



COHESA
Capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa



One Health for Pastoral Children in Somalia

Facilitator Guide



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 One Health for Young Pastoral Children

In pastoral and agro-pastoral communities, children grow up with animals, depend on natural resources, and face many of the same health risks as adults. From an early age, they help fetch water, herd goats, care for younger siblings, and take part in the life of the household and community.

Because people, animals, and the environment are closely connected in pastoral life, their health is also connected. This idea is called One Health. One Health is the understanding that the health of humans, animals, and the environment are deeply linked. When animals are sick, people may get sick. If the water is dirty, both livestock and families can suffer. If the land is bare and the trees are gone, drought and dust can bring harm to everyone.

1.2 One Health in Primary schools

Children between the ages of 6 and 12 are in a key life stage. They are:

- Learning quickly and absorbing ideas from stories, people, and their environment.
- Developing empathy and responsibility for animals and their surroundings.
- Playing an active role in household chores and livestock care.
- Forming habits and attitudes that will shape their behavior as adults.

Introducing One Health concepts early helps children understand the importance of clean water, animal care, safe food, healthy land, and working together as a community. These lessons are not abstract, rather they reflect the daily reality in pastoral communities.

1.3 What makes this Manual different?

This manual contains very short bite-sized One Health lessons specifically designed for primary school aged children in low-literacy, rural settings.

It uses:

- Visual learning through pictures and illustrations
- Simple, relatable stories based on pastoral life
- Playful, hands-on activities to reinforce key concepts
- Discussion-based learning led by local facilitators or educators

This is not a textbook. It is a facilitator tool, to guide primary school teachers and community health workers, or older youth to lead meaningful conversations with children, using storytelling, questions, and local examples.

1.4 How to use this Manual

This manual is designed to be used by primary school teachers in Awdal region but is applicable to any other similar context in Somaliland and beyond.

1.4.1 Use of visuals

Each lesson includes colorful, child-friendly drawings. These are essential tools for engaging children who may not read or write fluently. Use the pictures to spark questions:

- What do you see?
- What is happening here?
- Is this good or bad for health?
- What would you do if you were there?

Let children describe what they see, act it out, or tell their own stories based on the image. Encourage laughter and imagination!

1.4.2 Story telling

Every lesson includes a short story based on real situations in pastoral communities. These stories introduce One Health ideas in ways children can relate to. You can:

- Read the story aloud (in Somali language)
- Use props or act it out with the children

After the story, ask follow-up questions to check understanding and spark discussion:

- Has something like this happened here?
- What could the characters have done differently?
- What lesson do we learn from this?

1.4.3 Play the activities

Some lessons includes a game, group activity, or drawing exercise. These are meant to:

- Reinforce learning through action
- Include all children (even shy or non-verbal ones)
- Promote fun, teamwork, and problem solving

Some activities need basic materials like paper, stones, or jerrycans. Others need nothing at all.

1.4.4 Reinforce the key messages

Every lesson ends with 3–4 key points in simple language. Repeat them often. Children learn best through repetition and rhythm.

1.4.5 Connect to home life

The best learning experience happens outside the classroom. Encourage children to:

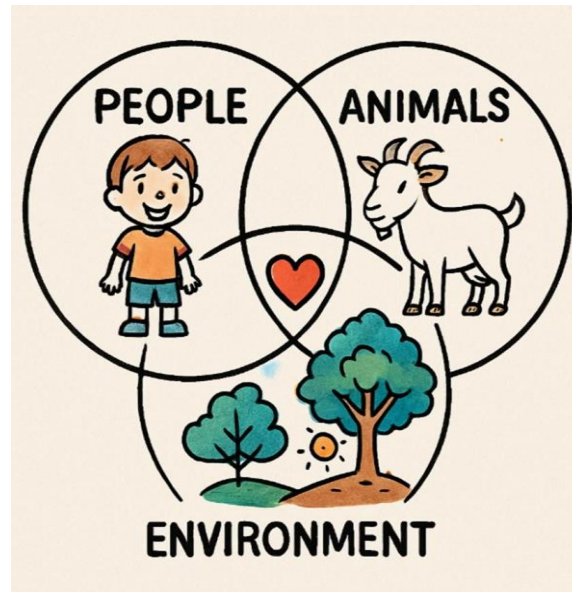
- Share what they learned with their families
- Observe animals, water points, or trees near their homes
- Try simple actions like handwashing, covering food, or protecting young trees

1.4.6 Structure of each lesson

Every lesson follows a consistent structure:

