lost livestock due to sickness or theft; the cost of replacement was sometimes a significant burden. Most participants have been able to mitigate these challenges through good care, including adopting veterinary services offered by animal health workers trained by PROSPER. In terms of maintaining pass-on, some recipients have been resistant, but this has largely been addressed by ensuring there are clear protocols for pass-on, including maintaining lists of households next in line to get livestock; ensuring there are local institutions such as livestock committees and lead farmers who are trained to manage and oversee pass-on; and involving local authorities such as chiefs in the programme, so that they can enforce pass-on when necessary.

Participants interviewed in the focus group discussions describe important positive impacts of the pass-on programme, many of which are corroborated by the BRACC quantitative midterm data. First, the pass-on programme has enabled many households who would not otherwise have livestock to have access to livestock, leading to an increase in household productive assets. Participants report using manure from the livestock on their crops; indeed, the quantitative data show livestock pass-on participants used manure as fertiliser at a higher rate than other households in PROSPER communities. Many participants indicated that having the livestock provides them with a buffer against shocks, food insecurity, or unexpected expenses. The quantitative data showed little difference between livestock pass-on participants and other PROSPER community members in terms of outcomes like use of coping mechanisms, but this may reflect the fact that it is still early in the pass-on programme, and households are not allowed to sell the livestock until they have completed passing on offspring to the next household. A few focus group participants reported improved nutrition from accessing milk from goats received through the pass-on programme; quantitative data also showed that pass-on programme participants were more likely to report that their households consumed milk products in the past week. Households also described social benefits, such as prestige associated with livestock ownership.

Aspects of the programme may have generated important spillover benefits for non-participants. The training and starter kits for the animal health workers have increased the availability of animal health services, with reports of utilisation by non-participants. There are also some reports of non-participants adopting animal care practices such as building kraals. Finally, the programme may have created market benefits for businesses such as butchers and animal traders.

Participants are extremely optimistic about the sustainability of the programme. Although they recognise the risks posed by animal illness or theft, and that some households may end up selling their livestock, most participants believed that the majority would maintain their livestock holdings, and that the pass-on would continue even in the absence of the PROSPER programme.

Intra-household dynamics may play an important role in both the success of the programme at the household level, and the impact of the programme on individuals within households. The labour burden of livestock may occasionally be lopsided, with women doing more of the day-to-day care of the livestock, despite perceptions of men having greater “responsibility” due to their role as household head and their role of maintaining the kraal. However, most participants reported sharing the labour burden; female-headed households sometimes reported hiring help with livestock care. Decision-making roles are also sometimes fraught or unequal, but many participants of both genders recognised the benefits of collaborative decision-making around the livestock.

The success of the programme, despite its inherent challenges, appears to have been enabled by both good programme design and good quality implementation and management. Positive features of programme design include bundling the pass-on programme with complementary programmes, particularly support for veterinary services, and creating institutions to support management of the pass-on after the end of PROSPER. Positive features of programme implementation include working with local institutions and authorities, maintaining flexibility in response to local feedback, good communication and coordination among partners and communities, and retaining skilled staff.

The successes of the programme, as well as the challenges documented, provide valuable lessons for future livestock distribution programmes. These lessons are particularly prescient as the Malawi government is piloting livestock distribution in place of agricultural inputs as part of the Agricultural Input Programme. Based on learning from the PROSPER programme, the following recommendations are identified:

- J Recommendation 1: Replicate the PROSPER approaches with respect to bundling and complementary interventions;
- J Recommendation 2: Replicate the PROSPER approaches with respect to community management of pass-on;
- J Recommendation 3: Implement at a scale where livestock quality can be ensured;
- J Recommendation 4: Target households with the ability to care for livestock;
- J Recommendation 5: Target females as livestock recipients;
- J Recommendation 6: Work with government, the private sector, and communities to address crime.

BACKGROUND

BRACC AND PROSPER

PROSPER is a multi-stakeholder resilience programme supporting the Government of Malawi to reduce extreme poverty and end the recurrent cycle of crises and humanitarian assistance. With funding from the UKAID under the BRACC programme, and over the period from December 2018 to March 2023, the programme will target 950,000 vulnerable people in the districts of Balaka, Chikwawa, Phalombe and Mangochi. PROSPER aims to build household resilience and livelihoods, strengthen market and government systems, reduce the impact of climate shocks, respond to seasonal consumption needs, support the design of social safety nets, and generate evidence and knowledge to inform government policy. The programme is implemented by a joint non-governmental organisation (NGO), private sector and United Nations (UN) consortium consisting of Concern Worldwide, CUMO Microfinance, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), GOAL, Kadale Consultants, the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Purpose, and the World Food Programme (WFP).

The BRACC Knowledge and Policy Hub provides knowledge management support to PROSPER and BRACC as a whole, and contributes to monitoring and evaluation, research, and communications and advocacy.

LIVESTOCK PASS-ON PROGRAMME IN BRACC

The PROSPER livestock pass-on programme was aimed at helping households initiate livestock rearing as an alternative income source, as well as a store of wealth that could be utilised in the case of shocks. The programme was targeted at the middle wealth group – “Stepping Up” households, based on the idea that these households would be able to make the necessary co-investments to care for the animals and would be less likely to sell the livestock out of desperation than the lowest income group. In each targeted community, a group of households in the Stepping Up category were selected to receive livestock, usually three to four goats, although some households received pigs. In most cases, households received female animals, and a smaller number of male animals were shared among households for breeding purposes. After the livestock reproduce, the offspring are passed on to other households in the community.

To address risks related to livestock illness, PROSPER also provided training and starter supply packs for local animal health workers, to enable them to provide vaccines and other care for the livestock. Participants also received training in caring for the livestock, using their manure for farming, and nutritional benefits of livestock.

PURPOSE OF THIS LEARNING BRIEF

This learning brief is part of a series of outputs produced as part of the BRACC Knowledge and Policy Hub's midterm evaluation of the BRACC programme. It is one of four briefs focusing on specific interventions implemented under BRACC: the other intervention briefs address Crop Insurance, Cash for Inputs, and Access to Finance.

This brief, and the analysis in it, seeks to address questions related to programme effectiveness, relevance and impact, including BRACC Midterm Evaluation Question 1: Which combinations of

BRACC interventions contributed most to building food security and resilience? In which locations and contexts? For whom? The analysis also looks at sustainability of the livestock pass-on programme and its impact, and potential lessons to be learned from the PROSPER programme for other livestock distribution programmes, including the pilot livestock distribution planned by the Government of Malawi under the Affordable Inputs Programme for the 2021/22 growing season.

RESULTS

METHODOLOGY

The BRACC programme was evaluated using mixed methods, including both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative evaluation methods included a randomised control trial designed to measure the impact of PROSPER interventions, which was implemented in two Districts and utilised household survey data in a wide range of resilience and welfare outcomes. The same survey data were also collected for a sample of participant households in the two PROSPER Districts excluded from the impact evaluation. The qualitative methods included key informant interviews, case studies, and focus group discussions that collected data on intervention-level outcomes and impact from male and female participants in all four PROSPER Districts, including livestock pass-on participants.

The findings in this brief draw primarily on the focus group discussion data related to livestock pass-on. Participants in the PROSPER livestock pass-on were selected for inclusion in the focus group discussions. Questions posed included how the livestock programme is managed in their community, their views on programme sustainability, the impact on households of having a goat, what types of households benefit most from having goats, and how responsibility for the goats is shared within the household. The findings also include some data from the quantitative surveys conducted with participant households across the four PROSPER Districts, and data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions with participants in other PROSPER interventions in communities where livestock pass-on took place.

