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Pastoralists will see better days

My name is Pervin Çoban Savran and I am a pastoralist from Turkey. I am a member of Sarkeçililer, which is an association fighting to improve pastoralists' living conditions and to preserve pastoralist culture. In the past, there used to be other pastoralists in this part of the country, but they have long adopted a sedentary life. We Yörüks are the last pastoralists of Anatolia, there are less than 1600 of us today. We lead a lifestyle that is millennia-old. We move constantly with our goats and camels and our movement depends on climatic conditions. But climate change and inadequate water supply increasingly challenge our way of life.

Moreover, we often have conflict with villagers who don't like us using local water and letting our herds graze on local land. If pastoralists were given constitutional rights, we probably would not have these problems. Instead, the authorities make laws that jeopardise our knowledge. For example, they vaccinate our animals regardless of whether or not they're threatened by illness. Vaccinations would be acceptable if the presence of illnesses has been medically diagnosed and if we put our

animals at risk. But vaccinating for the sake of it only benefits pharmaceutical companies.

The authorities tried to coerce us into a sedentary way of life, but we have resisted. Our relatives who accepted to settle can't get used to this lifestyle, they cannot live in apartments. This led us to better understand the importance of claiming our culture. Our culture is rich and represents generations of knowledge. The authorities should be aware of this. We live close to nature and depend on few external inputs.

Every year, our association organises a Nomadic Movement Festival in which we raise public awareness and discuss important issues about pastoralism. For this, we choose a place along our migration route where we face conflict. Our latest achievement was to regain access to water in the Hacı Baba mountains. I am sure we pastoralists will see better days, but before that there is a long way to go.

Interview by **Elçin Turan** (elcinntrn@gmail.com).
Photo: **Elçin Turan**

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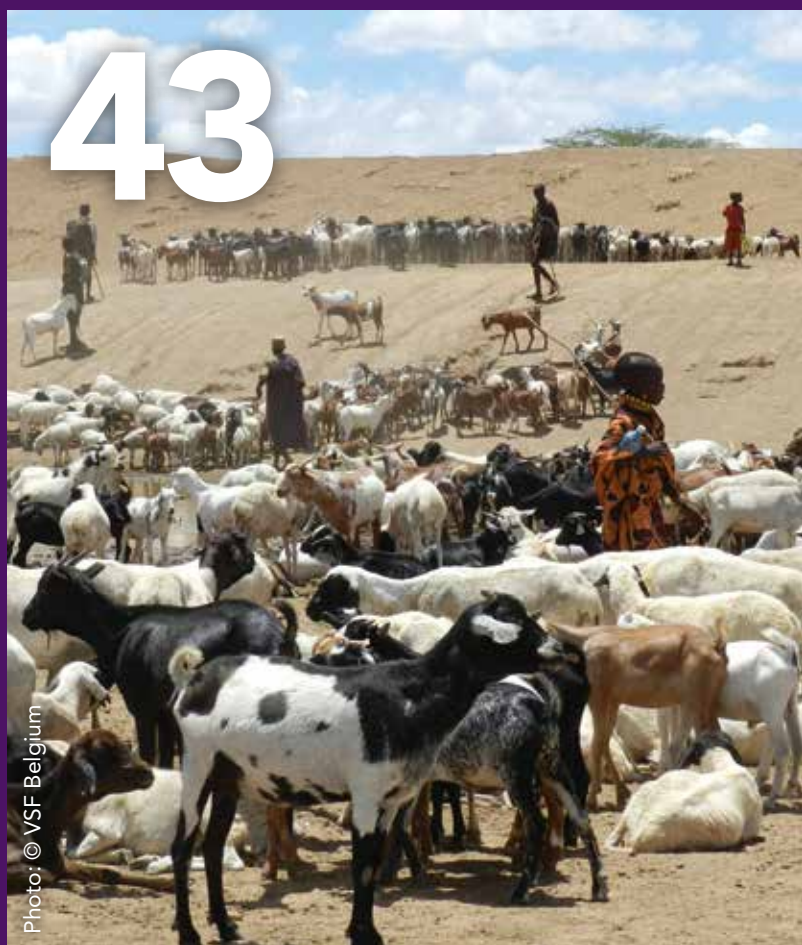


Photo: © VSF Belgium

Pastoralists and agroecology

The intrinsic values of pastoralists' way of life – cultural heritage, their animals and the ecosystems in which they live – are often shunned by today's policy makers. On top of this, the services pastoralists provide to society at large are underestimated. This issue of Farming Matters explores the different ways pastoral societies are improving their situations. Notably, a special section focused on pastoralism in the Middle East exemplifies how pastoral societies struggle under challenging circumstances. Joining forces and adapting traditional governance to make their voices heard are some of the strategies of pastoralists fighting to maintain their culture. The experiences and perspectives here highlight the importance of pastoral societies for agroecology and the transformation of entire food systems.

Madeleine Florin and Diana Quiroz

Much like peasants and family farmers, pastoralists' core activity is food production. For millennia, they have been producing milk, meat, fibre and hide, as well as providing ecosystem services in the world's most challenging environments. Pastoralists are mobile or semi-mobile livestock keepers with highly evolved relationships between their breeds and the environment in which they live.