Section	Purpose
Objective	What children will learn
Story	A short, age-appropriate tale to introduce the topic
Visual prompts	Drawings to support low-literacy learning
Activity	Game, role-play, or drawing to reinforce the message
Key messages	3–4 take-home points that children can repeat and remember
Facilitator tips	Ideas for asking questions, encouraging discussion

2 LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION TO ONE HEALTH



People, animals, and the environment are all connected. When one gets sick, the others can be affected too. That's why we protect them all. This is called One Health

2.1 Objective

By the end of this session, students will:

- Understand that health includes people, animals, and the environment
- Realize that keeping animals and the environment healthy helps keep people healthy
- Be introduced to the One Health concept

2.2 Story - Asha and the sick goat

Asha is a 10-year-old girl who lives with her family in Farda Lagu-Xidh village. She loves helping her brother take care of the goats, especially her favorite one, Dhabana Cas. One day, Dhabana Cas seems unwell, she is walking slowly and not eating. That night, Dhabana Cas gives birth, but sadly the baby goat/kid does not survive.

Asha helps to clean the birthing place. She doesn't wear gloves, but she wants to comfort Dhabana Cas, so she pats her head and helps bring water. Her mother milks Dhabana Cas the next morning, and the family drinks the milk raw, as they always do.

Two weeks later, Asha starts feeling tired and says she doesn't feel like eating. That night, she has a fever and starts sweating even though it's cool outside. Over the next few days, the fever keeps coming and going. Her mother takes her to the health post, where the health worker asks if Asha has been near any sick animals or drank unboiled milk.

When her mother tells the story of Dhabana Cas, the health worker says Asha might have brucellosis, a disease people can catch from animals, especially after touching birth fluids or drinking raw milk.

2.3 Discussion questions:

- What happened to Dhabana Cas the goat?
- Why do you think Asha got sick?
- What could Asha have done differently?
- Have you seen sick animals in your community?

2.4 Activity: Health circle game materials:

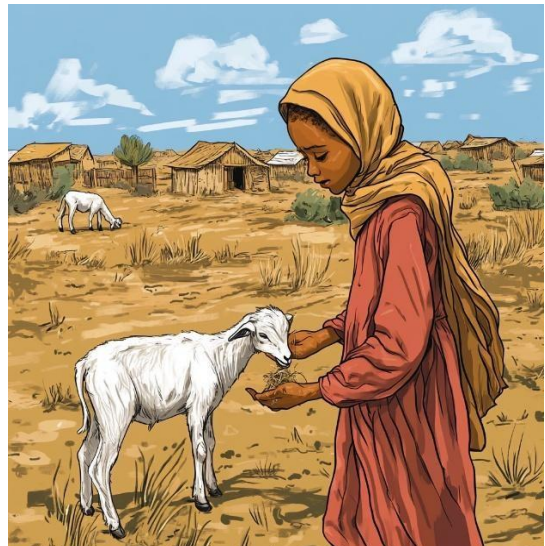
2.4.1 Chalk/sticks (for outdoors) or rope/strings (indoors)

2.5 Instructions:

- Draw 3 large intersecting circles on the ground labeled:
- Dad (People): stick figure
- Xoolo (Animals): goat or camel
- Deegaanka (Environment): tree or sun
- Give students cards written by these words (e.g., clean water, mosquito, raw milk, tick, handwashing, dead animal, open defecation)
- Ask each student to place the card in the correct circle, or in the middle if it affects all three
- Ask: How do these things connect us to our animals and environment?

2.6 Key messages

- Our health is connected to animals and the environment.
- Sick animals or dirty surroundings can make people sick.
- If we take care of animals and the environment, we take care of ourselves.
- This connection is called “One Health”: Dad + Xoolo + Deegaanka = Caafimaad Midaysan.



Taking care of animals is part of One Health. Healthy animals help families grow strong and happy.

2.7 Action points (For children)

- Wash hands after touching animals.
- Avoid drinking raw milk.
- Stay away from sick animals and tell an adult.
- Help keep your environment clean (no trash, no animal waste near home).

2.8 Facilitator tips

- Speak slowly and use visuals for low-literacy learners
- Encourage both boys and girls to share animal stories
- End with this chant:

*Caafimaadku waa mid: Dadkeena, Xooleheena, iyo Deegaankeena!
(Health is one – People, Animals, Environment!)*

3 LESSON 2: OUR ANIMALS, OUR HEALTH



Some animals can carry diseases like rabies. That's why it's important to keep animals healthy and teach children how to stay safe.

