Internship Report
Group: Poverty and Gender
Research Team: Index-Based Livestock Insurance
Intern: Ivi Demi
School: Cornell University
Major: International Agriculture and Rural Development
Minor: Applied Economics and Management

The following report documents the internship of Ivi Demi from June 1st, 2011 – July 30th, 2011 at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi, Kenya, as a member of the Index-Based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) research team in the Poverty and Gender group. This summary will provide insight into the roles of IBLI and the greater ILRI organization, as well as present a description of Ivi Demi’s on-the-job experiences and activities. A critical analysis and evaluation of the attachment and organization as a whole will be presented within the conclusion of this report.

Attention: Any opinions or observations expressed are solely those of the individual compiling this report and do not necessarily represent the views of the ILRI organization or any of its employees, donors, or affiliates.
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Foreword and Acknowledgement

Before continuing in my analysis of my summer internship experience, I would first like to acknowledge and thank those who have made this journey both possible and enjoyable throughout. I would first like to thank my research professor at Cornell University, Professor Chris Barrett, for turning me towards ILRI in my search for an international internship to fulfill my major’s abroad requirement. My research supervisors Erin Lentz and Cynthia Mathys at Cornell University were also extremely helpful in answering my questions and concerns throughout my preparations for the trip as well. I would like to thank the advisor of the International Agriculture and Rural Development program in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University, Peter Hobbs, for his advice in preparing me for my internship, as well as Diane Munn of the department as well. Their patience and wisdom was extremely helpful, and for that, I thank them.

From the ILRI institution, I would like to thank Andrew Mude, the IBLI project leader, for extending me an offer to work in Nairobi for the summer. With a busy schedule no doubt for much of this year’s earlier sales period, he was extremely prompt in answering any and all of my questions and concerns beforehand, making my transition into life here in Kenya much easier. I owe many thanks as well to Brenda Wandera, who has been an incredible asset to me for my time here at ILRI. She has always been quick to solve any of my administrative issues throughout my time at ILRI and she facilitated my work flow during my office tenure in a way that always kept me engaged with what I was doing. She was also instrumental in helping me find more long term housing outside of the research compound which I am very grateful for. Next, I would like to thank my fellow co-workers on the IBLI team, particularly Moha, Diba, Grace, Zipora, Shibia, Oscar, Nobu, and everyone else I have had the pleasure of working alongside with this past summer. One of my key goals for this internship experience was to interact with my fellow workers, not just during office hours, but really get to know them outside of the working environment as well. With the friendliness and generosity of the crew working with me on this project, I certainly exceeded my expectations for this goal. From my first day in the office, everyone took me in as one of their own. They showed me the ropes, accompanied
me to lunch and tea, and even escorted me around Nairobi to show me the sights on the
weekends. My transition into working for the IBLI team here at ILRI was made special not just
by the value of getting an inside look at how an organization and a research team such as this
runs, but also by the way my fellow office staff made me feel at home. To them, I owe a lot, and
I thank them all from the bottom of my heart.

To Oscar, thank you so much for your help in getting me accustomed to the ILRI bus system in
the mornings and afternoons. It can be quite a challenge for an outsider like me to learn the
routes quickly, so I appreciated your help immensely. To Grace and Zipora, your presence in the
office was always special and I know the rest of the office appreciates not only your hard work,
but your positive attitudes as well. I wish you both the best of luck. To Nobu and Shibia, you
are both incredibly hardworking and dedicated members of the team and I learned a lot from
sitting in on meetings with you guys and picking your brains about ILRI and fieldwork. I am
glad I had the opportunity to run into both of you one last time in Marsabit and I wish you both
the best of luck with your coming work in Moyale. Finally, to Moha and Diba, I have too many
thanks to include within this report, so I will try to keep it brief. You were the first people to
approach me during my first day of work at ILRI and have stuck by me for this entire process.
Not only has your camaraderie made working here at ILRI that much more enjoyable, but it has
allowed me to really get a glimpse of what the Kenyan lifestyle is all about. You both have
taken time out of your schedules to drive me around Nairobi and the surrounding areas, showing
me the sites, and providing me with a taste of the local culture. We have had some amazing
times together, especially with our experiences working in the field in Marsabit, and I will never
forget your incredible kindness and youthful spirits. I wish you both continued success at ILRI
and with all of your future endeavors.

Last, but certainly not least, I have one final thanks for the ILRI institution as a whole. Having
had a variety of other internship and work experiences in the past, I had yet to have the chance to
work for a research and development organization such as ILRI. The compound and its
employees have made my time here in Kenya that much more enjoyable with their open arms
and open minds. I can say for sure that this has been one of the best experiences of my life, and I
owe it all to the welcoming attitude of all of the staff and employees at ILRI. Thank you for this
wonderful journey and I will certainly never forget my time here.
Part 1: Introduction to the Institute

1.1 ILRI at Large

The International Livestock Research Institute is a not-for-profit, nongovernmental, independent research organization dedicated to utilizing livestock as a development tool. The organization has realized the importance of maintaining livestock to so many developing world populations, occasionally contributing upwards of 75% of the agricultural productivity of developing nations. With this knowledge, their research teams, scientists, economists, and staff work towards prevention techniques that reduce or eliminate many of the policies and conditions which hold back livestock development in so many regions of the world. This includes both natural conditions, such as devastating diseases, unfavorable weather conditions, and lack of water sources, as well as more human-induced situations such as degraded lands, prevention of market access, or other government intervention programs that impede livestock development. ILRI’s goal is to open up three paths towards poverty reduction for those who depend on livestock for their well-being: securing assets, improving pastoral productivity, and increasing market participation (“Why Livestock Matter,” ILRI.org).

ILRI hopes that by improving those agricultural systems in nations which rely heavily on livestock as a source of income they can create a better world for the poor. Their mission statement envisions bringing high-quality science together with capacity-building in order to reduce poverty and create a sustainable development environment for livestock keepers all across the globe. ILRI’s work involves much intricate collaboration with partners and allies from different organizations around the world, both at the national and international level, in completing livestock research (“Mission and Strategy,” ILRI.org).