The environmental and cultural diversity of pastoral communities across the world is vast. Yet, there are common struggles that unite pastoral communities – with each other, but also with family farmers, fisher folk, rural workers and others seeking fair food systems. Above all, as producers wishing to maintain their way of life, food sovereignty is a necessity they strive to achieve.

Access and control over land

Survival of pastoral communities and their animals depends on their ability to access land and water. Pastoralists manage extensive tracts of land, including migratory routes, for grazing. This strategy takes advantage of ecological and climatic variability and defies popular belief that certain areas, often arid and mountainous, are uninhabitable and unproductive.

Over centuries, pastoral communities have maintained land as shared property, known as the commons. Use of the commons is usually regulated by customary tenure and enforced through customary law. But today, in many places there is tension between the objectives of customary and statutory (national) law. Moreover, customary law is often undermined or dismantled by national governments facilitating or turning a blind eye to land grabbing. For instance, most national governments pursue privatisation of common land to encourage investment in commodity production (industrial agriculture, mining), nature conservation or hunting reserves. Consultation with pastoral communities in this process is often inadequate or altogether non-existent.

The result is that pastoralists are losing access to and control over their lands. And the implications include livestock death, hunger and conflict between pastoralists and other land users. Besides this, the role pastoralists play as keepers of the land (see box) is becoming less viable and land degradation more prevalent. Other societal issues such as rural exodus emerge as well.

Privatisation of the commons is certainly not happening in a vacuum, and there are other factors contributing to these issues (e.g. climate change, conflict, corruption), but (re)securing pastoral communities' land rights is cross-cutting and particularly illustrative when

it comes to empowerment, the struggle to improve governance, and ultimately achieve food sovereignty.

Local and global voices One way in which pastoralists make themselves heard at the regional and international levels is by forming alliances that participate in policy making fora. The World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP), the Arab Pastoralist Community Network (see page 23 in the special section on the pastoralism in the Middle East) and the pastoralists' constituency in the Food Sovereignty movement are but three examples. Margherita Gomarasca (page 43) reflects on the way a group of pastoralists, representing more than 100 organisations from across the world, is shaping IFAD's agenda through a statement that outlines their specific needs and priorities. These range from recognition of pastoral knowledge and culture to mobile services that suit mobile lifestyles.

Besides representation at the national, regional and international levels, pastoral communities often face another governance challenge at the local level. As Elizabeth Mpofu points out on page 31, traditional governance structures of pastoral societies often exclude women. But this is slowly changing. On page 32, Pain Eulalia Mako explains how pastoral women in Tanzania, when supported with training on empowerment, are proving their capacity to lead their communities' struggles for land. Moreover, the traditional male leaders are recognising women's rights and supporting this kind of change in their communities.

New alliances The example of improved women's rights within pastoral communities shows that traditional governance structures and institutions are not static. In fact, adapting traditional governance is an ongoing strategy of pastoral communities working with other land users. A story from Somaliland illustrates this, showing how hybrid institutions that formally recognise traditional leaders are functioning relatively well when it comes to negotiating conflicting land uses (page 16).

Another aspect of adapting traditional governance relates to forming new alliances with, sometimes unlikely, partners. The Pastoral Parliament in Gujarat



Pastoralists all over the world do find ways to overcome the challenges that undermine their lifestyles (see article on page 36). Photo: Escola de pastores

(page 8) is a good example of how diverse pastoral groups put aside cultural and religious differences to work together for a common cause. And in an article on page 12 from Italy, we see that immigrants with a pastoral background are playing an important role keeping pastoralism alive at a time when most local youth migrate to cities. This in itself raises a whole host of policy questions around support for the integration of a new wave of pastoralists in Mediterranean Europe.

Finding a way A common theme throughout this issue of Farming Matters is the spirit of collective action and cooperation. Pastoralists join forces to be better seen and heard, but also for economic empowerment and environmental sustainability (e.g. see page 40).

Finally, from the stories presented here it is remarkable how, despite political marginalisation, pastoralists do find ways to challenge the policies that undermine their lifestyles. And there is a lot to learn from pastoralists' experiences on the frontline of the struggle for land and their demands for a rights-based approach to achieving food sovereignty. This confirms that pastoralists are a crucial part of the agroecological movement.

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Environmental benefits of pastoral systems

The agroecological principle of enhancing crop-animal interactions is usually discussed at the farm level. But when zooming out to the territorial level the interaction between livestock and vegetation (be it cultivated or naturally occurring) is a principle that pastoral communities embody. Extensive livestock grazing is an excellent example of managing biodiversity and soil fertility. For example, through the transport of seeds and insects by livestock, the migration of pastoralists and their flocks supports habitat connectivity and biodiversity.



Pastoral Parliament:

a platform to be heard and seen

In India, pastoralists have long struggled to make their voices heard. Cultural and religious differences have exacerbated this situation. But a new initiative is allowing them to assert their identity, identify as a collective, and generate political momentum. The Pastoral Parliament represents a key space for pastoralists to meet, discuss and take decisions about the issues affecting them, without political, religious or caste-based segregation.