3.1 Objective

By the end of this session, students will:

- Understand that some diseases can pass from animals to humans.
- Learn about common zoonotic diseases in their communities (e.g., brucellosis, rabies).
- Know basic ways to protect themselves and their animals from these diseases.

3.2 Story - Asha's cousin and the angry dog

Asha is visiting her cousins in the rural area of Farda Lagu-Xidh village. One day, while playing near the water point (ceel biyood), they hear barking. A thin, wild-looking dog comes running toward them. Asha's cousin, Maydhane, throws a stone, but the dog bites his leg before running away. The wound is bleeding badly.

Maydhane's father takes him to the health post, where the health worker asks if the dog was acting strangely, was it foaming, biting for no reason, or stumbling? He says yes. The health worker says Maydhane may need treatment for rabies, a dangerous disease that can pass to people through bites from infected animals and he may need to be taken to Borama.

Asha remembers what happened with her goat Dhabana Cas, who gave birth to a dead baby and later made her sick with brucellosis. Now she understands when animals get sick, people can get sick too. She decides to learn how to stay safe.

3.3 Activity: “safe or not safe?”

Game materials:

- Drawings showing different animal situations (see examples below)
- A green card and a red card for each child

3.4 Instructions:

- Show or describe a scenario (e.g., “Touching a dead goat”, “Drinking boiled milk”, “Playing with a dog that’s foaming at the mouth”).
- Ask students to show green card if it's safe, or red card if it's not safe.
- After each one, ask: “*Why?*” and explain the risk.

3.5 Example scenarios:

- Drinking unboiled milk from a sick goat (incorrect)
- Staying away from a dog that’s acting strangely (correct)
- Touching an animal that has died suddenly (incorrect)
- Washing hands after helping feed animals (correct)
- Playing with a baby goat that looks healthy (incorrect)

3.6 Key messages

- Some diseases can pass from animals to people: These are called zoonoses.
- You can get sick from touching sick animals, birth fluids, or being bitten by strange animals.
- Never touch dead animals or ones that act angry or foam at the mouth.
- Always tell an adult or go to a health post if you’re bitten or feel sick after helping animals.

3.7 Action points (For children)

- Stay away from animals that act strange or are foaming.
- Never drink milk raw: Boil it first.
- Tell an adult if an animal dies suddenly or gives birth in a strange way.
- Wash hands after touching animals or cleaning animal pens (Kadib marka digada la xaaqo).

3.8 Facilitator tips

- Emphasize that animals and humans share the same environment, health is connected.
- Ask students to share stories of animal sickness or dog bites they’ve seen.
- Reinforce which animals are friendly vs. dangerous, especially stray dogs.
- Keep explanations simple: “Some animals carry germs that can make us sick.”

4 LESSON 3: CLEAN WATER AND CLEAN HOMES AREAS



Water sources, like ponds serve both animals and humans. But if animals make the water dirty, people can get sick. That's why it's important to keep water clean for both animals and people.

4.1 Objective

By the end of this session, children will:

- Understand how dirty water and unclean surroundings can make people sick.
- Recognize the risks of sharing water sources with animals.
- Learn simple actions like boiling water, sweeping, and handwashing to protect health.

4.2 Story- Asha and the water point

Asha and her brother go to fetch water early in the morning. They walk to the main village water point, where everyone brings their animals such as camels, cattle, goats, and sheep.

When they arrive, Asha sees animals standing in the water, some urinating and defecating near the edge. People are also walking into the water with bare feet, stirring up the mud. The water has a muddy color and smelling like animal waste, but everyone still fills their jerrycans from it. Back at home, Asha's younger brother drinks the water without it being boiled. A few days later, he develops a bad stomach pain and diarrhea. Their mother takes him to the health post. The health worker explains:

“When animals and people share water points, and the water is not boiled, it can spread diseases like diarrhea, worms, or typhoid.” Asha learns that even if water looks clean, it can still carry germs. She decides to help her family by boiling drinking water, keeping their yard clean, and reminding her younger siblings to wash their hands after using the latrine or touching animals.

4.3 Illustration discussion

Approach:

Show children a set of simple illustrations that shows a water point being contaminated by humans and animals ask questions to encourage reflection and discussion.

4.4 Instructions for the facilitator:

- Show one picture at a time.

Ask the children:

1. Is this clean or dirty?
2. What could happen if someone drinks this water?
3. What should we do here?

- Allow them to point, describe, or act out what they see if they can't explain it in full words.
- Reinforce correct answers with praise and explain gently when they miss something.
- This visual approach builds understanding through guided observation, not abstract reasoning or literacy.