FINDINGS

Household selection

Focus group respondent descriptions of the processes for selecting households to be included in the pass-on programme, and for determining the order in which households would receive livestock, varied. In a few cases, respondents either did not know how participants were selected, or thought the process was largely random.

The lead farmers randomly selected the households, there was no specific criteria used to select them. – Female participant, Phalombe

However, for most focus groups, there were three common features appearing in many of the descriptions:

1. Targeting by wealth group. Many respondents described being selected due to being part of the “Stepping Up”, or better-off, group. A few mentioned that households in the Hanging In, or poorest group, would receive livestock but only after the Stepping Up group. Other respondents, while not specifically citing the wealth groups, described programme targeting logic in line with the concept of targeting this group; specifically, targeting households that are sufficiently well-off to care for livestock and resist needing to sell them before they have produced offspring for pass-on, but who are poor enough that they do not already have the means to acquire livestock.

We were selected because we belong to the better-off (Stepping Up) category and we were given the livestock because they saw that we can manage to rear the livestock. – Female participant, Chikwawa

PROSPER was looking at households that didn't have goats and those that were vulnerable but also capable of taking care of the goats. – Male participant, Mangochi

Despite common descriptions of targeting the Stepping Up group, the quantitative midterm results tell a murky story with respect to targeting by wealth group. Table 1 shows the share of respondents in PROSPER communities who reported participating in the livestock pass-on programme, by self-reported wealth group. The participation rate in the Stepping Up group – the targeted wealth category – is higher than that in the Hanging In group, but about the same as that of the Stepping Out group. As this analysis is based on respondents' own reporting of their wealth group, these results may reflect confusion on the part of the participants regarding their wealth group, but there may have been cases in which targeting was imperfect.

Table 1: Composition of livestock pass-on participants by wealth category

Wealth group	Percentage of respondents reporting participation in livestock pass-on
Hanging In	7%
Stepping Up	18%
Stepping Out	18%

2. Building of a kraal as a prerequisite. Many respondents described a requirement to build a kraal, or elevated holding pen, for the livestock as part of the selection process. This requirement was described as limiting participation both by weeding out those without the resources to build the kraal, and those without the interest in doing so.

We were selected from our clubs. In each club they selected people that managed to construct an elevated/raised kraal. Not everyone could afford to construct the kraal at short notice considering the materials to build the kraal are expensive; the kraal construction was costing an amount ranging from MKW 50,000 to MKW 79,000, not an amount that each member would manage to raise within a short period. So, from those that managed to construct the elevated/raised kraal, the animal health extension workers came to inspect all the kraals and chose the best kraals that met the minimum requirements such as space size. Almost 20 households managed to construct the kraals, but they selected 18 kraals as the best and that's how it was determined which households received goats first. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Only members who have shown interest that they have built the raised kraal were given a boost to have these goats. – Female participant, Balaka

3. Further means of determining selection/order in case of over-prescription. In many cases, respondents described a range of additional mechanisms for winnowing down the list of households to be included in the livestock pass-on programme or determining the order in which households would receive livestock. In some instances, households participating in the PROSPER Cash for Inputs programme were ineligible to participate in the livestock pass-on programme. In other cases, communities decided among themselves who would receive livestock and in what order, or selection

was done or facilitated by chiefs or lead farmers. In other cases, communities simply used the order that households were listed in during the wealth ranking exercise.

We were asked to choose the first beneficiaries within ourselves, and the same process was followed for those to whom the goats will be passed on. Those who were beneficiaries of seed were not included in the beneficiaries of goats. – Male participant, Balaka

All the villages gave a list of all Stepping Up households and the extension officer just followed through the numbering on the list to select the first 50 households to receive the goats. The second and third rounds of recipients were selected in the same way, by just following the order of the list of Stepping Up households. – Female participant, Mangochi

Participation and Status of Pass-On

Overall, only about 10% of households in PROSPER targeted communities reported either receiving livestock directly from PROSPER or receiving livestock from another household as part of a pass-on cycle, at the time of the midterm survey. Responses from the focus group discussions show that at that time, most of the communities participating in the livestock pass-on programme were either still in the process of completing the first round of pass-on, or had just completed it, suggesting half to two-thirds of households of the total targeted number of households had received their livestock at midterm. The status of the pass-on programme reported by each focus group is paraphrased in Table 2.

Table 2: Status of the livestock pass-on programme according to focus group participants

FGD	District	Gender	Type of livestock	Status of pass-on	Households receiving livestock to date
1	Chikwawa	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on completed	60 (30 original, 30 first pass-on)
2	Chikwawa	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on completed, second round in progress	120 or more (60 original, 60 first pass-on, some second pass-on)
3	Chikwawa	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	44 (30 original, 14 first pass-on)
4	Chikwawa	Female	Goats and pigs	First round of pass-on in progress	50 or more (50 original, some first pass-on)
5	Chikwawa	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	17 or more (17 original, some first pass-on)
6	Chikwawa	Male	Goats and pigs	First round of pass-on completed	13 (7 original, 6 first pass-on)
7	Chikwawa	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	Unclear
8	Chikwawa	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	18 or more (18 original, some first pass-on)
9	Balaka	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on completed	24 (12 original, 12 first pass-on)
10	Balaka	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	25 (19 original, 6 first pass-on)
11	Balaka	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	32 (19 original, 13 first pass-on)

12	Balaka	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	20 (19 original, 1 first pass-on)
13	Balaka	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	17 (17 original, 0 first round completed)
14	Balaka	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	20 (13 original, 7 first pass-on)
15	Mangochi	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	105 (60 original, 45 first pass-on)
16	Mangochi	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	97 (50 original, 47 first pass-on)
17	Mangochi	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	50 or more (50 original, number in first pass-on unknown)
18	Mangochi	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	162 or more (162 original, number in first pass-on unknown)
19	Mangochi	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	87 (58 original, 29 first pass-on)
20	Mangochi	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	60 or more (60 original, number in first pass-on unknown)
21	Mangochi	Female	Goats	Unknown	Unknown
22	Mangochi	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on completed	32 (16 original, 16 first pass-on)
23	Phalombe	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on completed	26 (13 original, 13 first pass-on)
24	Phalombe	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	18 (13 original, 5 first pass-on)
25	Phalombe	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	20 (13 original, 7 first pass-on)
26	Phalombe	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	25 (13 original, 12 first pass-on)
27	Phalombe	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	24 (13 original, 11 first pass-on)
28	Phalombe	Male	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	15 or more (15 original, some first pass-on)
29	Phalombe	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on in progress	24 (13 original, 11 first pass-on)
30	Phalombe	Female	Goats	First round of pass-on completed	26 (13 original, 13 first pass-on)

Compliance and Enforcement

Ensuring that households comply with the pass-on programme is a chief concern for implementation, particularly with the early closure of BRACC and PROSPER. Many respondents noted that those receiving goats early in the pass-on programme could be resistant to passing on their livestock's offspring. A minority of respondents described such resistance, coupled with failure to enforce the programme, as a serious problem.

In my village some second phase beneficiaries are yet to receive their goats. The person that was supposed to give me mine has bluntly told me that he will not give me the goats since GOAL is no longer around to enforce the rules that they set regarding the goat pass-on programme. – Female participant, Chikwawa

However, in most cases, respondents reported that the community was able to resolve the problem. Respondents described multiple mechanisms for facilitating or enforcing compliance with the pass-on

plan. Many respondents credited community livestock pass-on committees trained by PROSPER with enforcing pass-on procedures. In addition to ensuring that those with livestock pass on the offspring, these committees are described as helping to ensure young livestock are passed on at the right age, and to the right household according to the determined order for distribution.

