

# Healthy Animals, Happy People



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## **Acknowledgement**

This flipbook was produced as part of Canada's International Development Research Centre's Grant No. 109062-001.

This flipbook was made possible by the Livestock Vaccine Innovation Fund. The Livestock Vaccine Innovation Fund is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

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## **Recommended citation**

Pangea Publishing and University of Florida. (2021). Healthy Animals, Happy People. A flipbook for use with community animal health workers working with the livestock vaccine value chain in Karamoja Sub Region, Uganda. University of Florida: Gainesville, FL.

## **Cover and drawing credits**

Drawings used in the flipbook were designed by Pangea Publishing.

Acheng looked worried as she fetched water at the borehole. "Some of my goats are having discharges from their noses and eyes," she said.

"Mine too. Do they have diarrhoea as well?" a woman next to her asked. Acheng nodded.

"I have tried different herbs but there has been no change," she sighed.

"I lost a goat yesterday," another woman cried. The women were worried for their animals.





Three days later, it was a market day. Acheng went to the local market. She heard a voice on the radio saying that when the goats and sheep had discharge from their eyes and noses or had diarrhea, they were sick with the PPR disease.

The voice asked people to take their goats and sheep that were not sick for vaccination against the PPR disease.

Acheng had never heard about vaccination. She decided that she would take her goats for it.



The next day, Acheng woke up very early in the morning and assigned house chores to the older children. She asked Akello, her neighbour, to watch over her children and house while she took the goats that were not sick to the vaccination site.





In the evening, Acheng's husband, Omara rushed to where Acheng was sitting. "Why did you go to the livestock crush?" he shouted.

"I wanted to vaccinate my goats," Acheng answered. "We lost two more goats yesterday."

"Don't ever do that again without my permission!" Omara warned her.



After a few days, Akello came to see Acheng. "I can see your goats are still alive. I thought they would die from the vaccination," Akello said.

"They are healthier than they have ever been," Acheng responded firmly. However, Akello did not trust the vaccination. She did not want to risk her goats.





A month later, Omara was telling his friends, "All my animals are healthy. I can sell any of them at a good price."

"How is that possible when our goats are sick and dying?" Owiny, one of his friends asked. Owiny was Akello's husband.

"Do you remember what Okech, the community animal health worker, said about vaccinating all the animals? Well, Acheng took the goats for vaccination and all the animals at home are as healthy as they could be," Omara said.



Owiny could not sell any of his animals because most of them were sick. He wanted to buy a motorcycle. When he went back home, he complained to Akello.

"I can't even sell any of my animals at a good price!" Akello thought about Acheng's goats which were very healthy after the vaccination. Owiny and Akello agreed that Akello should visit Acheng the next day.





"I have lost many goats in the past month and my husband's sheep are sick. What should I do?" Akello cried. Many other women had asked Acheng for help too.

"I will call Okech to visit our village," Acheng replied.

Acheng mobilized a lot of women and her husband mobilized the men to attend the session with the community animal health worker. After some days, Okech came to Acheng's village.



Okech talked to the women and men about the benefits of vaccination.

“Vaccination is one of the measures to control the disease outbreak among livestock,” he said. However, Akello had her fears.

“The other day, I sent my son to take the sick goat for vaccination, but it later died. Won’t all my goats die when I vaccinate them?” she asked.

“Vaccination does not treat sick animals. It helps to prevent the disease from spreading to healthy animals. You must treat all the sick animals first,” Okech said.





After the session, the women asked Acheng how she managed to take care of her home and still took her goats for vaccination.

“You should share the house chores among household members; your husband and the older children. For some of you who have older children, ask them to help you take the animals to the vaccination site. Remember to discuss livestock vaccination benefits with your husband,” Acheng told the women.



Days later, some women walked in groups to the livestock crush site to treat their sick goats. Some to vaccinate their goats.

Some husbands helped their wives take their goats to the crush site. Most of the animals became healthier and the PPR outbreak subdued in the area.





Acheng was identified and trained as a Community Animal Health Worker in her village. She supported the women to take part in the trainings that happened in her community. She also made sure that more and more women were engaged in animal health activities.