Monika Agarwal and Jessica Duncan

Like in many countries around the world, Indian pastoralists represent a diversity of social groups with shared expertise around animal husbandry. This includes livestock breeders, herders and dairy producers. However, they remain the unheard and unseen in local, state and national development agendas.

In 2008, to address the political marginalisation of pastoralists, MARAG, a Gujarat-based NGO experimented with the idea of a Pastoral Parliament: a space to strengthen the voice and positioning of pastoralists within governance processes. As a result of years of work with pastoralist communities, and from having pastoralists as core staff members, MARAG was very aware of the fundamental need and importance of such a space.

Equity at the core The Pastoral Parliament is guided by four core values. First, there are to be no explicit religious, caste, sect, geographic or political affiliations or perspectives promoted. The second value is translated as ‘win and help others win’, meaning that there should be no conflicts amongst pastoralists: believe in yourself and in others. Third, all pastoralists are to be given equal opportunities in activities of the parliament. Lastly, all aspects of the Parliament are to be inclusive. This fourth value relates to the principle that during the Parliament everyone has equal rights. To promote equal participation, discussions take place in a round seating arrangement and there is no podium.

Restoring dignity and cohesion

In response to the historic lack of collective organisation, the Pastoral Parliament has served as a platform to develop a social movement and collective spirit amongst pastoralists. In the words of Jaisinghbhai, a pastoralist from Kutch, “Pastoral Parliament unites pastoralists. It will also help us to find ways to sustain pastoralism.” One indication of this has been the widespread uptake of the phrase Jai Maldhari (Long Live Pastoralists!). The phrase was coined during the second Pastoral Parliament and is now used as greeting and as a rallying cry to unite pastoralists.

One of the most consequential achievements of the Parliament has been restoring dignity in being a pastoralist. These gatherings have helped to reconstruct the lost collective and individual identity of being a pastoralist. In India it is common for people to highlight their affiliations (e.g. caste, sect) on their vehicles. Over the last few years an increasing number of pastoralist youth in Gujarat have started writing ‘Maldhari’ on their vehicles.

Another notable outcome has been the revival and strengthening of customary norms and traditions, like

**2500 households
contributed 2500
litres of milk and 150
kilograms of ghee**

the sharing of milk. Sharing milk represents a strong custom in many pastoral communities and is accompanied by rules and norms that work to enhance social cohesion. During the third Parliament an estimated 2500 households from 80 villages contributed 2500 litres of milk, 150 kilograms of ghee and other food items to the Parliament. This set the precedent for the future Parliaments, and subsequent events were organised solely with the contributions of pastoralists.

Women and youth The Parliament has also been successful in creating spaces for pastoral women to play leadership roles. This has been achieved by ensuring that there are microphones and space for women to talk during parliament. Host communities receive guidance from MARAG and Maldhari Vikas Sangathan (MVS), a community based organisation that has a membership of over 35,000 pastoralists in Gujarat, on how to ensure that the voices of women are heard and acted upon.

What is the Pastoral Parliament?

Pastoral Parliament is a two-day discussion forum organised annually where pastoralists from across Gujarat meet to set a political agenda and address the issues that impact and affect them. The first Parliament was held in 2008. Each time, different communities of pastoralists host the Parliament. The venue, accommodation, and food is the shared responsibility of the host community. On average 2000-2500 pastoralist women and men from all over Gujarat attend the Pastoral Parliaments, but the number of attendees is not fixed. Pastoralists from other states have attended the Gujarati Pastoral Parliament, as have various experts. However, the majority of participants are pastoralists from the different regions of Gujarat.



The Pastoral Parliament is reviving interest in traditional skills, such as making cord from goat hair.

Photo: Jessica Duncan

Beyond training, this requires that the equal status of women is recognised and accepted in the Parliament. The number of women participants has been less than men, but women have contributed greatly. In the 2016 Parliament in the Kutch district of Gujarat, it was clear that pastoralists cannot succeed in their struggles for land rights without women's participation. With this spirit pastoralist women took more responsibility to assert their land rights.

Likewise, pastoralist youth have played a vital role in organising the Parliaments, particularly in extend-

Pastoralists reunite lambs with their mothers in Khokhora village after returning from a day of grazing. Photo: Jessica Duncan



ing invitations, logistics, facilitation and collecting contributions. Youth have readily accepted the elderly pastoralists as mentors, just as senior pastoralists have recognised youth as potential leaders.

Breaking down barriers The Pastoral Parliaments also play a key role in conflict resolution. At the 2012 Pastoral Parliament the Sindhi and Dhebar pastoralists, who are historic rivals, were seen together for the first time on a common platform. This signals a greater social and political movement. One of the elderly pastoralists remarked that, "others try to sabotage the community, but the Parliament is bringing everyone together." Indeed, perhaps the biggest success of the Parliament is how it has helped to mitigate boundaries of religion, geography, sect, political affiliation and gender, and has helped to unite pastoralists. There are no comparable initiatives elsewhere.