Since 1994, ILRI has been a member of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR), which conducts food and environmental research to help decrease poverty and increase food security while protecting natural resources. This relationship has allowed ILRI’s work to spread to many tropical regions of the globe, including many regions of Africa,
Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. ILRI maintains its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya with a principal research campus located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (“Mission and Strategy,” ILRI.org).

With the connections it maintains and help from international donors, ILRI is able to coordinate and maintain a variety of research projects and endeavors. Aside from dealing with economic problems related to broadening market access to the poor and reducing the vulnerability of marginal peoples and systems, ILRI takes on a variety of other challenges. Agriculturally, they work with the sustainable intensification of smallholder crop-livestock systems and with animal genetic sources. Environmentally, they maintain several projects related to reducing the effects of global climate change. Medically, they maintain several labs dedicated to the research of emerging diseases and vaccine technologies for orphan animal diseases. It is apparent that ILRI’s global reputation has allowed its projects to span a wide array of difficult challenges that the developing world faces today (“Research Projects,” ILRI.org).

1.2 Poverty and Gender

Within ILRI lie a number of groups targeted towards providing research and information for a specific facet of development. The Poverty and Gender group focuses on the reduction of poverty and the empowering of women in ways which are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. In order to accomplish this, the group’s research works towards achieving greater connections between livestock research for development and poverty alleviation and gender equity through a number of ways. Firstly, they work to gain a better understanding of how livestock play a role in the livelihoods of the poor, specifically poor women. This involves gaining more knowledge on how livestock research for development is able to reduce poverty and empower women in different regions. Next, they work towards gaining more systematic and innovative measurements of research outcomes and impacts in the field. This allows for the correct communication of information and proper analysis of new trends and discoveries. Lastly, they work towards gaining a more effective stakeholder/partner engagement to manage more suitable results-oriented livestock research for development partnerships (“Poverty and Gender,” ILRI.org).
The way in which the Poverty and Gender group goes about achieving its research goals is by working with and conducting numerous joint research projects with scientists from other ILRI groups as well as development partners in other research institutes. More so than some of the other groups conducting research at ILRI, the Poverty and Gender group issues and challenges cut across many of the other groups and themes present at the ILRI campus. Because of this, they often operate outside the lines of their structure in order to facilitate the progress of their research goals (“Poverty and Gender,” ILRI.org).

1.3 IBLI Research Team

My time at ILRI was spent as a member of the Index-Based Livestock Insurance project team, a research project within the Poverty and Gender group at ILRI. The group’s main focus is on collaborating with various partners from universities, institutes, and businesses, both local and international, in order to design, develop, and implement a market-mediated index-based livestock insurance product to protect pastoralists and agro-pastoralists from any drought-related asset losses they may face. The team has focused its research thus far on the drought prone Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) where drought-related livestock mortality is most common and threatens local livelihoods. Many of the tribes in these regions maintain a very traditional way of life, relying solely or partly on livestock for their main source of income. As a result, particularly brutal droughts which lead to high livestock mortality rates can have devastating effects on the asset levels of these livestock keepers, rendering them among some of the most vulnerable populations of rural poor (“Overview,” ILRI.org/IBLI).

The index-based livestock insurance product that the research project team has been developing and implementing represents a very promising innovation whose goal is to allow the benefits of insurance products to protect the climate-related risks which these rural smallholder farmers are being exposed to. This product monitors risk based on the realization of an outcome, namely the amount and distribution of rainfall over a season, which cannot be influenced by insurers or policy holders. Thus, the entire process is made transparent and simple to follow. The way in which it is designed to monitor vegetation cover through satellite imagery files already in existence since the 80’s makes the product easy to administer and more cost-effective to develop and trade throughout multiple arid regions. As of now, the initial phase of the project has been
completed, which includes an extensive program of field work and stakeholder consultation. The IBLI insurance contracts have been modeled, priced, and tested among target clientele and the initial pilot program was administered in the Marsabit district of Northern Kenya in early 2010 (“Overview,” ILRI.org/IBLI).

Overall, the IBLI project team along with their stakeholders, donors, and researchers hope to achieve several key objectives with the implementation of this index-based insurance product in multiple arid regions around the world. First, they hope to stabilize asset accumulation in these districts by enhancing economic growth. Next, they are looking to crowd-in finance for investment and growth in the regions. Lastly, they hope their work will stem the downward spiral of many vulnerable livestock-keeping households in these regions into poverty. With these aspirations in mind, the project team moves forward in training and educating the people of these regions on the benefits of an index-based livestock insurance product (“FAQs,” ILRI.org/IBLI).

The efforts of the IBLI project team have not gone unnoticed among the international community either. Project leader Andrew Mude and his staff have garnered several awards and honorable mentions from national and international committees for their achievements thus far with their product. They have received a best-practice award from the Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network in recognition of their innovative approach of combining scientific research and practice. They have also received a Vision 2030 ICT Innovation Award from the Kenya ICT Board for their efforts in designing and implementing an insurance design that allows the benefits of insurance to be made available to poor and remote clients. More recently, the IBLI project team had an opportunity to highlight their livestock insurance innovation for Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and other Kenyan dignitaries during the launch of the Kenyan government’s “Open Data Web Portal.” It is clear that the innovative approach which IBLI is taking to answer the challenges of livestock research for development are gaining a lot of support from public figures and organizations (“ILRI News,” ILRI.org).

1.4 Profile of Management Team

Like many other nongovernmental organizations, ILRI is governed by a Board of Trustees. At the helm of the Board is the Director General, Carlos Seré. Sitting at the position of Director of
Partnerships and Communications and the current Secretary to the Board of Trustees is Bruce Scott. The Board also appoints a Chair for the Board of Trustees, which is currently filled by Knut Hove. The rest of the Board of Trustees is composed of active members, including: Dieter Schillinger, Emmy Simmons, James Dargie, Khatijah Yusoff, Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, Lorne Babiuk, Modibo Tiémoko Traore, Nieves R. Confesor, Romano M. Kiome, Samir K. Barua, and Wondirad Mandefro Gebru.

