

Sustainable Agricultural Livelihood Restoration, Rehabilitation and Resilience in Kenya

Guidelines on Sustainable Ruminant Feeds and Nutrition Security for Kenya

CHAPTER 2 DRIVERS OF FEED AND NUTRITION INSECURITY

2.4 Unavailability and high cost of inputs

Inputs are essential for feed production and constitute a significant proportion of production costs. Some of the key inputs required to ensure efficient production include seeds, machinery (tractors, balers), herbicides and fertilisers. Due to high cost of inputs, there is inconsistent supply and use of some of the key raw materials such as oil seed cakes and fish meals that are good sources of minerals, vitamins and amino acids, which have a major role on feed quality. Prolonged droughts coupled with overgrazing in the ASALs has resulted to the loss of important range grasses. However, attempts to restore the rangelands through reseeding with superior range grass species such as *Cenchrus ciliaris* (Fox tail grass), *Enteropogon macrostachyus* (rye grass), *Eragrostis superba* (Maasai love grass), *Chloris roxburghiana* (horse tail grass), *Themeda triandra* (red oats grass) and *Panicum maximum* (Guinea grass) though has not achieved much (Mnene, 2006), is a growing effort. The reseeding programmes have been hampered by limited capacity to produce and supply the grass seeds. Additionally, taxation of imported raw materials and machinery required for feed production has further made inputs unaffordable to farmers. This has limited both production and access levels of livestock feed in many regions.