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The University of Nairobi has been providing technical backstopping to VSF-Suisse under the collaborative agreement signed in August 2020. Since 2023, the Department of Land Resource Management and Agricultural Technology (LARMAT) has been supporting VSF-Suisse under the Biovision-funded “Building drought resilience for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in Samburu and Isiolo Counties”. **Prof. Oliver Vivian Wasonga** has been leading capacity building of the pastoralist communities and County Government officials on participatory rangeland management; sustainable management and utilisation of *Prosopis juliflora*, particularly its use for livestock feed and charcoal briquettes in Samburu County.

Between **February 19 and 25, 2024**, the University of Nairobi team comprising **Prof. Oliver Vivian Wasonga**, **Prof. George Gitau** (Department of Clinical Studies) and **Prof. Charles Gachuri** (Department of Animal Production) joined VSF-Suisse in stakeholders’ consultations and inception of the new project: **“Strengthening the drought resilience of (agro-) pastoral communities in Isiolo County through innovative use of an invasive plant as livestock feed (INNOPLA).**







Prof. Oliver Vivian Wasonga, Prof. George Gitau and Prof. Charles Gachuri during Stakeholders’ Consultation Session in Isiolo

The **overall objective** of the project is to contribute to improving food and nutrition security and strengthening the resilience of (agro) pastoral communities to droughts and other shocks by increasing forage security, especially for key breeding livestock. Specifically, the project seeks to:

- Promote the use of livestock feed based on ground *Prosopis juliflora* pods, especially in the dry seasons and drought periods in Isiolo District.
- Determine the cost, nutritional value, and safety of *Prosopis juliflora*-based feeds compared to other compound feeds/nutrient blocks.
- Promote sustainable rangelands and livestock management.

UoN's role in **INNOPLA** will be to generate empirical evidence to guide the implementation of the project through mapping of the spatial spread of *Prosopis*; analysis of perceptions of the communities on the spread, impact, use and management options; and formulation of livestock feed from *Prosopis* pods. The project will support two PhD students and one MSc student from LARMAT, and one MSc. Student from the Department of Animal Production.

			
<p>Abarea Abubakar Rhoba (MSc. Dryland Resource Management, LARMAT) Research Topic: "Analysis of communities' perceptions on <i>Prosopis</i> invasion, impacts, uses and management options"</p>	<p>Edward Musya (MSc. Animal Nutrition & Feed Sciences, Animal Production) Research Topic: "Determination of nutritional quality, performance, safety and storability of <i>Prosopis</i>-based feed rations"</p>	<p>Haron Akala (PhD Range Management, LARMAT) Research Topic: "Spatial mapping of <i>P.juliflora</i> using GIS and participatory approaches"</p>	<p>Josephat Mungoche (PhD Dryland Resource Management, LARMAT) Research Topic: "Systematic literature review on <i>Prosopis</i> spatial distribution, impacts, management, utilisation, and lessons learnt in Eastern Africa"</p>