4.5 Key messages

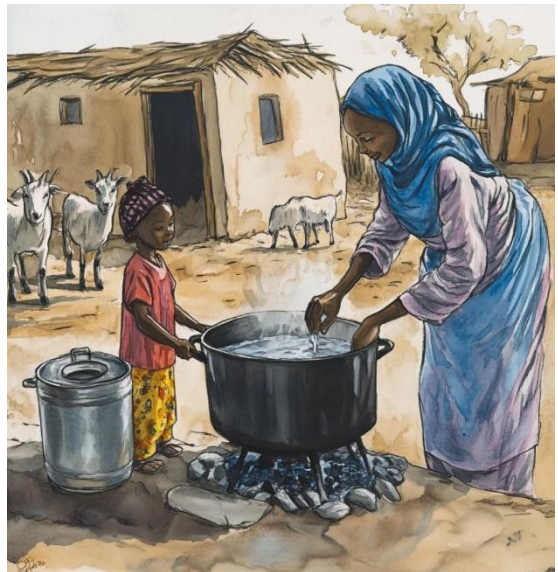
- Dirty water and dirty yards can make people and animals sick.
- Boil drinking water to remove invisible germs.
- Keep animals away from water jugs and food areas.
- Sweep your yard to keep away flies.
- Wash hands after using the toilet, after touching animals, and before eating.

4.6 Action points (For children)

- Remind adults to boil water for drinking.
- Help keep the yard clean and swept.
- Keep water containers covered and off the ground.
- Wash your hands with soap or ash and water when needed.

4.7 Facilitator tips

- Let children talk about their own homes and what they've seen at water points.
- Reinforce that children have power to help keep homes healthy



A mother and daughter boil water to make it safe for drinking. Clean water helps protect families from diseases that can spread between animals and people

5 LESSON 4: MOSQUITOES, TICKS, AND SICK ANIMALS



Many goats have died suddenly. Health workers are talking to the community about Rift Valley fever (RVF), a disease that can spread from animals to people. Keeping animals healthy helps protect the whole family.

5.1 Objective

- By the end of this session, children will:
- Understand that insects like mosquitoes can carry diseases that make people and animals sick.
- Learn how Rift Valley fever spreads through mosquitoes and contact with sick animals.
- Know how to protect themselves, their families, and animals during outbreaks.

5.2 Story: Asha's mother and the outbreak in the village

It was the rainy season in Asha's village. The grass had turned green and the animals had plenty to eat, but so did the mosquitoes. Around this time, people in the village began to notice unusual things. Pregnant goats and sheep were losing their babies, young animals were dying suddenly, and several people were falling sick with fever and body pain. There were rumors of a disease spreading, something the health worker called *Rift Valley fever*.

At Asha's home, one of their pregnant goats gave birth too early, and the baby goat was born dead. Later that day, another young goat died unexpectedly. Asha's mother buried both animals with her bare hands, not knowing it could be dangerous. She didn't wear gloves or wash with soap afterward. Two days later, Asha's mother began to feel unwell. She had a high fever, her joints ached, and her eyes were sore. She couldn't eat or do her usual chores.

Worried, Asha's father took her to the health post. The health worker listened carefully and said, "There's an outbreak of Rift Valley fever in this area. People can get sick from touching infected animals or being bitten by mosquitoes that have fed on them. You must rest, drink clean water, and stay away from sick or dead animals."

The health worker explained that Rift Valley fever doesn't spread from person to person, but it can be dangerous, especially for those who handle animals. Asha's mother began to feel better after some rest and supportive treatments. When she returned home, the whole family made changes. They started sleeping under mosquito nets, covered their water containers, and avoided touching any sick animals without protection. Asha helped keep the compound clean and reminded her younger siblings to always tell an adult if an animal died or looked sick.

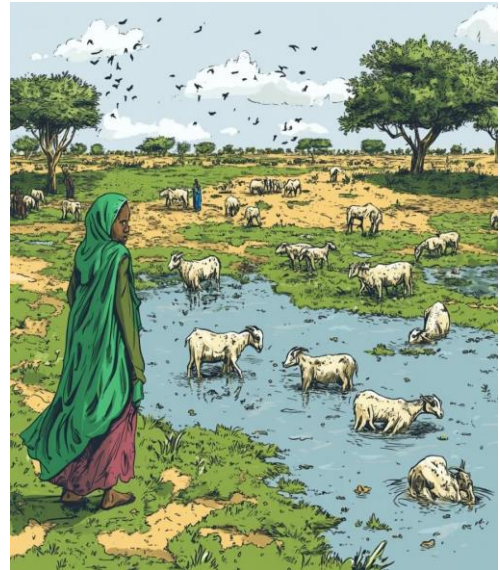
She now understood that during the rainy season, both animals and people could get sick, and small things, like a mosquito bite or handling a dead goat, could carry big risks.

