

Herding 4 Health – A livelihood model with conservation outcomes

The CI Botswana GCF project team attended a workshop to learn more about the Herding 4 Health (H4H) Model of climate-smart agriculture and livestock management on which the Ecosystem Based Adaptation and Mitigation in Botswana Communal Rangelands project is premised. Together with the project team, the workshop was attended by delegates from Ministry of Agriculture, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Lands and Water Affairs, Ministry of Youth, Gender, Sport, and Culture.

The Herding 4 Health model embraces a systems-level approach through a One Health lens encompassing Human Health, Animal Health and Environmental Health: it is an integrated approach to rangeland management, wildlife-livestock coexistence, and community development for climate smart farming.

The approach is premised on working with the people of the land, for the land of the people; it is a community-led concept that addresses the many challenges that farmers face in communal rangelands such as land degradation, poor livestock management and catalyzes them to move towards achieving desired positive impacts such as:

- Healthy Rangelands
- Healthy and Productive Animals
- Healthy people and livelihoods
- Healthy governance & policy

The model allows pastoralists to secure their livelihoods, as well as the health of their herds and their families, through improving disease and grazing management at the wildlife-livestock interface. Where relevant, market access is also unlocked.

The model, which carefully integrates indigenous knowledge with modern-day science, is being implemented in South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. A key tool to the H4H model is the use of negotiated rangeland stewardship agreements that are site specific for each given communal grazing land. This approach enables communal herding and kraaling, and rotational grazing of livestock, while ensuring stewards of the rangelands are adequately compensated for conservation actions. The rangeland stewardship agreements allow strategic collective grazing by skilled herders, which leads to the rehabilitation of the rangelands for climate resilience.

Through the H4H approach, the GCF Botswana project will contribute:

- Green jobs creation
- Restoration of the rangelands
- Wildlife – livestock co-existence
- Sustainable enterprises for food production

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Jacques van Rooyen, former Director for the Herding 4 Health Programme, Conservation International.