Gaining ownership Today, the Pastoral Parliaments are largely organised by MARAG and MVS, with input from the host community. MARAG has worked alongside the hosts to ensure the core values are respected. They have found that until now, training has not been needed as the processes and values of the Pastoralist Parliament are transferred organically. They are passed down and learnt through participation. After each Parliament volunteers from different regions set to work identifying communities that are prepared to host the next event.

The first Parliament was almost entirely financially supported by MARAG, however by the fourth Parliament, the organising communities were contributing towards all the expenses. The Pastoral Parliament has evolved into a community owned process. Instead of taking cash contributions, each region takes responsibility to collect contributions in the form of food (e.g. milk, flour, ghee, vegetables), as well as bedding and other necessities. This system has led to greater trust and transparency, as well as a sense of local pride and ownership of the Parliament. At the same time, it creates a strong incentive for reciprocation, ensuring the continuation of the Parliament as a community-driven initiative.

Challenges The Pastoral Parliament has matured into a space by and for pastoralists. There is no leader, neither are there set protocols. There is a facilitator, often a youth leader working with MVS or MARAG, to ensure a smoother assembly. While the lack of protocols can be challenging, more often than not this represents an opportunity. As such, the organisation and the events themselves take on unique characteristics reflecting the culture, experiences and needs of the hosts and participants.



When migrating, the women often walk ahead with the children and family's belongings while the men manage the livestock. Photo: Jessica Duncan

Given the success of the Pastoral Parliament, MARAG has started transferring the overall coordination of the Parliament to MVS. As with all community organising, there are lessons learnt that can extend beyond the organisation of Pastoral Parliaments. For example, though it is a flexible process, one of the limitations is lack of a structure. Furthermore, the organising capacity of each community differs. As those engaged in community organisation will also recognise, such processes do not always develop in a clear and linear way. Flexibility, patience, and understanding are prerequisites to participating and supporting the Parliament.

Growing promise The Pastoral Parliaments have also provided needed space for pastoralists to identify and set a development and political agenda that can be shared with NGOs, community based organisations and even political parties in Gujarat. For example, the work plans of MARAG and MVS have been directly informed by the mandate of the Pastoral Parliaments. Moreover, the Parliament provides a space where pastoralists can discuss their problems and take action. For example, after participating in the Parliament, Sitaben, a pastoralist from Nakhatrana village took steps to address challenges related to low prices for wool and access to land. He met the District Collector and wrote an application to the Chief Minister.

There is a general sense emerging that now is the right time to begin to develop a two-tier structure of

Plans are developing to replicate the process in seven other states of India

the Parliaments: one at the state and one at the national level. With growing interest in other states to organise a similar process, plans are developing to replicate the process in seven other states of India in 2016-17 and in more than ten states by 2019. Such a platform could serve to bridge the gap between the pastoralist communities and the government at the state and national level and hence improve governance. With emerging interest from pastoralists outside India, there is a possibility to develop a South Asian Pastoral Parliament to act as a legitimate representative voice of pastoralists and to function as a pressure group for pro-pastoralist policy advocacy across South Asia.

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Migrant shepherds

sustain pastoralism in the Mediterranean

Exodus of youth is one of the main problems of rural communities in Mediterranean Europe. The declining rural population is counterbalanced by migrants that have come to live and work in the countryside. Paradoxically, it is thanks to migrant shepherds that ancient pastoral traditions are kept alive and productive. But there are many challenges that need overcoming before pastoralism returns to the resilient and sustainable sector it once was.

Michele Nori

Vullnet Alushani immigrated to Italy from Albania in 1999. There, he began working for the Bramante, a traditional Gargano Podolico Caciocavallo producer in the Apulia region. Caciocavallo is one of the special Slow Food cheeses made from the milk of Podolica cows – a breed once common throughout most of mainland Italy. The breed is now restricted to some regions in Southern Italy. It didn't take long for Vullnet to learn and master the skills needed to produce Podolico Caciocavallo. He is not only appreciated for his extraordinary cheeses but also for his contribution to carrying on the tradition of the Bramante family.

The rural world, the cradle of socio-cultural traditions, local identity and Euro-Mediterranean heritage, survives and evolves thanks to the presence and contribution of immigrants like Vullnet. Nowadays, flows of immigrants from other Mediterranean pastoral regions contribute significantly to tackling the social and economic mismatch of the rural labour markets. They do so by filling the gaps left by the national population.

Despite the policy and financial commitment of the European Union through its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the decline and ageing of rural populations is a major concern for policy-makers at different levels. This rings even truer for mountainous areas where pastoralism plays a primary socio-economic and ecological role.

Shifting generations and communities The typical profile of a migrant shepherd in southern Europe is a man aged between 25 and 40 and native to another Mediterranean country (predominantly Romania, Morocco, Albania or Macedonia). History, language, and migrants' networks have shaped the different migratory patterns. Romanians are found mostly in Italy and parts of Spain, Moroccans in parts of Spain and southern France, and Albanians in Greece. Although not always from a pastoralist background, most of them come with previous experience in animal breeding. Socio-

cultural differences aside (e.g. Orthodox or Muslim in predominately Catholic societies), these shepherds are generally appreciated for their technical skills, as well as for their endurance, flexibility and adaptability. Fiorino, a Romanian shepherd explains: "We are organised and upon demand we can seek for more workers from our networks, mostly in our villages in north-eastern Romania. There, everybody used to keep sheep. Most households produced their own cheese, that is where we have learnt. We know how to deal with sheep."