5.3 Key messages

- Rift Valley fever (RVF) can spread from mosquitoes and from touching sick animals.
- Animals that abort babies or die suddenly may be infected.
- People who touch blood, birth fluids, or dead animals are at risk especially without gloves.
- Mosquito bites can also spread disease.
- RVF does not spread from person to person.

5.4 Action points (For children)

- Never touch dead animals rather tell an adult instead.
- Always use a mosquito net at night.
- Help cover water containers to stop mosquito eggs.
- Tell your family or community health worker if many animals get sick or die suddenly.



Goats are grazing in wet, mosquito-filled areas. Mosquitoes can carry diseases like RVF. Keeping animals away from mosquito breeding sites helps prevent sickness in animals and people

5.5 Facilitator tips

- Emphasize the link between rainy seasons, mosquitoes, and disease outbreaks.
- Reinforce the importance of not touching sick animals, even small ones.
- Keep it simple: “Mosquitoes and sick animals can pass germs to people.”
- Highlight that kids can help protect their families by noticing signs early and sharing information.

6 LESSON 5: SAFE FOOD AND SAFE HANDS



Boy washing his hands with soap and water

6.1 Objective

By the end of this session, students will:

- Understand that germs can spread through dirty hands and unwashed food.
- Learn the importance of handwashing before eating or preparing food.
- Know that even food from home can make people sick if it's not handled safely.

6.2 Story- Adan forgets to wash his hands

It was a busy morning at Asha's home. Her father, Adan, had just finished cleaning the animal shelter. He swept up the goat manure and carried it to the edge of the compound. While walking back, he passed by the mat where his wife was serving breakfast. Without thinking, Adan picked up a hot piece of liver with his bare hands and ate it.

That evening, Adan began to feel sick. He had stomach pain, nausea, and diarrhea. Asha's mother took him to the health post. The health worker asked if he had eaten anything with dirty hands. When she heard about the manure and meat, she explained:

"Manure contains tiny germs that can make people very sick if they get into food. That's why we always wash our hands after cleaning animals, especially before we eat."

Asha listened closely. She decided to always remind her family to wash their hands — especially after touching animals or cleaning the compound.

6.3 Activity: "When to wash?"

Game materials: Pictures showing different daily activities:

- Preparing animal source food
- Washing hands with soap
- Serving food in an unclean environment

6.4 Instructions:

- Show one picture at a time.
- Ask: "Should we wash hands before or after this?"
- Children raise hands and explain why.
- Reinforce correct answers with simple explanations.

6.5 Key messages

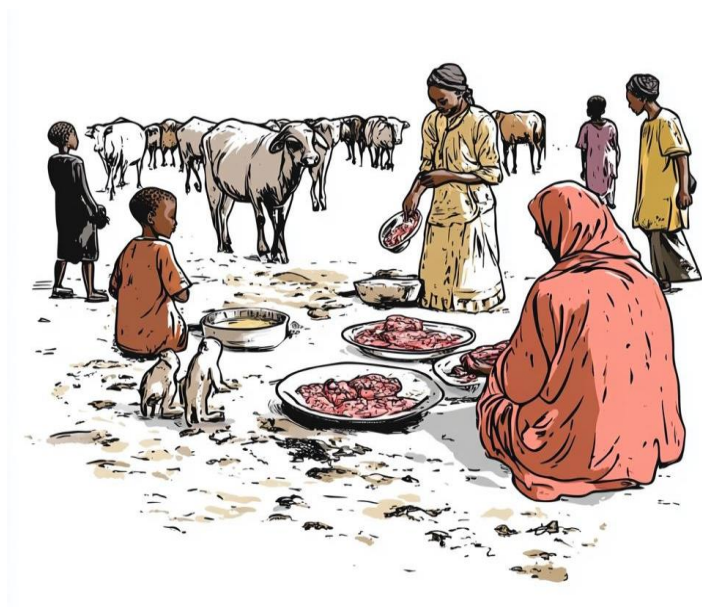
- Always wash hands with soap before eating or preparing food.
- Manure and animal waste carry germs that can make people sick.
- Germs are small, they hide on dirty hands even if we can't see them.
- Handwashing protects everyone in the family, especially children.