At a group village level, a livestock committee was selected that constantly move around and do livestock inspection to check if all the people that received goats are still keeping them. They also know whenever the goats reproduce, hence it is hard for people to cheat and fail to pass on the goats to other beneficiaries. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Local leaders such as chiefs, extension officers, and lead farmers are also described as playing roles in ensuring that pass-on takes place as designed, enforcing pass-on, and resolving conflicts if necessary. Exerting social pressure through community leaders or coordinated action is described as playing a role in enforcing pass-on. Respondents also describe occasionally utilising formal legal procedures to enforce pass-on. One focus group noted that including chiefs and other local leaders early in the implementation of the programme is critical to ensuring that they will support enforcement of the programme later should issues arise.

There are some people that are negligent to pass on the goats that they have received to others, however we do approach such people and ask them to pass on the goats to their successive beneficiaries. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Some households that received goats directly from PROSPER are unwilling to pass on to other households. We have dealt with the problem by visiting such households with lead farmers and enforcing the law on them. – Male participant, Mangochi

Most of the people that received goats first are refusing to pass on the offspring to second phase beneficiaries. The main challenge was that chiefs were not fully involved in the goat pass-on programme. It's hard to seek help from them since they were left out in the first place when the first beneficiaries were selected. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Two beneficiaries sold all livestock received from PROSPER; it was reported that the goats were stolen, and we knew that it was a lie ... These two members will very soon stand in the front of the law answering the case in court. – Female participant, Chikwawa

In addition to the formation of committees to monitor pass-on, two features of PROSPER's implementation of the pass-on programme were described as playing a positive role in enabling enforcement. The first was pre-selecting the list of households to receive livestock in the subsequent rounds of pass-on.

The pre-selection of second beneficiaries helped in monitoring because the beneficiaries that have not received goats yet put pressure on the first beneficiaries. – Local government partner

The second feature was the requirement that households replace any livestock that died or went missing, regardless of the reason or circumstance. Several respondents reported that there were some households who sold their goats and claimed that they were stolen or tried to claim the goats had died so they would not have to pass them on. This policy enabled the community to require that the households either produce the missing goats or replace them. It also may have reduced the incentive for such behaviour.

Some people, when it was their turn to pass on the goats, they would sell, and others would take the goats and keep them at a friend's place and lie that the goats have died. Some people would be cursing when we went to ask them to pass on the livestock to other households, they didn't like to be reminded to pass on. We had rules concerning livestock so for those that claimed that their goats had died, they were told that they should buy and after the goats produce, they should pass on to other beneficiaries. – Male participant, Mangochi

Caring for the Livestock

Nearly all focus groups described using the veterinary services supported by PROSPER on a regular basis, and many had positive things to say about their local paravets. Most respondents reported that the local paravets were highly responsive and quick to attend to their livestock when requested, although in a few communities, respondents described the paravets as taking a long time to respond and having to travel long distances to access veterinary supplies. The paravets were generally described as well-equipped, something some respondents attributed to the starter pack of supplies provided by PROSPER, though some reported the paravets running out of vaccines on occasion. Use of veterinary services was described as a cultural or behavioural shift by some respondents.

We have our own paravets right here in our village who were trained by GOAL Malawi. GOAL Malawi equipped them with all the necessary animal health care products for goats as well as cattle. Whenever our animals are sick or show unusual behaviour, we call or visit these paravets for treatment and advice, even at night as they are easily accessible. In the past we used to access extension services and health products at Livunzu Extension Planning Area (EPA), which was very far, and as a result our livestock ended up dying. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Before PROSPER came, people didn't see the need to access veterinary services for their livestock. Currently, when our livestock get sick, we go to the community animal health worker for medication. – Male participant, Mangochi

The main barrier to utilising veterinary services reported by the respondents was lack of cash needed to pay the MKW 500 fee for vaccines. Respondents also noted that a small number of individuals were resistant to adopting modern veterinary practices, or falsely believed that vaccines would harm the livestock.

GOAL Malawi provided medicine for goats, but our challenge was to find money for vaccination or medicine for our goats. For each goat to be vaccinated we pay MKW 500. Sometimes goats got sick when we had no money and as a result the goat died. – Male participant, Chikwawa

In addition to using animal health services regularly, respondents described adopting or changing other behaviours related to caring for their livestock's health. These included keeping livestock in the kraals constructed as a prerequisite to receiving goats, which is described as protecting them from both disease and predators. Participants appreciated that keeping animals in kraals enabled them to easily collect manure for use on crops, in addition to the animal health benefits. Respondents also mentioned feeding goats with a combination of stall feeding, using purchased foods like maize bran, and taking animals out to graze. Stall feeding with inputs like maize bran is more costly, but some respondents described risks associated with allowing animals to graze without good supervision, such as theft.

There were some changes in behaviour especially in terms of kraals. To be honest, we

used to sleep with our livestock in the same house, but the programme trained us in the construction of modern and improved kraals which give an enabling resting environment to goats and assist us in getting manure easily. – Male participant, Phalombe

Feed like maize bran as part of stall feeding is expensive and we solve this problem by doing casual work which provides an income which we use to buy this feed at maize mills. Some of us let our children take them to the dambo to feed on grass and shrubs. – Female participant, Chikwawa

While several respondents noted being trained in key skills related to caring for livestock, such as how to feed goats when they are suffering stomach ailments, a few respondents mentioned that they did not believe they received sufficient training, and would have appreciated more, before receiving the livestock.

The other challenge we faced was that unlike with crop farming, we were given the goats without being trained on how to manage them. It was only two people who were trained in livestock management and these two did not train us. So, for instance, when a goat becomes sick, we really don't know how to take care of it. – Female participant, Mangochi

Challenges with the Programme

Challenges with animal health

One of the most common challenges mentioned by respondents was receiving livestock from PROSPER that either appeared to be in poor health or died soon after they were received. Several respondents reported receiving goats with symptoms of listeriosis, a disease which can be transmitted to humans through contact with the goats or consumption of their milk. A few participants noted that they believed the livestock had been procured from different areas in Malawi and suffered from the long transport or were poorly adapted to their village environment.

When they gave us the goats, they were mostly small and suffered from a disease that makes them walk in circles (listeriosis) and so we had to sell those and replace them. However, it was not easy to get a good goat with the little money that we got from selling the sick ones. – Male participant, Chikwawa

A day after I received the pigs, the male pig died. – Female participant, Chikwawa

We noticed that most of the goats which came from Lower Shire districts such as Chikwawa and Nsanje died due to weather issues as these two districts both have hot to very hot weather patterns, unlike here in Phalombe district. – Male respondent, Phalombe

Participants also reported sometimes receiving very young livestock, which negatively affected outcomes in two ways. First, the young livestock were more likely to suffer from diseases, especially in the case of very young livestock that should not have been weaned yet but were. Second, receiving young livestock resulted in longer timelines for livestock reproduction and pass-on.

Some of the goats that people received were too small and some died because they were too young to be reared without the does. I lost three of the goats I received and I had to replace them with my own money. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Because most of the goats were very small, it would take a long time for them to grow

and start reproducing and the next recipient would not understand why you are taking so long to pass on the goats to them. This brought some conflicts among the two. – Female participant, Mangochi

These challenges with receiving young or unhealthy livestock were consistent with reports of challenges with the procurement process by implementing partners. Implementers describe delays associated with suppliers struggling to meet the agreed-upon quantities of livestock. These supply chain challenges may have contributed to issues with procuring sufficient quantities of high-quality livestock for the programme.