There is also a management team in place at ILRI which governs respective themes or departments at the ILRI campus. At the position of Senior Advisor to the Director General sits Gabrielle Persley. John McDermott currently serves as the Deputy Director General of Research. Joan Sawe is the current Director of Finance and Operations. Sitting at the position of Director of Human Resources is Margaret MacDonald-Levy. Segenet Kelemu serves as the Director of the BeCA Hub. There are three appointed Theme Directors at ILRI who oversee a staff of researchers and employees underneath them: Vish Nene is the current Theme Director of Biotechnology, Steve Staal is the current Theme Director of Market Opportunities, and Shirley Tarawali is the current Theme Director of People, Livestock and the Environment. Alongside them are several Team Leaders who oversee a staff of employees as well: Nancy Johnson is the current Team Leader of the Poverty and Gender group, Mario Herero is the current Team Leader of the Sustainable Livestock Futures group, and Jane Poole is the current Team Leader of the Research Methods group. Finally, at the position of Head of the Capacity Strengthening Unit is Purvi Mehta. I have included a diagram below of the management order of the ILRI staff, as per what the ILRI website provides ("Management,” ILRI.org).
Part 2: The Internship Experience

2.1 Objectives of the Internship

An internship, at its core, provides numerous opportunities for both the hiring organization and the individual being hired. I feel that this was no different in the case of my internship with ILRI. My choice to apply with ILRI for an internship opportunity was allowing me to fulfill multiple goals I had set for myself before finishing my Bachelor’s degree. Firstly, as part of my major’s requirements, it is mandatory that a student spend time abroad studying or working in a developing nation or working for a development organization. I had made the decision early on
in my college career to not pursue a study abroad program, but to instead look for a work opportunity. I felt that this would eventually be more helpful in preparing me for the working world or further education in graduate school. I am finding this to be very true, as the knowledge I have gained from my experience with ILRI has been incredibly valuable and eye-opening to me.

A further objective of mine during this internship experience was to perhaps gain the opportunity to complete some form of field work. I had heard through my research professor that ILRI provides their interns with opportunities to work with survey data or other information gathering programs in the field among areas of rural Kenya. This really attracted me to the organization and is a key reason why I chose to contact them. Additionally, I hoped to use my internship experience to try and form a network of contacts and relationships with my supervisors and peers. This was not only in hopes of gaining advice for potential careers I am attempting to focus on in the coming years, but to also gain the opportunity to learn more about a culture I had never been in contact with before. I have always considered myself to be a people person; I enjoy meeting and learning about the lives of people all over the globe. I think this internship with ILRI has really opened me up to an amazing group of people, my colleagues, who I hope to continue to keep in touch with and perhaps work with or visit in the future. I had heard about the friendliness of the Kenyan people from friends who had visited the country in the past, but my expectations were far surpassed. The hospitality and generosity I have experienced during my time here has made this one of the best experiences of my life.

The final objective I had for my internship with ILRI was to try and provide as much assistance and insight to the IBLI project team whom I worked alongside of. I am still a fairly young student with a lot of time ahead of me to grow into a professional in whichever career path I eventually choose. But I like to think that the life I have lived in my few years has been filled with many experiences and opportunities to gain knowledge to share with others. I have done my best to take on many responsibilities with the research work and leadership positions I have taken up at my university and during my past internship experiences. I do my best to bring my drive and passion into every new endeavor I take on and I feel I have done so with my time at ILRI. I hope that the insight and attitude I have brought to the team, as well as some of my suggestions which I will include later in this report, will ultimately turn out to be helpful to the
project team. This opportunity has made an incredible impact in cementing my passion and desire for working in the development field. If I was able to make even a fraction of the impact on ILRI as the organization has made on me, than I know this internship experience has been successful.

2.2 Limitations of the Internship

With an organization as expansive and influential as ILRI, the limitations of an internship with them are few and far between. But it is worth mentioning a couple limitations which I faced during my time at ILRI which were not a result of any of the organization’s actions, but simply side effects of the internship timeline. That being said, the first and largest limitation I faced was the lack of enough time to be involved with more aspects of the IBLI project’s implementation. Due to previous engagements prior to the start of my university’s next school year, I have to be back on campus earlier than usual, up to three weeks before the start of classes. This has forced me to cut my internship to no more than two months. I would have enjoyed exploring some more of the rural regions in Northern Kenya further, particularly during the training period in early August. It would have been nice to see this portion of the IBLI contract period carried out in person since I have read so much about it. It would also have been nice to perhaps see some of the other groups on the ILRI campus in action or to get involved with some of their projects, even if only temporarily or just to watch over and learn, but again, the time constraint was too much.

Another limitation which I faced, not so much during my office work, but in the latter part of my internship during my field work in Marsabit, was my inability to speak Kiswahili. Often times when my fellow co-workers and I communicated with some of the locals, their English was too poor or my accent was too thick for them to understand everything I was saying. It forced my colleagues to have to translate for me often during our field work so that we would often be having two conversations, one with my colleagues and the locals, and then the translation between my colleagues and me. Like I mentioned, it was not an issue I faced at the compound, but it did provide a bit of a limitation in the field. Perhaps I could have prepared better by bringing along a language book to try and learn a bit of Kiswahili along the way, but there was little else I could have done. I’m not sure if ILRI provides any services such as this, but perhaps
it would be interesting to provide outside workers with no knowledge of Kiswahili with some language training. This could be done in the form of a tutor offering lessons at the compound for an hour or two after work hours for those interested. Other than these two small limitations though, my time at ILRI was not impeded by anything of major gravity.

2.3 Orientation to IBLI

Transitioning into the office work with the IBLI project team was a simple process, but one that was made even easier by the help of Brenda Wandera and the rest of the team staff. They not only provided me with documents and sources to browse through to learn more about the project, but they also were there to answer any questions for me about how the office operated, how the intricacies of the technical portions of the insurance product operated, or any other concerns I had along the way. Thus, the first couple of weeks with the IBLI project team involved me reading over project guide books, reports, or any other materials that could introduce me to all facets of the index-based livestock insurance product and how it is developed, distributed, and taught among the locals.

