

# LEGS



# Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)



Livelihoods-based livestock interventions in disasters

## What is LEGS?

- The *Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards* (LEGS) are a set of international standards for improving the quality of livestock programs in humanitarian disasters
- LEGS is global, focusing on regions prone to repeated or large-scale disasters – rapid onset, slow onset, complex and chronic
- LEGS is an official companion module to the 'Sphere handbook' - the *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*
- Sphere is underpinned by international humanitarian and human rights laws and conventions

## Where did LEGS come from?

The LEGS Project grew out of concerns that livestock responses in emergencies were frequently inappropriate, poorly designed and/or delivered too late to be of assistance. The livelihoods of livestock-owning communities were often not taken into account by such interventions, and in some cases were even undermined by the emergency response. For example, the dumping of veterinary medicines during disasters may weaken the private sector structures that support livestock owners after the emergency is over.

LEGS is overseen by a Steering Group, made up of individuals from

the African Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Tufts University and Vetwork UK, supported by a LEGS Coordinator.

Following broad consultation with a global mailing list of over 1700 members and sector experts, the LEGS Handbook was published in 2009 and is available from the publisher, Practical Action Publishing: <http://develop-mentbookshop.com>.

The LEGS Handbook is also available as a soft copy, and can be downloaded free of charge

from the LEGS website: [www.livestock-emergency.net](http://www.livestock-emergency.net)

The Handbook has also been translated into French, Arabic and Spanish, available free on the LEGS website.



Photo credit: Kelley Lynch / Save the Children USA

## LEGS Livelihood Objectives

LEGS is based on the recognition that livestock are an important asset for people throughout developing regions and that these assets are often destroyed or affected by disaster. LEGS enables humanitarian actors to design and implement projects which help to protect and/or rebuild these livestock assets, based on three livelihoods objectives:

1. **Providing rapid assistance** to crisis-affected communities through livestock-based interventions
2. **Protecting livestock assets** among crisis-affected communities
3. **Assisting the re-building of livestock assets** among crisis-affected communities



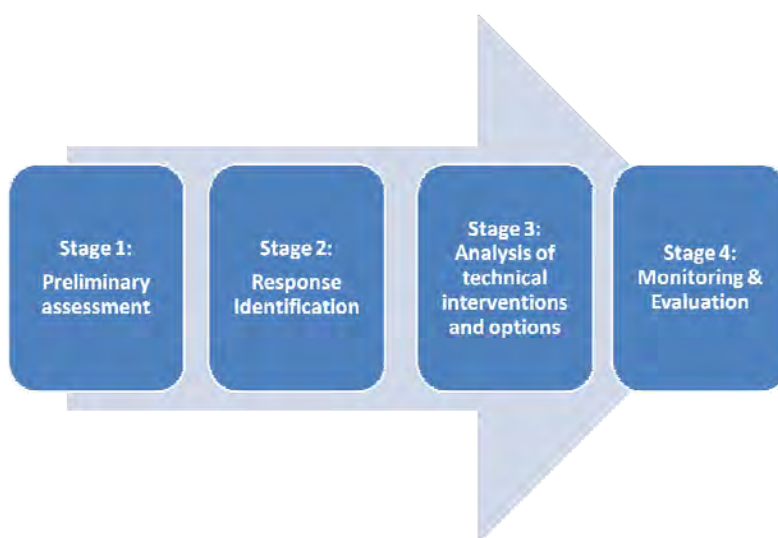
## The LEGS Handbook and the LEGS Approach

The LEGS handbook covers the following topics:

- Conducting rapid assessments of livestock and livelihoods; & identifying appropriate interventions
- Common Standards:
 

Participation	M&E, Impact Assessment	Response & Coordination
Technical Support	Initial Assessment	Contingency Planning/Response
Targeting	Advocacy and Policy	
- Technical Standards: Destocking; Veterinary Services; Feed; Water; Shelter; Restocking

Each technical chapter provides minimum standards, timelines and a discussion of the various options with their advantages and disadvantages. Decision-trees and other tools support the process of identifying which options could be the most appropriate, feasible and timely in any given context to provide both immediate relief and longer term livelihood support to livestock keepers affected by disaster. Together, these standards and tools together form the four stages of the LEGS Approach.



## Uptake of LEGS

LEGS has carried out a series of ten regional Training of Trainers (TOT) courses, and further courses are planned for 2012/3. A short, half-day training module has been developed for decision makers and donors, and is also being rolled out.

As a result of the training programme, a total of 175 people have been trained as LEGS trainers. Between them they have carried out 63 LEGS Trainings in 17 countries in Africa and Asia, reaching over 1200 participants. Over 6,000 copies of the LEGS Handbook have been sold, while

another 5,000 soft copies have been downloaded from the LEGS website. Around 500 copies each of the LEGS Handbook in French and in Arabic have also been downloaded from the website.

As a result of the dissemination of the Handbook and the training programme, LEGS is increasingly being used as a key point of reference for practitioners in designing emergency interventions in livestock-keeping areas, as well as for donors in their funding decisions.

For example, in Ethiopia, FAO and some other do-

nors expect emergency funding proposals to be guided by LEGS, while NGOs such as Save the Children USA and CARE use LEGS guidelines in the development of their programmes. According to Charles Hopkins, Pastoral Programme Manager for CARE-Ethiopia, LEGS has influenced the design and implementation of their and partners programmes, and their donors have commented on the improved quality of their proposals.

## What do people say about LEGS?

'LEGS is recognized as THE handbook to guide livelihoods based livestock interventions' (*Astrid de Valon, former Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, Trócaire East Africa*)

'In my professional life, LEGS is the most useful and comprehensive tool for livestock focused interventions that I have come across. It covers all major emergencies, and provides necessary planning and implementation guidance for experts and non-experts alike.' (*Saeed Ullah Khan, former Technical Advisor, International Rescue Committee, Pakistan*)

## Get involved in LEGS:

To join the LEGS mailing list and receive regular updates on activities and future plans, contact the LEGS Coordinator: [Coordinator@livestock-emergency.net](mailto:Coordinator@livestock-emergency.net); or see the website: [www.livestock-emergency.net](http://www.livestock-emergency.net)