Even when initially receiving healthy animals, respondents reported challenges with frequent illness affecting the livestock received through the programme, or the livestock's offspring. This challenge was compounded in situations where local paravets had shortages of vaccines or other medicines. Another occasional animal health challenge reported was infertility in female goats. A few respondents mentioned challenges with livestock being attacked by predators or hit by vehicles.

Since at first, they didn't bring the male goat, so we would let the goats loose and in the course the goats could be bitten by the dogs and some even died. – Female participant, Mangochi

Among the four goats I received from GOAL Malawi, one goat was hit by the Presidential convoy on the way to Nsanje and I replaced the goat. – Male participant, Chikwawa

In some cases, participants reported being able to trade in the animals for healthier animals from the butcher. This solution was often cited in the case of infertile female animals.

When the goat is sick, we invite the extension worker to come and kill it. Then we would sell the meat to fellow members and the money would be used to buy a new goat. – Female participant, Phalombe

Inability of some goats to give birth delayed the pass-on. To address this challenge, we would either swap the barren goat with butcher men or sell the goat and buy another one to replace it. – Female participant, Mangochi

Theft of livestock

Another challenge very commonly mentioned was theft of livestock. This was not the case for all communities, and seemed to be particularly acute in Chikwawa, but participants in all Districts mentioned theft as a problem. Some participants noted that they believed that PROSPER livestock pass-on participants are specifically targeted by livestock thieves, since they are new to livestock rearing and still learning how to address such challenges, or because they received the livestock for free.

One man lost all his goats to theft, and he had to replace all of them with his own money. – Female participant, Chikwawa

The only challenge as of now are people stealing goats in our community. – Male participant, Mangochi

We can confidently say there has so far been no theft of our goats during this period. – Male participant, Balaka

Having these goats made us targets of theft, because people said that we had received free goats and they thought it was not really bad stealing them from us. –Female participant, Chikwawa

To address theft, participants describe balancing measures to protect livestock from theft, such as keeping them in their kraal or in the house, with other needs, such as taking them to graze or arranging for female goats to be impregnated. Some participants hire shepherds, or band together with other households to hire a shared shepherd to watch their livestock. In other cases, communities have instituted strict penalties for livestock theft.

We allow our goats to free-range and on a certain day after we opened the kraal at 9 am, two goats got stolen as they would wander far. One was a billy and the other a pregnant doe. We looked everywhere and did not find them. From that day onwards, we changed the time we open the kraal to noon and the goats do not wander far and they stopped being stolen. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Theft cases are high in our area and to leave the goats alone without a shepherd is another challenge. Therefore, households combine their goats and hire one shepherd to care for them. – Female participant, Chikwawa

One goat I received from PROSPER was stolen. Therefore, because of this, I use one bedroom as a goat barn. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Because of the by-law put in place by the senior Group Village Head Phwadzi, one caught stealing GOAL Malawi goats will pay back five goats. It is working in our village. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Replacing livestock lost to illness, injury or theft

There was a saying that PROSPER goats do not die, meaning if you received a goat from PROSPER and it dies you are supposed to replace it, so imagine a poor person who did not have plans to buy a goat receives a goat and it dies, that means they have to find means to buy another one with money that they did not have. I believe this placed a financial burden on us. – Male participant, Phalombe

Despite measures to reduce livestock loss, or replace sick livestock through trades, participants reported they were often left with the responsibility of replacing the animals with their own funds, due to the PROSPER policy requiring that participants replace animals lost due to death or theft before their pass-on is complete. In some cases, this was a significant burden for participants.

The only thing we can say is that our goats are really dying a lot, which is problematic. We can only ask to equip the extension services well, so we take care of this. – Male participant, Balaka

Some of the goats could not reproduce and for these there is no solution that we have come up with. – Female participant, Mangochi

There is one man who lost all four of his goats and he had to pay a total of MKW 120,000 to buy goats to replace the lost ones. He actually gave up ownership of those goats by passing on the very same goats that he received to his next beneficiary, so he no longer has any goats from GOAL Malawi now. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Out of the 60 households who received, eight households' goats died, and they are expected to buy the goats, rear them and pass them on to other households. – Male participant, Mangochi

Although the policy of requiring participants to replace livestock lost due to any reason occasionally resulted in difficult burdens for households, some participants appeared to appreciate this policy, as it provides an accountability mechanism that helps them achieve their own goals of maintaining a sustainable population of livestock.

We replace the goats once stolen or dead because we want to continue to increase livestock production in our area and take off hand-out syndrome. It is also one way of encouraging us to be serious when managing the livestock. We should be owners of development and not relying on others to participate in developmental activities. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Lack of complementary resources

Some participants described challenges in making the co-investments needed to participate in the programme and care for the livestock. Some of the co-investments included transporting livestock to participants' homes, building and maintaining kraals, and paying for animal health services including vaccinations.

Our challenge was to find money for vaccination or medicine for our goats. For each goat to be vaccinated we pay MKW 500 and sometimes goats got sick when we had no money. As a result the goat died. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Building a goat house on the higher ground needs more wood and it is expensive. – Female participant, Phalombe

Managing male livestock

Several respondents mentioned challenges around sharing male goats between households receiving livestock through the programme. In some cases, respondents believed the ratio of male to female goats was insufficient. In other cases, respondents found it logistically difficult to manage the movement of male goats between households.

The approach of sharing male goats among five beneficiaries – which is 20 goats – was not good because of delay to impregnate the female goats. The process was slow because the male goat would not manage to work effectively; one week was not enough. – Male respondent, Chikwawa

Conversely, some participants mention a challenge with having too many male animals during the pass-on phase. Participants recount situations where a household's livestock by chance only have male babies, so there is a long delay before female livestock eligible for pass-on are born. As with infertile or sick animals, this is sometimes addressed by trading male livestock for female livestock with local butchers.

Most of the breeding happening is for he-goats, therefore it has delayed the process and progress of pass-on to the next beneficiaries because according to the criteria we are not supposed to pass on he-goats to the next beneficiary. – Female participant, Phalombe

Impact of Participation in Livestock Pass-On

Respondents were asked how having goats or livestock affects household welfare. Respondents described a large range of transformative benefits. In some cases, they described these benefits as already accruing to livestock pass-on participants; in other cases, the benefits were expected to occur in the future or in the case of shocks. Some respondents mentioned that because they are still in the process of raising livestock for pass-on to other community members, and do not have the freedom to sell the livestock, they are not yet experiencing all the anticipated benefits. In many cases, the quantitative midterm data provided additional evidence of associations between participation in the livestock pass-on programme and better outcomes in the areas mentioned by respondents in the focus group discussions.

We haven't really started benefiting, maybe only [in terms of] manure, but we haven't seen any tangible benefits yet, so it is difficult to say. – Female participant, Mangochi

Increased assets

Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggest that the pass-on programme was successful at meaningfully increasing household livestock holdings. Quantitative data show that 88% of participants in the livestock pass-on programme had at least some livestock at the time of the midterm survey, compared with only about half of respondents in PROSPER communities who did not take part in livestock pass-on. This difference was largely due, as would be expected, to goat ownership. Participants in the goat pass-on programme reported owning 3.2 goats on average, while respondents in PROSPER communities who did not take part in livestock pass-on owned less than one goat, on average. In the qualitative interviews, several respondents noted that before the pass-on programme they had not owned goats.

In the past I never used to have goats. Now that I have received these goats and already done the pass on of the first offspring, I now have 10 goats, six of which are offspring from these goats. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Input for integrated conservation agriculture

One commonly mentioned benefit of owning goats was the ability to use their droppings as fertiliser for crops. Respondents describe this as resulting in both improved crop yields and reducing the amount they need to spend on inorganic fertiliser, a benefit much appreciated in the context of rising fertiliser prices. Quantitative midterm data show that households that participated in the livestock pass-on programme were indeed more likely to adopt use of manure in farming, with 26% of livestock pass-on participants reporting use of manure in the last rainy season, compared with only 19% of respondents in PROSPER communities who did not participate in livestock pass-on.