Having had the opportunity to work under Professor Chris Barrett at Cornell University for the past year, who was a research contributor for the IBLI product, I have had exposure to the IBLI product in the past, but I had yet to grasp every detail of how the product worked. Being given the chance to educate myself further, I took the opportunity to read through as much material as possible. Along the way, as I do with any material I am studying, I took extensive notes on every aspect of the product, from the creation of the index to the training of VIPs. I feel I have summarized the major points of most of the IBLI documents I have come across and have taken out only the key points in preparing my document. I will make my notes available to the rest of the team, perhaps with the intent that they can be used to quickly train anyone on certain aspects of the product without having to look at multiple sources.

2.4 Administrative Tasks

On a day-to-day basis, aside from any of the main projects that I was focused on, a portion of my time was dedicated to completing general office administrative tasks required by my superiors and other members of the IBLI research team. Part of this included the traditional copying of
papers, retrieval of documents, or delivery of materials to other offices on the ILRI campus. I was also asked to take notes at any of our team meetings or consultations with outside companies and organizations, particularly when we were meeting with potential production companies for our video extension tool project. I spent some time proofreading or revising written materials for members of the office as well. When it came down to contacting VIPs during the portion of my internship surrounding the improvement of the extension tools, this required a lot of phone calls and phone interviews with field supervisors and VIPs in order to understand problems they faced in the field. Lastly, I was asked at various times throughout my tenure to produce documents, pamphlets, or other educational materials in regards to the IBLI project. With any of the materials I produced, I coordinated with Andrew Mude and Brenda Wandera for any changes or consultative advice. As a whole, any of the administrative work I was involved with was straight-forward and simple. I did not experience any problems with this facet of office work at ILRI.

2.5 Website Organization

One of the earlier projects that I was involved with during my time with the IBLI team was in reorganizing and developing certain portions of the IBLI research team website at ilri.org/ibli. The site itself is run on a Wordpress blog format with the majority of the same features available to the website developers as most other blog sites: widgets, updated posts, latest news feeds, RSS feeds, video uploading capabilities, comment sections, etc. The site itself already contained a lot of information and posted articles before I began working with it. In that sense, the site was already heavily developed. The issues lay in the formatting and organization of the website as a whole. One of the first things I noticed when first visiting the site was that it did not seem very navigationally friendly, particularly to anyone who would not be very familiar with surfing the internet. The issue here is that some of the pastoralists and rural farmers who may enter a cyber in their hometowns to check on the state of the index may not be so familiar with browsing and navigating, making it extremely difficult for them to find the information they desire on the website.

With the website project, I first set out in reorganizing some of the sections and pages in order to make it easier to navigate for first-time users. I have previously worked with a Wordpress blog
account at my university, so getting to work on this portion of the project was very quick and painless for me. Firstly, I made sure to highlight the indexes as much as possible on both the sidebar and main articles of the site. I think these are the most sought-after portions of the website, so they are the ones that should be highlighted the most. At the same time as I was organizing the material on these pages, I made sure to do quick run-throughs of some of the written material for general proofreading purposes. I also uploaded any new articles or stories that the office staff provided to me for consideration. Next, I moved on to trying to make the site a little bit more user friendly and interactive. I did so by first moving some of the search categories up towards the top of the website and incorporating a few drop-down boxes to make it easier to click and search for what you are interested in.

Along with these tasks, I did my best to remove as much duplication of information on the site as well. It appeared as if certain topics were included in multiple sections unnecessarily, so I consolidated as much of these stories in articles into general sections along the sidebar. This made the website a little bit more organized and improved navigation as well. I also began the use of a poll along the sidebar in order to pose a question to our website viewers for thought. I felt this would increase the interaction between surfers and the IBLI staff and get them to share their opinions on the state of the project more. Along with this widget, I included a new widget near the top of the sidebar to provide a continuous slideshow of IBLI photos for the viewers. This was a tool that I had to download additionally to the blog, since it was not one of the provided features originally.

In wrapping up the website work, I had a few recommendations for any future IBLI website developers to consider. First off, I think it is important to continue to maintain a friendly user interface with a continuously changing variety of interactive tools. Keep utilizing widgets such as the poll and try to download new ones. I think we should also continue to encourage commentary on posts and articles on the website, but only on ones that require it. It appeared as if users could comment on any portion of the website, including mundane sections such as the contact information or the IBLI FAQs section. Make sure that comment sections are kept at a minimum and only for pages that really require them. I am also throwing out the idea of possibly initiating a switch from the Wordpress blog format to a more professional and interactive website format. I seem to run into several issues with this format related to not
having enough capabilities of including the widgets I desired or not being subscribed to a powerful enough Wordpress account in order to make all the necessary changes. This would need to be a change coordinated with ILRI as a whole though, since the IBLI site format follows the ILRI site format as well. The last suggestions I had for future website developers would be to incorporate a forum into the site. This would be a portion of the website dedicated to users asking questions to the IBLI staff with detailed responses to these questions being posted on the website for other users to see. The issue here again lies in the Wordpress format, which does not provide a tool or widget appropriate enough to create such a section of the website. But in time, perhaps increasing our subscription payment to receiving better options from Wordpress or even simply switching website formats could make this possible.

2.6 Enhancing Extension Tools and the Add-On Module

One of the more long-term projects I was involved with during my time with the IBLI research team was in working towards improving the extension tools being used to train the VIPs to understand and sell insurance contracts and to educate pastoralists on how the index-based insurance product works. This involved a number of steps, but the ultimate goal was the creation of an add-on module to the training manual for the VIPs to use, as well as the identification of a number of changes that could be implemented in the future to enhance the extension tools that are currently being used. Throughout this project, I worked alongside many other staff members of my team, including Diba, Shibia, and any of the representatives from the field we had an opportunity to talk to or interview.

