

“With Artificial Insemination, it is now Possible to Produce a Crossbred Heifer for Less than a Dollar”

After FAO trained 15 farmers to be Farmers Artificial Insemination Technicians for one month, the inseminators have performed a total of 2088 inseminations from September 2009 until August 2010.



The majority of animals inseminated are local cows. Based on the report obtained from respective woredas, a total of 276 calves were born until December 2010. All the newborn calves were registered by the project and provided unique identification number with ear tags. Also, certificates with all the basic information were given to the calves' owners. As to reproduction efficiency, the data was collected and analyzed from the six project woredas for 359 cows (17 percent of total), 254 of which were found pregnant. The average conception rate was found to be 1.6 and that of pregnancy to be 71 percent. Out of these inseminated cows, 1009 calves are projected to be produced, with 504 of them expected to be female calves.

These 2088 inseminated cows reside in areas which are otherwise inaccessible for artificial insemination service provided from the woreda capital. The regular cost of one crossbred heifer is more than 10 000 Ethiopian birr, which is unaffordable to the majority of smallholder farmers; but with artificial insemination, it is now possible to produce crossbred heifers for 12 Ethiopian birr only.

The introduction of Farmers Artificial Insemination Technicians is playing an important role in alleviating the existing shortage of crossbred heifers, increasing milk production, and improving the livelihood of smallholder farmers. The Oromia regional state government has applauded the technology and the impact of services, and intends to scale up the practice, with training to be provided to 180 farmers selected from the different zones of the region.