Livestock provide droppings which we use to make manure for our crops... On one acre of land, before manure, I was harvesting 11 bags and when I started applying manure, I got 28 bags of 50 kg. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Inorganic fertiliser is now too expensive, so [we are] using the organic manure from goats. We were trained on how to make/multiply fertiliser, and when we apply it, it improves the crop productivity. – Female participant, Mangochi

Livelihood and wealth buffer for shocks

One of the most common benefits of owning livestock mentioned by programme participants was having the ability to sell the livestock to obtain money to meet basic household needs, including food,

or to cover emergency expenses. Several respondents recounted selling goats to buy food or pay for medical expenses. One noted that where she would have done casual labour to fund food purchases in the past, she now can sell one of her goats. In other cases, respondents had not yet actually sold livestock, but noted that it was an option in the case of shocks, or that they expected to do so in the future as their livestock multiplied as an additional source of livelihood.

Analysis of the quantitative midterm data did not show any significant differences between livestock pass-on participants and non-participants in terms of likelihood of reporting selling livestock as a coping strategy, or in using other coping strategies likely to have more long-term negative impacts, such as removing a child from school. Livestock pass-on participants on average did report about one less day of food insecurity in the previous month, controlling for wealth group and district. However, it is unclear whether this is due to the impact of having livestock, or whether this reflects targeting strategies that sought to identify households within the Stepping Up wealth group that would be most able to care for the livestock and least likely to sell them to meet immediate needs. Lack of measurable quantitative differences in coping strategies may reflect the fact that, as stated by some of the focus group participants, many households are still rearing their livestock for pass-on, and therefore are restricted from selling them until they have successfully passed on the required number of offspring.

When a household has a goat there is a significant effect at the household in terms of livelihood, we can sell it and have money to address some critical issues and problems such as buying food whenever there is a shortfall. We also use the same money to pay school fees for our children and even buy school uniforms, therefore when a household has a goat it is so easy and simple to solve these problems at the right time, unlike going out and searching for ways to find money, which consumes time also. – Male participant, Phalombe

By selling some kids, I have also been able to buy relish for my household. – Male participant, Mangochi

I used to do casual work but now I just sell my goats which I received from GOAL Malawi. – Female participant, Chikwawa

I know that in future if I ever lack food, I will be able to sell goats and earn money to buy food. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Enabling resilience investment

In addition to supporting consumption and facilitating consumption smoothing, a number of respondents report using, or planning to use, the proceeds from sales of livestock to support resilience investments, including improvements in dwellings, and investments in agricultural inputs or alternative livelihoods such as non-agricultural microenterprises. Some respondents mentioned using sales of the offspring of goats received through the pass-on programme to diversify into other types of livelihoods, such as cattle. However, by far the most common investment mentioned by respondents was using sales of livestock to pay for school fees.

I sold goats and paid a boarding fee for my daughter who will sit for the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) this year. – Female participant, Chikwawa

I sold three goats and bought 30 iron sheets and I am planning to build a house. – Female participant, Chikwawa

We will sell the goats and invest in business to top up the capital instead of borrowing money from money lenders which will later give me a burden to pay back because of high interest rates. – Female participant, Chikwawa

The project provided the farmers with livestock and some of them were able to sell and pay school fees for their children. – Local government partner, Mangochi

Nutrition and food security

Respondents also describe benefiting from improved food security and nutrition, through several mechanisms. First, respondents credit improved yields as a result of using manure from their livestock with increasing their food production. Second, as described previously, livestock can be sold for money or slaughtered and eaten if the household runs short of food or wants a greater diversity of food. Third, a number of respondents mention consuming milk from their goats to improve household nutrition. This latter benefit is reflected in the quantitative midterm data, which show that 18% of households who participated in livestock pass-on reported that the household consumed dairy in the past week, versus 13% of non-participants, a difference that was statistically significant at the 10% level.

We are also able to access milk, which has improved the nutrition of our children. –Male participant, Mangochi

We also have a goat as a source of food for our households. Whenever a need arises, we just get one and kill it for household use. This means that even a scenario whereby there is no cash to buy relish or when there is a need to have meat to meet six food groups for household members as per health and nutrition trainings we got under the same PROSPER programme, goat meat is our readily available source of proteins. – Male participant, Phalombe

Social benefits

In addition to the benefits documented previously, respondents also described additional social benefits, sometimes subtle, that nonetheless positively affect welfare. Respondents describe owning livestock as a mark of social status, a point of pride, or a source of independence. Some respondents simply find the livestock received aesthetically pleasing.

The goats I received are a source of prestige at my household and can support my needs. – Female participant, Chikwawa

The house with goats also looks beautiful; goats are like flowers. – Female participant, Phalombe

Negative impacts

Few negative impacts of the programme were described by participants. The most common were those related to the challenges of livestock loss due to theft or illness.

I have no peaceful nights with the goats that I have because I need to guard them against thieves. – Female participant, Chikwawa

There were also some reports of tension within communities due to some receiving livestock and some being excluded from the programme, and due to some people receiving livestock before others. While there were only a few of these reports in the qualitative data collected, it is important to note that the livestock questions were directed to participants in the programme, so it is possible that feelings of jealousy or discontent among non-participants were more widespread than the focus group data would

suggest.

[One of the challenges was] being ridiculed in the village for being given a goat when other people that were grouped in the Stepping Out and Hanging In groups did not receive. – Male participant, Mangochi

The programme started with a few beneficiaries; which led to conflicts in the community as people had difficulties understanding how the programme works, especially on the selection of beneficiaries. This problem was addressed by the help of extension workers and proper explanation on operation of the livestock pass-on programme as well as transparency in implementing this programme, and eventually people were able to understand. – Male participant, Balaka

Finally, one respondent expressed the view that the programme would not succeed in improved development for the community as a whole, due to the small number of households who initially received livestock and the long time it would take for pass-on to be completed.

Only a few people received the livestock. They were selecting one beneficiary per village, therefore our community will not develop because for the whole village to receive the livestock it will take a long time since an individual pass-on to another individual which will take a long time for the whole village to receive the goats. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Spillovers

A number of positive spillover effects were identified by programme participants and key informants. One key spillover effect was the improvement in animal health services, as well as adoption of animal health services and better animal care practices among non-participant households. Higher utilisation of animal health services may also have the downstream effect of reducing transmission of animal diseases in the project area, reducing the prevalence of disease even for households who do not adopt practices like livestock vaccination. Finally, the programme has been described as having positive effects for local livestock industries such as butcheries and animal traders.

Enabling Factors

Participants and key informants mention a number of factors related to programme design and implementation that contributed to the success of the livestock pass-on programme. First, complementary interventions were implemented alongside the livestock pass-on programme itself. These include the training of community animal health workers, which is facilitating fast access to veterinary care in communities; nutritional training, which raised awareness of how livestock could contribute to improved household nutrition; and natural resource management activities, which help to minimise the negative environmental effects of additional livestock and ensure livestock have sources of food.