In order to prepare ourselves for producing an appropriate add-on module, we took several steps to get ourselves educated on the situation in the field. For me especially this was an important step, since this was the first exposure I was getting to the IBLI training process. I began first by reading through all of the current extension tools and materials, including the cartoon series, training manual, quick reference guide, and card game rules, in order to gain a perspective of where possible complications may lie. I also read through a number of reports written by VIPs, detailing any of the issues that they faced in the field while training and selling the insurance product contracts. Brenda, Diba, and I made comments on these reports, asking for clarification from the VIPs on certain points mentioned. Additionally, I followed up on these reports by
carrying out several phone interviews with the VIPs, prodding and asking further questions in regards to some of the complications that they brought up. Throughout the entire process, the rest of the team working on the extension tools and I did our best to write up any suggestions we could find for creating the add-on module and improving upon the extension tools.

After coming together to share our findings, Diba and I began to compile the add-on module for the training manual, along with the help of one of the field VIPs, Dae. The first task we took on was to perfect the training and teaching of the cartoon series. I have included the portion of the add-on module in regards to presenting the cartoon series below:

**Cartoon Series**

- In presenting the cartoon series, there are several preparatory steps that should be taken before showing the images and beginning to retell the story presented on them. It is important to do so in order to make sure no members of the local pastoralist tribe feel offended or neglected by the presentation.

  - Explain to them the characters that will be portrayed in the cartoon series. Make sure to differentiate each of the roles and what they will be attempting to teach.

  - Draw a clear difference between what they are about to see and children’s cartoons; they should understand it is meant to be a teaching tool for adults.

  - Dispel any of the local beliefs in opposition to cartoons being “ghosts” or other similar ideas. Be sure to emphasize the value of the cartoon in teaching about the product.

- Once these preparatory steps are taken care of, it is important to set out the steps in reading through the cartoon carefully. It’s very important that each and every slide is paid attention to carefully and that the lessons of individual slides are learned step by step in order to help establish the concept as a whole.
- When starting a slide, select volunteers from the group to read a certain character bubble, making them feel comfortable and involved with the presentation. Be mindful of their feelings and do not force any one to read a slide or put someone on the spot that doesn't feel comfortable with reading aloud or is not able to. Read the slides yourself with the help of some partners if necessary.

- Be sure to stop after reading each slide in order to provide enough time to discuss the message of the slide thoroughly.

- If necessary, field questions from the audience after a slide if anyone has them. Make sure to stress that it is okay to stop and ask questions throughout the entire cartoon presentation.

- After going through the whole cartoon series, be sure to hold a wrap-up conversation in regards to the message of the cartoon. Be sure to field questions and try to make any confusing points as clear as possible. Bring up parts of the presentation that may have been confusing and ask the pastoralists if they fully understand them. Some people may be nervous at first to speak out, so try to open up the conversation by bringing up points.

Similarly to what we complete for the cartoon series, we also went through and provided additional information on how to present the card game for the add-on module. I have included the portion of the add-on module in regards to presenting the card game below:

**Card Game**

- In presenting the card game, just like with the cartoon, it is very important to lay out the ground rules ahead of time and explain the game thoroughly enough so that there is no confusion when the game is started. The pastoralists need to understand what they are about to see before cards are even brought out.
- Explain the difference between the type of card game they will be play and gambling. Make sure to erase any stereotypes of card games that members of that community may have.

- As with the cartoon series, make sure to differentiate between the game they will be playing and a kid's game. They must understand the educational value of it, so present it more as an educational tool.

- Discuss the types of cards that they will see, including the live cows and dead cows. Particularly spend some time discussing the dead cows, since some pastoralists may see this as a bad omen. Emphasize that it is purely for demonstrative purposes and that holding the card is simply part of the learning process. Explain that cartoons of live and dead cows have been used to emphasize the fact that this is a demonstration and thus cannot be a bad omen.

- If the members of the tribe do not own any cattle, make sure to discuss the use of the cow cards as purely a demonstrative tool. Ask them to think of the livestock on their cards as whatever animals they may own themselves, whether it is camel, sheep, or goats.

- Take time to explain the remaining usage of the chips and other game rules to the pastoralists in a clear and precise manner. Field questions regularly and make sure they know it's okay to ask questions while explaining the rules. Be sure that every pastoralist who is participating in the game understands the rules fully.

- While distributing out the game pieces and getting started with the actual game itself, it is very important to take time to explain what is happening with every move. Once a player has gone through a round of the game, they must understand the consequences of what has occurred and the connections between what is occurring in the game and real life insurance.

- After every round, be sure to explain what is occurring in the game. If there are pastoralists who don't understand what is happening with the particular move or round, be sure to take time to explain it.
- Make as many connections between what is occurring in the game and what happens with the real life index-based insurance product. It is important that they understand that the game is a medium to discuss what is actually occurring with the product we are offering.

- Emphasize the effects of when participants lose livestock in the game and the trigger is surpassed or not surpassed. The pastoralists should get a clear concept of when they are able to receive compensation and when they are not and they should be able to make the connection that personal experiences are not what causes them to receive or not receive payments.

- Repeat the game as many times as possible to ensure that the pastoralists understand the concepts.

Additionally to the work we completed on the add-on module, we spent some time considering possible changes to the current formats of the extension tools as they are now. The additions we incorporated into the add-on module were simply in regards to presenting the extension tools as they currently are designed now. But with some of the following changes, we feel that the extension tools could be made even stronger. Firstly, in regards to the cartoon series, we felt there were several key points that need to be brought into the cartoon, possibly with the addition of some new scenes. The cartoon series does not mention much about the monitoring of forage availability, which is a very confusing point for some pastoralists to understand. There also should be a focus on the divisional split of forage monitoring into districts and why it is done this way. Additionally, there is no discussion in the cartoon of why only sheep, goats, cattle, and camels are covered by the insurance. We should bring up the point of chicken not being covered since they have simple food requirements and are not technically under the definition of livestock and that donkeys are not as common or valued as much among the communities we are currently serving. Lastly, there should be some mention of other risk-taking forms within the cartoon series, since the IBLI product itself is a form of risk-taking. We could then draw distinct differences between these other forms of coping with drought-related livestock losses and the benefits of choosing to go with an IBLI contract.
In regards to the card game, the majority of the issues that were presented to us by the VIPs were in terms of the game being too similar to gambling to some tribes or providing an image of a bad omen with regards to the dead livestock images. If the overall mindset is to keep the game the way it is, then we first suggest that the livestock cards match up to the livestock that the pastoralists in that community actually keep. For example, if the area is more prone to having camels instead of cattle, then the cards should depict camels. Our other suggestion for the game though insinuates having to change the game around a little bit. Instead of utilizing cards with images of dead or alive livestock, we could potentially have other types of game pieces, such as marbles or figurines of animals, which depict death by being a different color than the rest of the pieces. We feel that this change would remove any of the local spiritual superstitions regarding bad omens around images of dead livestock.