The working and living conditions of immigrant shepherds are concerning

Filling knowledge gaps Despite its many benefits, immigrants lack some technical knowledge. Coming from nations with different policy frameworks, immigrants often lack knowledge of CAP and related agro-environmental measures. Depending on their background, they might not be familiar with the adequate management of large herds, forestry resources, wildlife presence and relationships with protected areas, as well as farming plots of their host communities. Training and education programmes, such as the existing pastoral schools in France and Spain could be one consistent way to fill these gaps (see page 37). Extending and connecting these experiences would also enhance discussion about and promotion of this sector.

Vulnerable populations But the working and living conditions of immigrant shepherds are concerning in most cases. The contractual conditions are often informal or partially legal with

History repeats

Migratory flows have long proven to be an important factor for resilience and sustainability of pastoralism, as well as crucial for keeping these territories productive. Rural succession in pastoral areas based on immigration is not new in the Mediterranean. The 20th century has witnessed a number of migrations of

pastoral communities within the region. Sardinians colonised abandoned pasturelands in central Italy, Piedmont's shepherds moved to work in the French Provence, southern Spanish herders moved to graze the Pyrenees, and Valach and Arvanite shepherds moved throughout Greece.



With an established business, Mario will be able to bring his wife and children from Romania to Italy.
Photo: Michele Nori (TRAMed)

monthly salaries typically lower than 1000 Euros per month for fulltime engagement.

Opportunities for migrant shepherds to improve their socio-economic status are very limited, even after many years of operating in this sector. In this respect, there are few examples of immigrant shepherds that have graduated as independent livestock owners or dairy entrepreneurs. Lack of financial resources and limited access to land and credit are the main factors inhibiting the capacity and the interest of these workers to remain in this sector. This is exacerbated by constraints related to residence permits, entrepreneurial licenses and overall citizenship rights, including compliance with CAP procedures and rules.

Working together To address these constraints, sometimes immigrant shepherds partner with local ones. For instance, Mario, a Romanian shepherd, came to Italy ten years ago. Initially, he worked without a contract or insurance. Seven years ago, he got a contract which finally made him eligible for Italian citizenship. Italian citizenship is needed to register as an entrepreneur and to legally own a flock. With his savings he was able to accumulate a few animals each year, which he kept within the flock of

his employer. Recently, he and his employer have been talking about jointly managing a common flock. They plan to share the costs and responsibilities, as well as the profits. With an established business, Mario will be able to bring his wife and children to Italy.

Other examples of such socio-economic graduation exist where two immigrants have shared resources and responsibilities or in areas where pasture lands are communal and therefore more easily accessible. Yet in general, this is a lose-lose situation. Migrant shepherds do not evolve in their socio-economic role and elderly livestock owners do not find people capable of taking over their herds when they retire. According to FAO, about one quarter of the EU flock has been lost in the last two decades. The disappearance of pastoral flocks and the abandonment of pasturelands has environmental and socio-cultural repercussions that impact society at large.

Importing the future For many reasons, keeping pastoralism alive is key to ensuring that large parts of the Mediterranean remain vibrant and productive. As a main source of income and employment in mountainous and arid areas, pastoralism contributes to managing the rich yet fragile natural resource base. Thus it plays a crucial role in maintaining local landscapes, identities and socio-cultural heritage.

Yet without decent living and working conditions for today's shepherds, the future of pastoralism is uncertain. Therefore, rural development actors should pay more attention to the potential for integrating immigrant shepherds as tomorrow's livestock keepers and dairy entrepreneurs. This would also help tackle depopulation and abandonment of difficult territories, and support activities that enhance their sustainable management – the goal of most national and European policies.

Sustainable pastoralism will not be merely the result of subsidies and incentives, but rather the outcome of a comprehensive, integrated policy framework, including the review of agricultural, trade, migration and labour market policies. And together with the development of tailored initiatives and adequate investments. The viability of shepherding, the attractiveness of mountainous areas, the profitability of extensive livestock production along with efforts to support integration of foreign shepherds are the key challenges for the future of an ancient activity that is vital for the Mediterranean identity and for the resilience of its territories.

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Over centuries, pastoralists have created a large number of livestock breeds that are of enormous value for food sovereignty: they convert the vegetation of drylands and other uncultivable areas into food. They turn 'waste' into protein and they do this enormously efficiently – in contrast to the high-input breeds developed in the North that depend on feed that needs to be specially grown with fertilizer, pesticides, diesel, etc..

When we look at the true cost of producing feed, pastoral livestock, ranging from alpacas to yaks, is one of humanity's greatest assets. Representing an important part of domestic animal diversity, pastoralists' breeds come under the purview of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources, as well as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

But pastoralists' breeds cannot be reduced to assemblages of genes. They represent knowledge accumulated over generations, not only of their keepers, but also learnt behaviour of animals that is passed on from one generation of livestock to the next: how to make use of natural environments, both individually and as a socially organised population. Survival and performance under extreme conditions is not just a matter of physiological traits and instinct but also of learnt behaviour. That's why it makes no sense to try to conserve these 'animal genetic resources' as frozen semen or embryos. In order to maintain and develop their potential to produce protein in the most climatically volatile regions of the planet they need to be kept and conserved in-situ under the guardianship of their keepers.