Tree nursery establishment and promotion of regeneration helped in feeding the goats. Promoting nutritional education also helped the pass-on beneficiaries to utilise the benefits of having a goat at household level. – Local government partner staff

The training of the community animal health workers in the villages who serve as primary animal health care providers and help with data collection as well as facilitating pass-on, has improved the overall performance of the project in terms of monitoring and

time management. – Local government partner staff

Multiplication of livestock results in depletion of some natural resources. We are to make sure livestock is not destroying the natural resources in our areas because of the pass-on system. We need to make sure we are taking care of community woodlots from animals such as goats. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Participants and key informants also attribute the success of the programme to good management, including good coordination among partners and different programme components, good communication with local stakeholders, the development of local ownership around the programme, and flexibility and responsiveness to local input on the part of the implementing partners.

If we are to be very honest, the PROSPER programme is just one of the few programmes which had good design and methodology, for example the breakdown of programme components and activities/interventions within each was good as it had unique activities to address some specific issues whilst achieving the overall objective of the programme. All components were well-aligned and so interlinked to one another. In short, I can say they were well-integrated so had to complement each other. This was wonderful because it is not easy for a programme to integrate its activities from each component but for PROSPER this has been so possible. – Male participant, Phalombe

Improved coordination, collaboration, joint planning, sharing reports and other relevant information have enabled the success of the programme. In addition to that the capability and willingness of staff were also drivers to success. – Local government partner staff

Sustainability

Sustainability, including continuation of the pass-on after PROSPER's early closing, was viewed by implementers and FCDO as a risk to the livestock pass-on programme. However, livestock pass-on participants were extremely optimistic about the sustainability of the programme. While many did recognise the potential for some households to lose their livestock holdings due to shocks such as livestock illness or theft, or that some households might sell off their livestock, they believed that most households would continue to maintain their stock of animals, and that pass-on would continue until nearly all households had an opportunity to receive livestock. This was true across Districts, even among participants reporting considerable challenges with theft or livestock deaths. Some participants described plans to leverage the livestock received through the pass-on programme to invest in additional livestock or diversified livelihoods.

Five years from now, almost all the 400 households in the two villages will have at least one goat as their own. These goats will help in the production of manure for farm use and act as a source of food and income for the households, thereby reducing the poverty levels in our community. For us who received the goats first, we will have many more goats in our ownership because by the end of five years we should have finished passing them on so however they multiply, the goats will be ours. – Female participant, Balaka

Some of us who have been trained by PROSPER will still have goats five years from now as we will not sell every goat but keep some for reproduction even if we face challenges like food shortage as we have been told. As for others, some may end up

selling all goats in times of crisis like food shortage, illnesses and many other life-changing events. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Those with an interest and passion for livestock management will have goats forever, even after passing on to other beneficiaries. Of course, some will sell all because of lack of interest and passion to own livestock and would want to eat the benefits once and for good. – Female participant, Chikwawa

I have already finished passing on the goats to another person, therefore all the subsequent kiddings will be mine and I will sell and buy cows. I want to start cattle farming too. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Continuation of the pass-on element was, in some cases, attributed to having a clear list of households in line to receive the livestock.

The livestock pass-on will also continue because we already have a list of people that are still waiting to benefit from the pass-on and they will not sleep until they also receive these goats. – Female participant, Phalombe

The goats will spread to almost everybody targeted because we gained knowledge and skills about passing on the goats from one person to another. Simply put, we have a well-defined order. – Male participant, Mangochi

One participant mentioned their household's co-investment in the kraal as a key motivating factor for continuing to keep livestock.

It will be hard for a goat farmer who invested too much money to build a goat kraal to sell all the goats and remain with an empty kraal. The kraal motivated most people to be rearing animals and be livestock farmers. – Male participant, Chikwawa

The trained community animal health workers are also seen as a key element of sustainability. These paravets are expected to not only continue to provide animal health services, but also to monitor the continuation of the programme.

The goat pass-on programme will continue surviving because we have the community animal health workers who are responsible for tracking the livestock pass-on programme. – Female participant, Mangochi

The risks to sustainability identified in the qualitative interviews include participants' resistance to passing on livestock, as described in the section on Compliance and Enforcement, and the death or theft of animals. Even with these challenges, only one respondent expressed pessimism about the programme; it was unclear if this individual was a livestock pass-on participant as he participated in the Access to Finance focus group.

It is very doubtful that the goat pass-on will continue because most goats died. For example, a poor person is given goats and they immediately died, and before receiving the goats you were not able to buy a goat, how will you find means to buy another goat? – Male Access to Finance participant, Phalombe

What Types of Households Benefit Most?

Participant views on the types of households that benefit most from livestock pass-on varied, but many agreed that the key factors in success included the ability to care for the livestock, and the ability to

make wise decisions about when to sell the livestock.

Both male- and female-headed and other households can benefit from goats. What matters is ownership, taking responsibility to care [for] and manage the livestock. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Many respondents echoed the programme logic around targeting the Stepping Up group: that Hanging In households would be unable to make the necessary co-investments required to care for the livestock and would be at high risk of selling them to meet immediate needs, and that Stepping Out households either already have the means to buy livestock or have other alternative livelihoods. It should be acknowledged that the majority of respondents whose data were reviewed for this analysis were livestock pass-on participants, and in the Stepping Up category, and therefore may be predisposed to agree about their own suitability for the programme.

Those who belong to the Stepping Up category because they tend to have some assets, and can't easily sell the goats, unlike the Hanging In group; while the Stepping Out group assumes it's unnecessary to keep the goats and disturb their schedule. – Female participant, Mangochi

The goat pass-on did not work the same for everyone because some could not afford to vaccinate their goats on time, and their goats died. – Male Access to Finance participant, Phalombe

In a few cases, it was noted that physical limitations could prevent a household from caring for livestock effectively or protecting them from theft. However, it was also noted that livestock could be particularly beneficial to people who are disabled or elderly and therefore unable to take on more demanding farm labour. Some respondents viewed female-headed households as being more vulnerable to theft.

Households led by younger people benefit better from having goats because they are able to care for their goats, unlike old people that are not strong enough to do all the activities involved in goat care such as building a kraal, taking them out to graze, guarding them against theft, or going out to look for them when they do not return home. – Male participant, Chikwawa

The female-headed households are the ones that thieves come to steal the livestock at night the most because they know the lady is single. – Female participant, Chikwawa

There was rich discourse around how different household structures or dynamics might affect how successful the household is with livestock. Several respondents believed that female-headed households benefited the most, as they had more need, and did not have to deal with challenges with husbands who spent money unwisely, or who wanted to divide the proceeds of sales between multiple wives. However, others noted that if decisions are made collaboratively in the household, being married can be an advantage, as having someone to discuss with can lead to more measured decision-making. Polygamy was also viewed as having both pros and cons. On the one hand, a wife in a polygamous marriage may risk having the proceeds of sales taken by the husband and shared among households; on the other hand, livestock are an asset that a wife in a polygamous marriage can control with less risk of it being shared with the other wives than assets like cash.

Mostly homes that have irresponsible men don't benefit. – Male participant, Phalombe

Those who are not married are the ones who can benefit from goats or livestock...

sometimes, married women make poor decisions, we focus on things not important or we work towards pleasing the husband. For example, a husband and wife can decide to sell a goat for a reason but sometimes, how the money is being utilised is a shame. Men spend the money for drinking, or to have extramarital affairs. – Female participant, Chikwawa

In a contrary view, sometimes it is difficult to make decisions alone. Women who are married are more likely to benefit more from goats or livestock because they discuss the decision. – Female participant, Chikwawa

I think those in polygamous marriages are the ones that benefit more because livestock from one wife cannot go to the other. Therefore, when you sell the livestock, you use the money for the household's needs. – Female participant, Chikwawa

A single lady benefits more because once she sells the livestock, she has full custody of the whole amount, therefore can make her own decisions. But for those in a polygamous marriage, the man would want to share the money among his wives. – Female participant, Chikwawa

There was a situation in a nearby village where a man who had two wives received the goats and each of the wives wanted to be in control of the goats. In the end, all the goats went missing mysteriously and people were spreading rumours that the goats were sold or were killed to ease the tension between the two wives. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Burden of Labour

Allocation of labour associated with caring for livestock varied widely among participants. Many married participants reported labour being shared between the husband and wife, with children often pitching in as well. Both men and women reported that men were more likely to be responsible for building and maintaining the kraal, whereas women were more likely to be responsible for keeping track of the livestock, bringing them into the kraal, and searching for them when they are missing. Division of labour is often based on practical considerations, such as whether one partner works away from home.