Although there were not many, we did consider a few changes to be made to both the quick reference guide and the training manual for future training sessions. First, we acknowledged the need for a larger premium table to be displayed, either in the quick reference guide, or as an additional handout to be provided to VIPs and scanner agents. The chart as it is now is too small to display all of the required values, especially when dealing with a customer who is purchasing insurance for a large number of livestock. A larger table would eliminate the need to perform any calculations out in the field, which may be difficult. The other suggestion we had was to utilize real images from the areas we are covering within the training manual and quick reference guide. We felt it was important for communities to see images of the situations regarding forage availability in all areas of their respective districts. This could be particularly important in showcasing the difference to pastoralists in Upper and Lower Marsabit why they pay different insurance premiums. In Upper Marsabit, for example, some pastoralists have access to lush foliage near their communities, but they fail to understand in other areas of their district, the situation is not so pleasant. Noting this difference would allow them to better understand why Upper Marsabit pays higher premiums.

In wrapping up the development of the add-on module and our discussion of the extension tools, there were additional changes that we felt could be incorporated into the training process which would minimize the risk of improper information being distributed to the pastoralists. I took time to analyze the training process as a whole and wrote down any suggestions for
consideration by my colleagues. Together with Diba and the comments and suggestions from VIPs and team members, we came up with several changes we would like to see in the way training sessions are run.

The first idea we came to agreement on was the need to distinguish and separate VIPs during training sessions into two groups: returning VIPs and new VIPs. This would lead to returning VIPs being utilized to aide in teaching the newcomers along with the supervisors. This would also prevent the returning VIPs from answering all of the questions being posed by the session leader. The new VIPs could be called on more frequently to respond to questions to judge whether they understand all of the material being presented to them. Along with this, it would be important to differentiate the name tags of individuals during the training sessions so that the supervisors can clearly see who is a returning VIP and who is a newcomer. This would be very helpful during group activities in which the supervisors would prefer to have evenly mixed groups of new and old VIPs.

Another important change that we feel should be made is in the examination of the learning and training process, both prior to beginning sessions and at the end of sessions. First off, VIPs should be questioned at the end of every training session on the material they were presented with that day. This would be in addition to the performance analysis test at the end of the entire training program. It would also be important for VIPs to be tested with short quizzes at the start of training sessions on material from the previous day’s training session. These short examinations prior to the final exam would be key in determining if the trainees understand all of the material they are being presented with along the way. If they are being constantly reminded of the material, they will gain deep-rooted knowledge of the entire IBLI product, minimizing discrepancies in information when they present the product to pastoralists later. A final change we would like to see in the examination process comes in the form of updating some of the question formatting on the final exam. As it stands, there appear to be too many short answer, true or false, and multiple choice questions. We feel that the majority of the exam, if not all of it, should be in the format of long response questions which ask the potential VIPs to elaborate on topics they have been taught. We feel that this is the best way of judging their ability to understand the information they have been presented with.
Since the majority of the issues arising from pastoralists misunderstanding certain details of the IBLI product are rooted in the way they are instructed on the product by hired VIPs, we felt one final change that should be made during the training process is in the evaluation of VIP performances. We need to be clearer with our goals when presenting these opportunities to the VIPs; they need to understand that not performing to our standards or failing to educate pastoralists on every facet of the product details will not be tolerated. One way in which to better rate the performances of these VIPs would be to utilize secret supervisors who are present at the town meetings in which VIPs are presenting the IBLI product. These supervisors could take the opportunity to judge the performance of the VIPs and write up a report for the IBLI team in regards to what he saw. Afterwards, he may choose to present himself to the VIPs and inform them of his status, and depending on their performance, share pointers or suggestions for improving their instructional methods.

2.7 Marsabit Field Experience

The latter portion of my internship with ILRI and the IBLI research team was spent in the field, working in the town of Marsabit in Northern Kenya. The first week of the field work involved working alongside Diba, Moha, Zipora, and Grace of the IBLI team. Moha, Zipora, and Grace would head back to Nairobi after that first week and the remainder of the time I would spend with Diba overseeing and taking care of a number of tasks. We made the initial drive up to Marsabit on the morning of Saturday July 9th, a twelve-hour affair which was tiring to say the least. We would then have a few other drivers from ILRI take us to locations where we needed to be throughout our stay in Marsabit as some traveled back to Nairobi and others came to take their place. Having not been to Africa before and never having had the opportunity to perform field work, the opportunity to do so was incredible for me and I owe many thanks to both ILRI and the IBLI team for allowing me to help in this capacity.

There were a number of tasks to keep the team and I busy during our time in Marsabit, the first and foremost being the production of a movie to be used as a training tool in future training sessions and sale periods. This involved a collaboration between IBLI and the MOJO Production Company in order to produce, film, and edit the film. The general idea was to utilize local actors who have already had a relationship with IBLI in order to put together a comedic skit.
that entertains and also teaches an audience about the benefits and details surrounding the purchase of an IBLI contract. The initial filming would be done in Kiswahili while subsequent versions in four local languages would be dubbed over afterwards with the use of voice actors. An English subtitled version would also be produced to use as a teaching tool for international organizations and partners.

The first step in the production process involved translating and writing down a final script for the production company to use. Moha, Zipora, and Grace began this tedious process by sitting down with the main actors in several sessions and writing down their initial skit idea down. Once they provided me with an English version of the script, I began the process of proofreading and updating the script so that the information made sense. Then, with the help of Diba, we incorporated the IBLI concept into the script as best as we could. We produced a final version of the script after several exchanges with Andrew Mude and Brenda Wandera back at the office. Once the final version was set, we passed it on to the actors for memorization.