The Nagoya Protocol for Access and Benefit-Sharing, an add-on to the CBD from 2012, includes the provision for countries to support Community Protocols in which communities detail the genetic resources and traditional knowledge that they are the custodians of, as well as the conditions under which they would give prior informed consent and provide access.

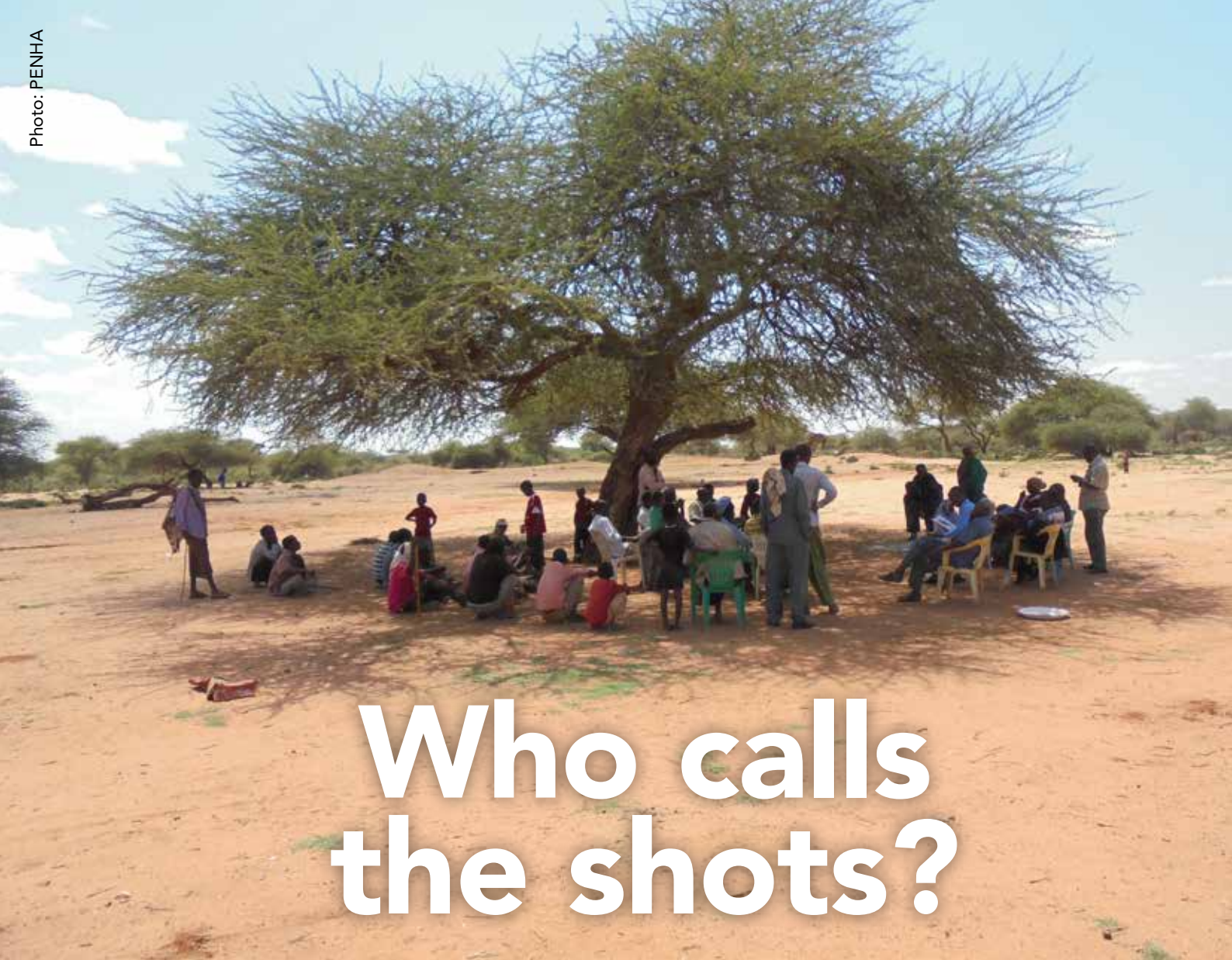
Pastoralists from India, Pakistan, Iran and Kenya have already taken the initiative to develop such Biocultural Community Protocols in which they explain their situation and outline the conditions under which they can continue to act as stewards of their remarkable herd animals and to ensure 'access' in the future.

As the global community begins to look into the role of agriculture in climate change, it is time for more pastoral communities to join this effort and for international organisations to support the endeavour!

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Pastoralists' breeds hold generations of knowledge



Who calls the shots?