6.6 Action points (For children)

- Wash your hands after touching animals or manure.
- Remind your family to wash hands before eating.
- Don't eat food with dirty hands even if you are very hungry.
- Help keep eating areas clean and free from flies.

6.7 Facilitator tips

- Show handwashing using a real jerrycan or tippy tap.
- Keep language simple: "Germs are invisible but strong, soap removes them."
- Let children act out the story and handwashing process.
- Ask: "When do you forget to wash your hands?" and help build new habits.



A Somali family preparing and eating meat in a rural pastoralist area. Livestock roam nearby, and food is handled in an open environment, highlighting the importance of hygiene and handwashing during food preparation and meals

7 LESSON 6: FIGHTING THE STRONG GERMS



A farmer treating his goat with antibiotics. He should have consulted with Animal Health worker

7.1 Objective

By the end of this session, children will:

- Understand that misusing medicine can make germs stronger.
- Learn that only trained health workers should give medicine to people or animals.

7.2 Story - Asha and the strong germs

One morning, Asha's father, Adan, noticed one of their goats coughing and looking weak. He remembered some leftover medicine from when their cow was sick last month. "Maybe it will help this goat too," he thought, and gave the medicine without asking the community animal health worker (CAHW).

A few days later, the goat still wasn't better and now another goat was coughing too. When the CAHW visited the village, Asha told him what happened. He checked the goats and explained,

"This isn't the right medicine. When we give medicine in the wrong way like using leftovers, giving it to the wrong animal, or not finishing the dose the germs can become strong. We call them *strong germs*, and they learn how to fight back."

"Even if we give the medicine again?" Asha asked.

"Yes," said the CAHW. "Sometimes, even the best medicines stop working if germs become resistant. That's why we should only use medicine from trained animal or human health workers."

Asha nodded. "From now on, no guessing. We ask before giving medicine."

7.3 Key messages

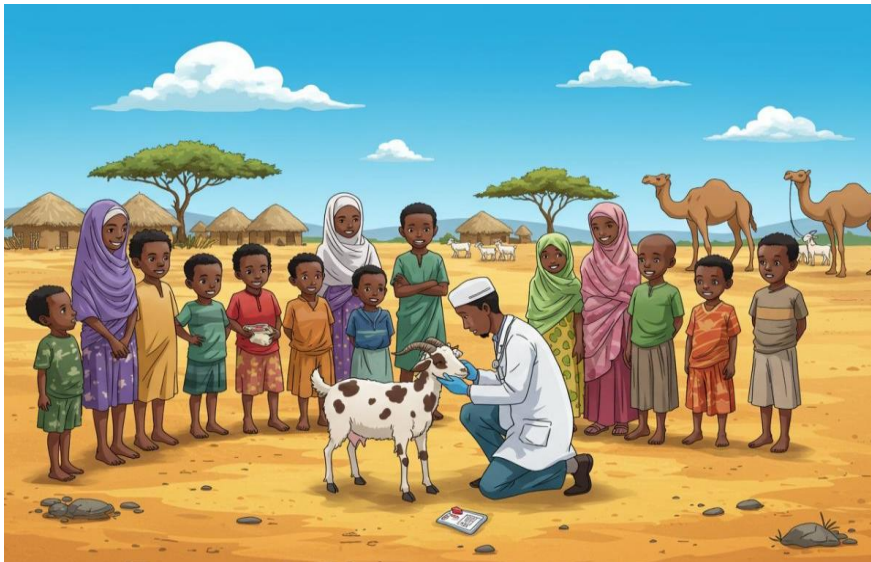
- Some germs learn to fight back if we use medicine the wrong way. These are called strong germs (antimicrobial resistance).
- Don't use leftover medicine. Don't share medicine.
- Only take or give medicine that comes from a trained health worker or animal doctor.
- Preventing sickness by keeping clean is better than using medicine later.

7.4 Action points (For children)

- Wash hands often, especially after touching animals or before eating.
- Remind your family to ask the health worker before giving any medicine.
- Keep your surroundings clean to help stop germs from spreading.