Alongside this, there were several tasks that we needed to accomplish before the MOJO Production Company arrived in Marsabit. One of these was the finalizing of set sites for the filming which involved some travel with the actors to areas in the surrounding areas of the town. We took photos of the sites we picked out and forwarded them to MOJO for consideration. Additionally, I worked with Diba in producing a radio script to present to local radio stations for transmission of IBLI’s message to locals who relied heavily on the radio for all of their outside information and news. In the end, we ended up producing two separate scripts along the same lines as the movie script. One was simply a narration of what the IBLI product can provide to pastoralists. The other was more of a skit and was taken from parts of the original movie script we had to cut out due to time constraints. We felt that including this scene would appease the actors who had originally developed this scene, since they were still fairly upset with the fact that too much of their script needed to be removed for the finished movie. We made both scripts available to the IBLI team back on campus and MOJO.

Once Moha, Zipora, and Grace had left and the MOJO Production Company had arrived in Marsabit, the remainder of our job was in gathering the voice actors for the translations and aiding MOJO in anything they required throughout the filming process. The first of these tasks
ended up becoming much more challenging than we had envisioned. Firstly, Diba had a difficult time obtaining written versions of the movie script in the four separate languages. This was a step that I could not really be of use to Diba either, since I was not familiar with the area or the locals. It ended up becoming an even bigger challenge to find five voice actors for each of the scripts in order to record each language during the short window of time that MOJO would be present in Marsabit. These issues along with some of the contract negotiation problems that arose throughout the entire process made the entire process a little bit stressful for us as we tried to get all the tasks complete before MOJO had to depart for Nairobi.

In my analysis of the field work that we accomplished during my stay in Marsabit, there were several areas of concern for both Diba and I. The first major issue that became clear almost right away was with the timeline. The MOJO crew was not supposed to have arrived in Marsabit until the 25th of July, but they made it clear that they could only come on the 19th. This became problematic since the finished script was only made available to the actors on the 17th, meaning that the actors only had two days to learn all of the new material on the script. Needless to say, this was quite difficult for them, particularly with the portion of the script regarding the IBLI product, which was completely new material to them. If the MOJO crew could have arrived on the 25th as we had hoped, then the actors would have certainly had enough time to memorize all of the material perfectly.

What made the situation even more frustrating was MOJO’s complaints about the actors taking too much time to complete certain scenes, since they were taking their time trying to learn all of the lines properly. I felt that this was something they should have foreseen, having themselves requested to come to Marsabit earlier. They even requested that we shorten the IBLI portion of the film even further, which Diba and I refused to do since we had already made too many concessions in shortening the script to its final version. Overall, I had the sense that the MOJO Production Company felt as if it were in charge of the project, even though ILRI were the ones paying them to complete this film. It appeared as if they wanted to get all of the tasks done as quickly as possible in order to return to Nairobi sooner, which did not sit well with Diba or me. If we are paying a production company such as MOJO to complete a project for us, they need to show us that they will remain on location as long as it takes to complete the project to our liking. The process as a whole seemed very rushed to me.
There were also several issues which I saw during the translation and voice recording process of the production. First, I think in the future with projects such as this that require speakers and translators of obscure local languages, we need to look for translators who have an educational background or are currently attending a university. I think we should have made sure to double-check all of these translations with the help of scholarly speakers who would know if grammatical mistakes are being made. It would be a shame if a wrong translation was implemented into the final version of the film. Luckily, I feel that there is still time in the process to accomplish this.

Aside from this though, I did see another issue with the way the voice recording process was handled. I will not try to pretend to be an expert in the film industry, but I do know that when dubbing films in other languages, the original version of the film needs to be completely cut and edited first. The way that MOJO completed the recording process was by utilizing voice actors in Marsabit while the original Kiswahili version of the film was not yet completely edited. Once they come back to Nairobi to edit the film though and produce the dubbed versions though, if there are mistakes in matching up the four local languages to the film (i.e. problems with tone, length of phrases, mistiming of words, etc.) they will not have the ability to correct these mistakes with other takes since the voice actors are all still back in Marsabit and have been already paid. They would need to work with ILRI to find other speakers in Nairobi to make the corrections, which would involve hiring and paying more voice actors to do new takes or perhaps even redo the entire script again. This, in my opinion, would be an unnecessary expense and waste of resources, one that could have been avoided if the process had been planned out a little more on their part.

The last few issues which Diba and I faced during our time with the MOJO film crew in Marsabit were in regards to the contract negotiations with the voice actors. Diba had made it part of his duty to negotiate salaries with the voice actors and had settled on a price prior to the film crew arriving in Marsabit. What he was not made aware of beforehand was that contract agreements were already part of MOJO’s duties and they had come to a settlement at Ksh 2,000 per individual. It may have just been a miscommunication issue, but Diba should have been made aware of this earlier. With this information now in hand, Diba had to go back to the voice actors and let them know of the price set by the MOJO Production Company, a price which
many of the voice actors refused to work for. Diba was given the unpleasant task of trying to convince a majority of the voice actors to work for that price, a task which seemed impossible for him to gain any proper negotiating advantage in since he was pressed for time. In the end, Diba was cleared by the IBLI team to provide the actors with an additional Ksh 1,000 each on to their current salary. Some of the actors, particular those who claimed they were college educated and deserved more, pushed Diba into providing even more than this amount from his own pocket. I think this is an unacceptable situation for any members of the ILRI and IBLI staff to be in, and in the future, I hope that contract negotiations can be completed far in advance and at more reasonable prices, with clauses that stipulate ILRI can dock pay if their performances are not up to par.