Adapting traditional land governance in Somaliland

Pastoral rangelands are vital to Somalia's livestock-dominated economy. But where national government is weak to non-existent, conflict over access to land is rife. Traditional common property regimes are under pressure from enclosures, population growth and charcoal production. Yet even in these very challenging situations, hybrids of customary and 'modern' law enable pastoralist communities to assert their rights.

Sadia Ahmed, John Livingstone, Amsale Shibeshi and Nick Pasiecznik

Somaliland, the autonomous region of northern Somalia, is a predominantly pastoralist country. Pastoralists dominate the economy and play an important role in governance. Livestock exports account for around 90 % of export earnings, and pastoralism has the capacity to withstand and recover from droughts, thanks to mobility, large herd sizes and strong social capital. Households tend to move towards ‘pastoralism +’ – maintaining traditional livestock keeping while taking on new activities like agriculture. Some 30 % of the population are now agro-pastoralists, 54 % remain semi-mobile pastoralists, and 16 % are urban residents.

Sources of conflict Common property systems and customary law prevail in the rangelands, while private property and ‘modern’ law are the norm in urban areas. In agro-pastoral areas, a combination of the traditional and modern models prevail. These regulatory mechanisms support export-oriented pastoralism and a healthy private sector. But in recent years, they are under strain due to rapid population growth, an expatriate-fuelled real estate boom, and increasing government intervention. Weakening customary law means more environmentally destructive charcoal production, more enclosures on rangelands, and new settlements established by urban and expatriate investors.

Communities empowered There is always a decision to make, and at the local level, village committees are responsible. Committee heads

handle everything from minor personal disputes to large land issues. They consult widely, and on bigger issues also with traditional leaders, *aqils* and sultans, hereditary clan or sub-clan positions. All is governed by traditional Somali law (*Xeer*) with clear rules for land management, but village heads face many issues for which *Xeer* does not provide straightforward answers.

A recent story from Dheenta shows how resource use was negotiated by a strong, capable and progressive village committee, representing and respected by its community. The committee has authority to allocate land and oversee transactions, working with district and central governments but has the power to overrule them. Hargeisa’s Amal Construction Company began quarrying around Dheenta in 2014, and approached the village committee for permission to use bulldozers. This was granted on condition that impacts would be limited. But when grazing land was damaged, the committee told Amal to stop work. Discussions followed, and Amal was allowed to resume operations only when they agreed to employ and train local youth and abide by new rules to protect farms, pasture, shrubs and water points.

Villagers ‘win’ again In 2013, the government granted rights to the Turkish oil company Genel Energy for oil exploration in the pastoral heartlands of Somaliland. First greeted with enthusiasm and hopes of oil wealth, issues of land rights emerged when exploration began. PENHA (Pastoralist and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa)

Somaliland

Somaliland celebrated 25 years of independence in May 2016. Not bad for a country that doesn’t officially exist! Once British Somaliland, it joined with the former Italian Somalia in 1960, but declared independence after the government collapsed in 1991. It has its own currency, customs, passports and EU-monitored free and fair elections, but remains unrecognised by the international community. Puntland to the east is also semi-autonomous, meaning the Mogadishu government effectively governs only (parts of) south Somalia. Neighbouring French Somaliland became the Republic of Djibouti in 1977.

Power relations underlie land governance in Somaliland. Governments, elites and vested interests wield power to seize land from communities. But, powerful clans and an armed

population resist ‘land grabbing’ and can frustrate infrastructure development. The government claims ultimate ownership of land and issues titles and deeds, but cannot effectively oversee land sales. The government’s capacity to re-assert its authority and strengthen land use policy, laws and enforcement is severely limited. In this partial vacuum, basic functions such as maintaining a land registry are performed by UN agencies. Also, NGOs work with communities to prevent rangelands enclosures and maintain or re-establish seasonal grazing reserves. However, in many instances the success of such projects are hindered by power relations that do not favour traditional pastoralist communities. But in the eastern provinces of Sool and Sanaag gun ownership by pastoralists has enabled local people to protect their institutions, traditional culture and kinship networks.



Consultations with elders at Sanyare. Photo: PENHA

was conducting consultations in the pastoral village of Sanyare when the first fleet of Genel trucks came sweeping in. There was consternation. What was going on? Who were these people? Heavy vehicles damaged fodder shrubs and trees, and problems quickly deepened. Said one aggrieved local leader, “if they behave that way now, what about when they find oil?” Another implored that, “we shoot at our own people to stop them cutting acacia trees for charcoal, so how can we allow others to clear them away?”

Communities were deeply concerned about what discovery of oil would mean for their future. “We don’t know what’s underneath the ground, but we know what’s on top of it – and they are destroying it,” one elder said. “And if they find what they are looking for, how do we know that we’ll get anything out of it?” Would their land ownership be maintained? Would they have to abandon their pastoral livelihoods? If so, would they be given compensation and a share of the benefits? Tensions eventually led to armed clashes. The village committee talked with clan elders and traditional leaders in other affected communities. The consensus: shut down Genel’s operations. Local leaders told the government, and that was the end of that. Genel suspended work and pulled out in September 2013, but recently announced a desire to return, this time working alongside communities. This was welcomed, with proper consultation. In Somaliland, *unlike* elsewhere, local people call the shots.