Both husband and wife are responsible for caring for goats because having goats benefits everyone that lives in the household. – Male participant, Chikwawa

The duty of caring for goats depends on who is mostly available on the houses between spouses, sometimes us men are always out in search for work and money, leaving our wives at home. This automatically gives them the duty to take care of goats, but when the man is available at home, the responsibility to take care of goats is for the man. – Male participant, Balaka

Perhaps predictably, men were somewhat more likely to say that men had primary responsibility for caring for livestock, while women were somewhat more likely to say that women bore more of the burden. When men were reported as bearing primary responsibility for the livestock, this was often based on their role of maintaining the kraal and responsibility for decision-making, whereas when women were reported as bearing primary responsibility, it was more often based on the time spent each day caring for the livestock and their consistent presence at home, which allows them to monitor the animals. Even some women reported that their husbands had primary responsibility for the

livestock, despite also mentioning that the daily tasks of monitoring the animals falls on them.

It is the man's responsibility to care for goats. Even though the wife and children may look after them when the man is away, the man is the one that is mostly responsible for the goats as he is the head of the house. – Male participant, Chikwawa

A man is the one who is responsible for caring for animals, as he is the one who can know that his kraal needs maintenance; the lady just helps to make sure that the goats have entered the kraal at night so that they are safe from predators. – Male participant, Chikwawa

In my household, it is the responsibility of the husband to care for the goats. When my husband is at his other wives (polygamous, he has four wives), I care for the goats myself. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Women are more responsible in taking care of the goats because children go to school and most of our husbands don't spend time at home. – Female participant, Phalombe

The huge responsibility for caring for animals lies with the woman. A man is just there because he is the head of the family, but the woman is the one who always watches her movements, remembering she is caring for animals; she knows she needs to be home by the time the goats will need to enter the kraal in the evening. The husband can move anyhow, coming back late or the following day. The children also take part in caring for the goats as we go with them when searching for our goats whenever the goats are missing. – Female participant, Chikwawa

In female-headed households, women bear the responsibility for care of the goats, but they may hire help with kraal construction or with herding.

I divorced my husband and I am the one who makes decisions in my household. For example, I employed a shepherd to look after my goats. I employ men to construct the kraal for my livestock. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Decision-Making with Respect to Livestock

Many participants reported that decisions about livestock are shared within the household, and the majority of participants, male and female, agreed that collective decision-making between household members was advantageous. Some participants mentioned including not only both husband and wife in decision-making, but also involving other family members, including children.

We make decisions about the pigs together as a man and a wife. A man on his own cannot decide to sell the pigs, the same for the woman. We sit down and decide how to handle the family financial problems; if we resort to selling the pigs then we do it. – Female participant, Chikwawa

When only one [family] member makes a decision about goats while the responsibility of caring for these goats is collective, meaning all family members take up an initiative, definitely some get demotivated, so even when we want to sell a goat, we usually consult our children to make their contribution to the idea before reaching a final decision on whether to proceed or not. – Male participant, Phalombe

For us widows, we discuss with our children whether to sell or not, depending on the

household needs. – Female participant, Phalombe

When a man sits down with his wife and they make decisions together, things always go well at a household level. – Male participant, Chikwawa

Sometimes, you listen to the wife when making decisions regarding the goats as she can disagree with you whenever you suggest selling the goats, she advises you on how you can raise money differently from selling the goats or sometimes she advises you that instead of selling all the goats, you should keep some, maybe two goats that will keep on multiplying and you are able to remember that without her input in decision-making, the household would have had no goats left. – Male participant, Chikwawa

In other scenarios, decisions were made less collaboratively, and decision-making power was less balanced. Some participants, especially men, held the traditional view that the husband, as the head of the household, was ultimately responsible for making decisions regarding household assets like livestock.

It is the man's responsibility to make decisions about goats. Decisions can only be made by the woman in case the man is away for a long time, otherwise women are not supposed to make decisions about goats alone. – Male participant, Chikwawa

But as for me being the household head I make such decisions. – Male participant, Mangochi

Most of the men are so challenging. They even sell the goats without the consent of the spouse. – Female participant, Balaka

Even where men are viewed – or view themselves – as the ultimate deciders with respect to livestock, women may have subtle roles in influencing decision-making. For example, discussions around selling livestock might be started by women, who may have greater awareness of household financial needs. Women may also be able to veto proposals to sell animals or convince their husbands to change their decisions.

I think the woman is the one that cares for animals and makes decisions about the goats because whenever children need something they ask the woman, not the man. Now as a woman you sit down with the husband to decide how to handle the problem at hand. – Female participant, Chikwawa

If the wife disagrees with decisions made by the husband, then the husband does not go through with them. However, the woman cannot initiate the decision to sell a goat. – Male participant, Chikwawa

In the absence of men in the household, women are the primary decision-makers with respect to livestock. This may be the case for female-headed households, but also for women in polygamous marriages where the husband is often absent.

I am a widow, so I make the decisions alone. – Female participant, Chikwawa

I make decisions on my own because I am a fourth wife to my husband. Because of tradition and culture, I do inform my husband when I have a challenge, but I just do it for him to know what is going on in our household. Otherwise, I make decisions because he doesn't supervise or monitor the number of goats. – Female participant, Chikwawa

Some respondents noted that programme design can influence who in the household has decision-making power with respect to the livestock. In many communities, the official recipient of the livestock is more likely to be recognised as having primary decision-making power.

The person who received the livestock is responsible for caring for the goats and making all the necessary decisions. If the goat is given to the woman, she will be responsible for making all the decisions associated with it. – Female participant, Mangochi

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, PROSPER's livestock pass-on programme appears to have been extremely popular among participants. The programme, while only reaching a minority of households in PROSPER-targeted communities, has the potential to have a sustained, transformative impact on the households that did participate.

The programme was not without its challenges. Some participants reported receiving animals in poor health or that were too young, consistent with implementing partner reports of issues with the supply chain and suppliers meeting procurement numbers. Even when participants received healthy animals, some lost livestock due to sickness or theft; the cost of replacement was sometimes a significant burden. Most participants have been able to mitigate these challenges through good care, including adopting veterinary services offered by animal health workers trained by PROSPER. In terms of maintaining pass-on, some recipients have been resistant, but this has largely been addressed by ensuring there are clear protocols for pass-on, including maintaining lists of households next in line to get livestock; ensuring there are local institutions such as livestock committees and lead farmers who are trained to manage and oversee pass-on; and involving local authorities such as chiefs in the programme, so that they can enforce pass-on when necessary.