Working with the MOJO crew, as I stated earlier, was a little bit frustrating at times, but I will say that their professional and technical capabilities were present and visible. The crew seemed to be very well-educated on the filming process, even providing us with alternate locations in which they felt the scenes could be portrayed better. Their use of the equipment and their direction of the actors appeared to be extremely well thought out. That being said, the issues I have mentioned in this report lie in their desire to get in and get out of Marsabit as quickly as possible. Because of this mindset, it felt as if a majority of the steps were being rushed and it was impossible for me to know whether the finished product was turning out the way we were hoping. In my opinion though, this behavior was not a representation of the crew’s aspirations, but that of their management team back in Nairobi. It seemed as if their superiors had given them strict directions to complete every step of the production process within a small allotted window of time and they were simply following orders.

Looking back at all I witnessed while working in Marsabit, there was a lot to take from the experience, both for me personally and for IBLI and ILRI as a whole. First and foremost, it was very clear that the situation indicated by the extremely high index levels thus far is true. We witnessed and photographed numerous dead livestock carcasses along the farms that we visited. It was evident from the still decomposing carcasses that some of the livestock had even begun to consume inedible materials, including plastic bags and pieces of rubber from shoes or tires, since there was not enough vegetation available, a sight that was truly disturbing. Testimonies from
farmers were not much brighter either; many simply could not find enough water to provide to all of their livestock.

What was also made evident from my time in the field is that the training process really needs to be improved. From the many confused and angered accounts of insurance contract purchasers, it seemed as if some of the VIPs were not presenting the product in a clear way or could possibly be withholding information about the product in order to sell as many contracts as possible. Wherever the roots of these problems may lie, we need to begin to evaluate our VIPs more stringently and in a more productive way. They need to be capable enough to do the job that they are being paid to do. It does not seem fair to me that some of the VIPs may be working diligently to sell as many contracts as they can in an honest and clear way while others are simply taking shortcuts and only presenting the information half-heartedly, yet still these VIPs are being paid the same. We need to incorporate stiffer contract agreements, perhaps utilizing clauses which will dock pay if it is found that VIPs are not performing satisfactorily. When dealing with the scanner agents as well, the IBLI team needs to work alongside Equity and UAP in order to smooth out any kinks in the process to make sure that the complaints coming through this past sales period do not occur again. It is up to the IBLI team and ILRI to decide how to approach solutions to this problem, but action must be taken before the next training period.

Part 3: Conclusion and Discussion

3.1 Final Thoughts

My internship experience here at ILRI has been one that I will certainly never forget. Both ILRI and the IBLI staff have made this journey such a memorable one for me and I am incredibly appreciative to have been given such an opportunity. It is clear that ILRI provides amazing opportunities for students like me to understand the inner workings of a research team and a nongovernmental organization such as this which carries out global and life-changing research
initiatives. The experience provided to me here, particularly with the field training and enhancement of the extension tools, will be extremely valuable for the future. The environment at the institute was so friendly and I enjoyed coming to the office every day. I think what made that possible was the generosity and kindness of the staff. Everyone I had the opportunity to work with was incredibly professional, polite, and provided me with a lot of advice for moving forward in my chosen career path. The team members in their respective groups also seemed to bond together well, which is not always present with every organization, but was very evident here at ILRI. This internship has opened up a lot of doors for me and for that I am truly blessed. I thank the ILRI staff for making my summer an unforgettable one.

3.2 Improving ILRI

There are few things that I found difficult to work with here at ILRI, but as with every organization, there was always room for improvement. I have come up with a number of suggestions of how ILRI could improve some of its programming, particularly in regards to orienting new interns and contracted staff, as well as in improving upon any of the projects that had the pleasure of working on. My first suggestion would be the creation of a shared theme group database of corporate partner reports. As we all know, there are numerous research projects and teams within all of the theme groups present here at the ILRI campus, all of whom carry out partnerships and contracts with outside companies and organizations to complete their research (i.e. IBLI’s contract with the MOJO Production Company). Field workers are already in the habit of writing up reports on their experiences with this companies and organizations, but I feel that it is important to make sure that other research groups on the ILRI campus have a digital location where they can scan through and look at reports in regards to these partnerships. It would simplify the process for a research team to search out a suitable partner in completing their necessary tasks. For example, if another group on campus was interested in hiring a production company for a certain project and they were considering MOJO, they could read up on our experiences with them before making a decision on whom to go with.

Another suggestion I have for the future would be the creation of a guidebook for field workers heading out to rural parts of Kenya or neighboring countries. This guidebook would provide some of the more inexperienced field staff with written descriptions of the locations they will be
headed to, information about what items will be useful to bring along, as well as detailed descriptions of lodging, restaurants, grocers, banks, or other services required by field staff when working in these rural communities. You could consider it to be almost like a user review guide of places that you could turn to for services and how to get there, including short descriptions of what you should expect and what the service is like. Additionally, there should be contact information for landlords of lodges in the areas travelled to most, since at times it can be difficult to find proper accommodations or the landlords do not reside at the location of the lodges.

In regards to continuing to increase traffic and exposure to the IBLI website, I think it would be appropriate for the team to search out partners that they work with and try to include links to their project website in their sidebars or homepages, almost like a little advertisement. It would be a great way for the project team to get their name out there and gain a little more recognition for their achievements. I would also like to see more team building events among the staff, particularly involving community events in the rural areas that we operate in. I think this would be an excellent way to continue to build camaraderie among the staff as well as to make the local communities we are servicing aware that we care for them and the work we are doing to better their livelihoods.

The last couple of suggestions I had are in regards to orienting and aiding new staff and interns to life at ILRI. I had mentioned earlier that the language barrier is a slight limitation, especially for those who are participating in field work, so my first suggestion is to incorporate a Kiswahili tutoring service at ILRI. This could be in the form of a staff member or certified tutor providing optional Kiswahili learning sessions for an hour or so after the workday is complete for those interested. I know that I would have certainly taken advantage of such an opportunity if it were made available to me. The last suggestion I have would be to incorporate a program to connect new interns and staff with current local staff who live at or around the place of residence of the new staff. Partnering them with the new employees would allow them to teach newcomers of where they can access key services at or around their place of residence, including grocers, bus or taxi services, post offices, banks, clothing stores, etc. I know that I certainly appreciated any advice I received from my colleagues when I arrived here and I was not shy about asking for help, but I think a formal program would be particularly helpful for more introverted interns and staff.
References