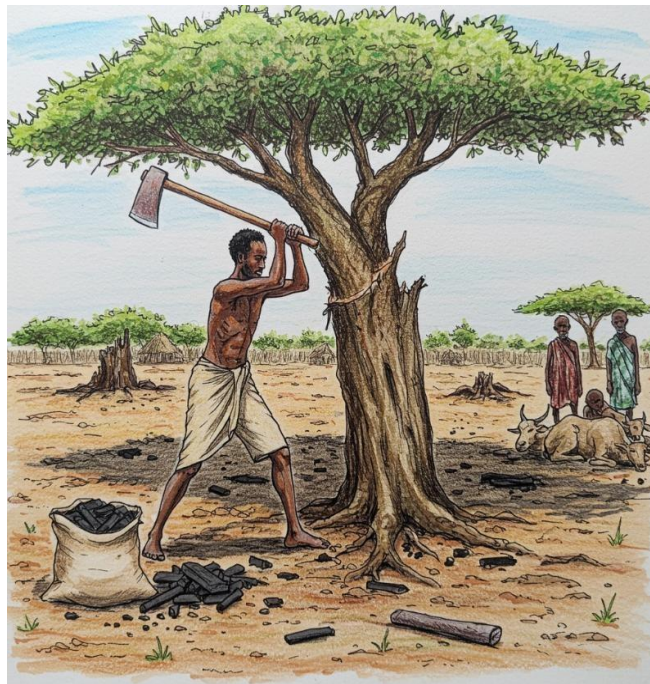
7.5 Facilitator tips

- Use simple words like "strong germs" instead of "antimicrobial resistance".
- Reinforce the idea that germs can become "smart" if we give them too many chances to learn.
- Use real-life examples children might have seen (e.g., animal sickness, medicine in the house).
- Highlight both animal and human health – same message for both



An animal health worker shows children how to keep animals healthy. Healthy animals mean healthy people and a clean environment.

8 LESSON 7: PROTECTING OUR TREES AND LAND



A man cuts down a large tree to make charcoal, while others watch nearby. Cutting too many trees harms the land, animals, and future shade for families.

8.1 Objective

By the end of this session, children will:

- Understand why trees and vegetation are important for the health of people, animals, and the environment.
- Recognize how cutting down too many trees (e.g., for charcoal) can harm water, soil, and shade.
- Learn simple actions they and their families can take to protect the land.

8.2 Story: Asha and the missing shade tree

Asha and her friends used to play under a big acacia tree near their home. The goats rested there, and the family used the shade to cook and relax during hot afternoons. One day, Asha came home to find the tree had been cut down. Her older cousin had sold it to make charcoal for money.

Weeks, Asha noticed the area was dustier and hotter. Without the tree, her goats had no place to rest. The soil away in the wind. Asha's younger brother got nosebleeds and headaches from the heat and dust.

When the community health worker visited, she explained that trees are important for keeping the environment healthy. "Trees help the land stay cool, protect water, and give animals shelter. Cutting too many trees can hurt all of us," she said.

The village decided to plant new trees together and protect the few big ones left. Asha helped carry water for the new seedlings and told her cousin, "We need trees more than charcoal."

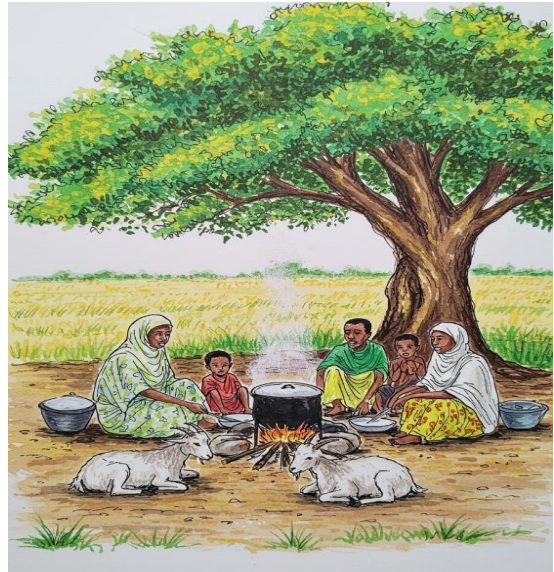
8.3 Activity: Tree trouble or Tree treasure?

Game materials: Picture cards showing scenes like:

- A tree being cut for charcoal
- A family cooking under a tree
- Goats resting in shade
- Dust blowing across a treeless plain
- Children watering small trees

8.4 Instructions:

- Show each picture and ask: “Is this helping or hurting our health?”
- Let children raise thumbs up or down.
- Reinforce how trees help protect soil, water, animals, and people.



A family enjoys a peaceful meal under the shade of a big tree. Trees provide comfort, shelter, and protection for people and animals in hot climates.

8.5 Key messages

- Trees are important for people, animals, and the land.
- Cutting too many trees leads to dust, heat, and poor soil.
- Charcoal brings short-term money but long-term harm.
- Planting and protecting trees helps the whole community.