Participants interviewed in the focus group discussions describe a number of important positive impacts of the pass-on programme, many of which are corroborated by the BRACC quantitative midterm data. First, the pass-on programme has enabled many households who would not otherwise have livestock to access them, leading to an increase in household productive assets. Participants report using manure from the livestock on their crops; indeed, the quantitative data show livestock pass-on participants used manure as fertiliser at a higher rate than other households in PROSPER communities. Many participants indicated that having the livestock provides them with a buffer against shocks, food insecurity, or unexpected expenses. The quantitative data showed little difference between livestock pass-on participants and other PROSPER community members in terms of outcomes like use of coping mechanisms, but this may reflect the fact that it is still early in the pass-on programme, and households are not allowed to sell the livestock until they have completed passing on offspring to the next household. A few focus group participants reported improved nutrition from accessing milk from goats received through the pass-on programme; quantitative data also showed that pass-on participants were more likely to report that their households consumed milk products in the past week. Households also described social benefits, such as prestige associated with livestock ownership.

Aspects of the programme may have generated important spillover benefits for non-participants. The training and starter kits for the animal health workers has increased the availability of animal health services, with reports of utilisation by non-participants. There are also some reports of non-participants adopting animal care practices such as building kraals. Finally, the programme may have created market benefits for businesses such as butchers and animal traders.

Participants are extremely optimistic about the sustainability of the programme. Although they recognise the risks posed by animal illness or theft, and that some households may end up selling their livestock, most of the participants believed that the majority would maintain their livestock holdings, and that the pass-on would continue even in the absence of the PROSPER programme.

Intra-household dynamics may play an important role in both the success of the programme at the household level, and the impact of the programme on individuals within households. The labour burden of livestock may occasionally be lopsided, with women doing more of the day-to-day care of the livestock, despite perceptions of men having greater “responsibility” due to their role as household head and their role of maintaining the kraal. However, most participants reported sharing the labour burden; female-headed households sometimes reported hiring help with livestock care. Decision-making roles are also sometimes fraught or unequal, but many participants of both genders recognised the benefits of collaborative decision-making around the livestock.

The success of the programme, despite its inherent challenges, appears to have been enabled by both good programme design and good quality implementation and management. Positive features of programme design include bundling the pass-on programme with complementary programmes, particularly support for veterinary services, and creating institutions to support management of the pass-on after the end of PROSPER. Positive features of programme implementation include working with local institutions and authorities, maintaining flexibility in response to local feedback, good communication and coordination among partners and communities, and retaining skilled staff.

The successes of the programme, as well as the challenges documented, provide valuable lessons for future livestock distribution programmes. These lessons are particularly prescient as the Malawi government is piloting livestock distribution in place of agricultural inputs as part of the Agricultural Input Programme.

Recommendation 1: Replicate the PROSPER approaches with respect to bundling and complementary interventions

PROSPER’s approach of bundling the livestock pass-on programme with other related programmes appears to have strengthened the sustainability and impact of the livestock pass-on. The training and equipping of local animal health workers was particularly credited with helping to support better animal health, and both participants and animal health workers reported adoption of vaccination and other animal health services. Other complementary interventions also strengthened programme impact, including training on using animal manure in farming, and using animal products to improve dietary diversity and nutrition. Future programmes should replicate these programme combinations and explore other programmes that could further complement pass-on. For example, training on intrahousehold decision-making and women’s empowerment could help households make productive decisions about their livestock and ensure that both the responsibilities and the benefits of livestock are shared equitably within the household.

Recommendation 2: Replicate the PROSPER approaches with respect to community management of pass-on

The PROSPER programme had several features that appeared to facilitate successful pass-on in most communities even after closure of the PROSPER programme. First, the households to receive livestock pass-on, and the order in which they were to receive animals, was clearly documented and the households were aware of their place in the order. As a result, these households were able to monitor livestock reproduction, and advocate for themselves if households resisted pass-on. Second, local livestock committees were established and trained in monitoring and overseeing the programme. These committees were able to track livestock reproduction and ensure that pass-on was implemented as intended. Third, local leaders were often informed of, and involved in, the programme from an early stage. As a result, they were well-situated to enforce pass-on in the case of disputes and support the implementation of local by-laws addressing problems like livestock theft.

The requirement that households replace any animals lost for any reason appears to have played a role in reducing the incentive for households to try to hide animals that would have been passed on, and motivating households to invest in veterinary care. However, it also sometimes created significant burdens on households as a result of shocks that were outside of their control. Future programmes should consider carefully whether to include this aspect of the programme. If it is included, efforts should be made to reduce the risks to livestock, including ensuring animals are healthy when they are received, ensuring veterinary care and supplies are locally available, and working to address community crime.

Recommendation 3: Implement at a scale where livestock quality can be ensured

PROSPER faced challenges procuring sufficient quantities of livestock for their programme, which may have contributed to some beneficiaries receiving poor quality livestock. Strict requirements should be put in place for procured livestock with respect to factors like age, size, breed or variety, and vaccination status, to ensure that households receive healthy livestock. This is especially important for programmes that require households to replace livestock that die, to avoid creating undue burden on participants, but it is also critical to ensure that households are not put at risk of diseases that are transmissible from livestock to humans. Livestock distribution programmes should be implemented at scales where strict procurement oversight is realistic; if needed, procurement and distribution could be staggered over the course of a year.

Recommendation 4: Target households with ability to care for livestock

PROSPER's decision to target livestock pass-on to the Stepping Up group was credited by participants with ensuring that the households who received livestock would be able to afford the complementary inputs, such as a kraal and veterinary services, needed to care for the livestock. The wealth ranking process used by PROSPER may not be the only way to achieve this; the requirement of investing in a kraal is another example of a mechanism that may have helped ensure dedicated households with the resources to care for livestock participated in the programme. In addition, the threshold for caring for livestock may depend on the type of livestock being distributed. Caring for poultry, for example, may require fewer co-investments than caring for goats. To avoid unnecessarily excluding households, the requirements should be as narrow and as well-aligned with animal care requirements as possible.

Recommendation 5: Target females as livestock recipients

Several respondents mentioned that when women are explicitly given the assets, they are more likely to have decision-making power over them. Targeting women as the named beneficiaries of livestock distribution may help encourage them to have a greater say in how livestock are managed and used in the household. Targeting women may also help address the challenge of polygamous households, avoiding scenarios where multiple wives compete over the livestock allocated to a male household head.

Recommendation 6: Work with government, the private sector, and communities to address crime

Theft is a clear risk to programme success; unlike livestock disease, which can be mitigated with veterinary care, participants had few tools or programmatic resources for addressing theft. Stress related to theft was mentioned as a negative outcome of the programme, and in some contexts, it may disproportionately affect female-headed households. While there may be limited options available to fully mitigate the risk of theft at a household level, organisations or donors implementing livestock distribution programmes could consider working with government, the private sector, and other stakeholders on larger initiatives aimed at addressing crime and security. In the context of Chikwawa, where participant concerns regarding theft of livestock were particularly acute, one option for partnership is Illovo's new Thriving Communities initiative, which includes a component aimed at studying and addressing crime and security in the district.

Acknowledgements

This brief has been distilled out of the evaluation of the BRACC programme undertaken in 2021 by the BRACC Hub. The BRACC Hub is very grateful for all the support and assistance provided during the evaluation by the BRACC programme participants, implementing partners and funder. We would like to thank the team members who were involved in data collection, analysis, and particular studies that fed into the evaluation, including Gulden Bayaz, Nick Brooks, Khandan Danish, Catherine Gould, Obioma Egemonye, Merlin Hanauer, Ying-Syuan (Elaine) Huang, Zemira Humphrey, Jennifer Leavy, Emmillian Kasililika-Mlagha, Mackenzie Klema, Sarah Wilson Knight, Diana Mataya, Matthew McConnachie, Dylan Pyman, Bright Sibale and the Centre for Development Management team, Danny Smith, Kirsti Thornber, Liz Venable, Katharine Vincent and Lena Weingärtner. We would also like to thank Mitzi du Plessis for her help in copyediting and proofreading.