

Bull service is the most common insemination method in pastoral herds grazing in the rangelands. To accelerate multiplication and distribution of and access to high quality Sahiwal genetics to pastoral communities, development agencies have promoted the use of Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs) in the Kenyan rangelands. However, sustainable use of ARTs is uncertain because pastoral herd owners attach high value to bull calves of high genetic merits for breeding, which is a potential barrier to technology adoption. This study assessed preferential use of ART- bull calves among beneficiaries of the Sahiwal cattle upgrading breeding program that were utilizing OvSynch and TAI protocol in the southern rangelands of Kenya. Preferential use of bull calves was assessed in a choice experiment basing on attributes associated with potential use of bull calves. Overall, the first-choice preference was to retain the bull calves for future breeding (54%) compared to immediate selling for income (44%). This was the first-choice of pastoralists and agro pastoralists preferred unlike ranchers who preferred selling bull calves for income compared to retaining for future breeding (80% versus 20%). The preference of retaining bull calves for future breeding was higher among women compared to male respondents (59% versus 51%). Second choice preferences were sales for income (58%), breeding (29%), draft power (5%), meat production and cultural practices (3% each) and prestige (2%). Socioeconomic factors had no significant influence on preferential use of ARTs bull calves. The results indicate that high genetic merit bull calves are preferred for breeding, implying that bull calves would be retained within the pastoral herds for bull service. This presents a possible barrier to adoption of ARTs in pastoral herds for upgrading of Sahiwal cattle breed. Policy direction need to invest in Sahiwal multiplication and distribution of bull calves to pastoralists and agro pastoralists. Ranchers have low preference for retaining bull calves for breeding, so it would be best to capacitate them to invest in ARTs to multiply breeding bulls and supply to pastoralists and agro pastoralists.

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