8.6 Action points (For children)

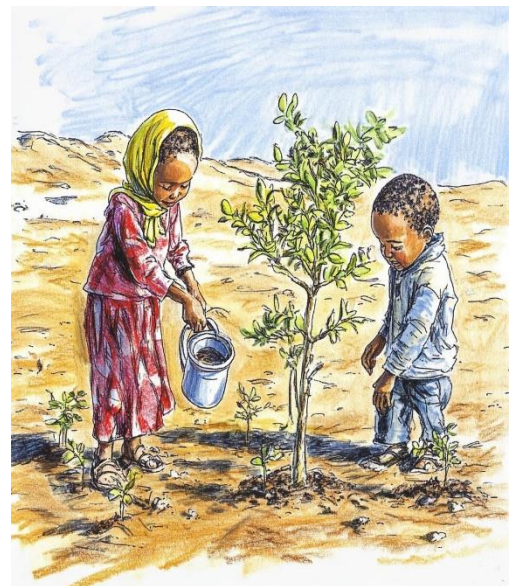
- Don't cut trees.
- Help water young trees or protect tree roots.
- Talk to elders about planting more trees for shade and health.

8.7 Facilitator tips

- Ask: “What trees grow near your home?” or “Have you seen trees being cut?”
- Discuss both the need for firewood and how to balance it with tree planting.

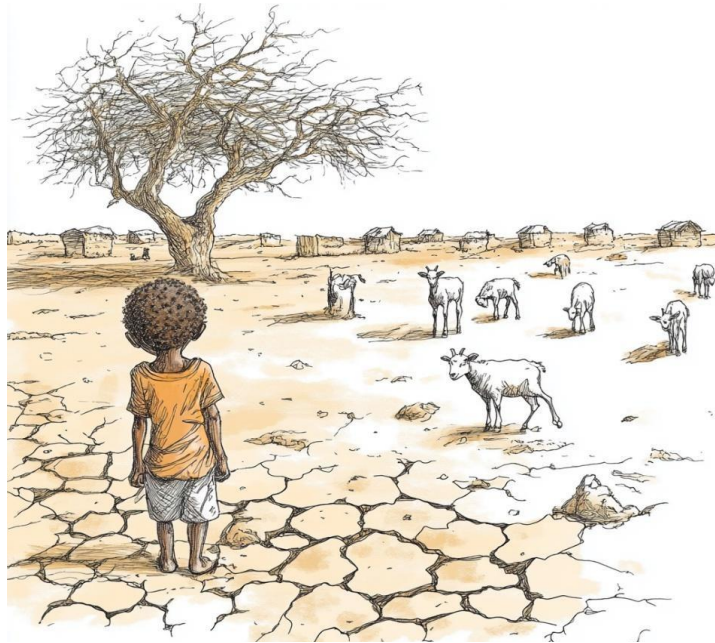
End with this chant:

“Seegaanku Waa
Nolosheena”



Children care for a small tree by giving it water. Planting and protecting trees helps the environment stay healthy for animals and people.

9 LESSON 8: WHEN THE RAINS DON'T COME: DROUGHT AND OUR HEALTH



A young boy stands on cracked earth as thin goats search for food in a dry Somali village. Drought has dried up the land, affecting both animals and people

9.1 Objective

By the end of this session, children will:

- Understand how drought affects animals, people, and the environment.
- Recognize the health dangers of drought (hunger, thirst, sickness, conflict).
- Learn what actions help protect families and animals in dry times.

Story - Asha and the dry season

The rains didn't come this year. Asha's family has fewer goats, and the grass is gone. The water point is dry. Asha's younger brother has dry lips and cries from hunger. Their animals are thin and weak. Trees have no leaves, and dust blows across the land. A community elder visits the village and tells children about past droughts.

He shares how planting trees, storing water, and caring for each other helped people survive. Asha joins the village group that fetches water, shares food, and helps younger children stay cool in the shade.

9.2 Key messages

- Drought makes people, animals, and the land sick.
- Water and food are precious use them wisely.
- Help your family stay healthy: drink clean water, share food, and rest in shade.
- Work together as a community during hard times (Performing Roob doon is essential).

9.3 Action points (For children)

- Don't waste water help keep it clean.
- Remind adults to save food and water during dry seasons.
- Help care for younger children, the sick, and animals.

9.4 Facilitator tips

- Use real stories or drawings of dry land, thin animals, dried water points.
- Reinforce: *One Health = Caring for People + Animals + Environment during drought.*



Children and women walk long distances across the dry plains to collect water. In times of drought, finding clean water becomes a daily struggle.