An elder talks with a group of women. Photo: PENHA



Emerging hybrid institutions

Somaliland’s upper house of parliament is reserved for traditional leaders, and elsewhere we see the development of hybrid institutions that formalise roles for traditional institutions. This mix of traditional and modern law and institutions works well, allowing the development of strong Somali-owned businesses in water supply, telecommunications and aviation – sectors where foreign companies dominate in most of sub-Saharan Africa.

Traditional, common property ownership is not synonymous with ‘backwardness’ and economic stagnation

Expanding positive outcomes

Pastoralism will continue to be central to Somalia’s economy, even with the growth of service-oriented urban areas and farming. But to reduce the risk of conflict, participatory and inclusive processes for land management and land policy development must become the norm. Formal institutions need to work with traditional ones, with constructive debate and decisions made at the community level, building collaboratively towards coordinated decision-making at national and regional levels. Traditional, common property ownership is not synonymous with ‘backwardness’ and economic stagnation. Traditional institutions are compatible with progress, and traditional leaders are not opposed to change. They are ready to negotiate, and to participate in designing new approaches.

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This article builds on a paper by Sadia Ahmed and John Livingstone, ‘New participatory approaches to land governance and conflict resolution in Somaliland’, presented at the International Resilience, Research and Innovation Conference, Djibouti, 26-28 October 2015.

PASTORALISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

**SPECIAL
SECTION**



Pastoralism is declining across the Middle East. Although varying from country to country, this decline has accelerated from the middle of the 20th century with the establishment of 'modern' nation states, oil wealth and conflict.

For the Bedouin pastoralists, this decline reflects the need for their communities to be respectfully included in policy making and decisions that directly impact their way of life.

This special section of Farming Matters

includes four stories from Egypt, Jordan and the Occupied Palestine Territory. These stories are the result of a documentation workshop conducted by ILEIA in early 2016 in Jordan. Each story illustrates different actions and initiatives of pastoralist men and women aiming to strengthen their communities.

The presentation of pastoralist's experiences on these pages is a result of the Food security governance of Bedouin Pastoralist Groups in the Mashreq project, carried out by Oxfam, IUCN ROWA and ILEIA, and funded by the European Union.



OXFAM

A woman wearing a black hijab and a black dress is standing in a factory, operating a green wool spinning machine. The machine has several large spools of wool on it. The background shows other similar machines and the interior of the factory.

Preserving our Bedouin heritage

A training unit for spinning and manufacturing woolen handicrafts in the Alqasir village, Egypt, has become a place where women not only gain skills from which they can earn an income, but also a place to connect with their cultural heritage. This is a story of one of the first trainees, who quickly became a trainer and shares her passion for the preservation of Bedouin heritage.

Eatemad Rafallah Abdallah

The Matrouh governorate stretches west of Alexandria to the Libyan border, and all the way south to the Siwah Oasis. Matrouh is a coastal desert governorate which is known for its traditional tribal character. In Matrouh, the Bedouin traditions of generosity, chivalry, noble ethics, cooperation, and respect for our heritage are passed from one generation to the next. But the same traditions restrict the work of women outside the household.

In 2004, the Desert Research Center of the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, set up a wool spinning and manufacturing unit, the first of its kind in Matrouh. The General Council of the governorate, which maintains the unit building, funded the purchase of equipment for drying and sterilising, carding and spinning the wool, as well as a quilting machine. I joined one of the first training courses, and as a trainee the idea of preserving our Bedouin heritage occupied my thoughts. I saw that we had to teach young girls how to earn an income with traditional weaving methods, and this became my mission.

Training a new generation Three years later, in 2007, with the help of a number of other women at the wool spinning and manufacturing unit, we started an initiative to teach women and girls how to produce handicrafts using traditional weaving techniques. We taught them more than just the act of weaving: the threads and colours we use are related to the environment and to the general context we live in. It is as if we are putting our feelings and senses into each piece of work. The traditional designs used are *alhawayya*, *alareej*, *alshabor* and *alnawayri*.

My mother taught me how to use the *masad* for weaving. But to teach others I needed first to find women who could work outdoors and help me teach young girls about our traditional designs. This was not easy, but I was lucky to find Zainab, from whom I learnt a lot about tools and techniques. I also found two young women who were very interested in our local heritage and who, at the same time, had a lot of experience producing handicrafts. We have been working together since then, exchanging ideas, acquiring new skills, and improving what we do.

Among the many activities we engaged in, the most influential was the training of 90 girls inside the spinning and manufacturing unit. Many of them came from the Wadi Alramel village, and were trained by women from the same village. Afterwards, we also made an effort to work with disabled girls, including those who are blind. During the training sessions we encourage the Bedouin girls to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors and use traditional designs. We try to use local materials and inputs, such as yarn from sheep wool of different colours.



The wool spinning and manufacturing unit is the first of its kind in Matrouh. Photo: Eatemad Rafallah Abdallah

The need to preserve our local heritage through traditional handicrafts is not widely recognised, but it is important in many ways. Our traditional heritage is closely related to what Bedouin women do. It is also strongly linked to the pastoral communities of the Matrouh governorate, where many different economic, environmental, social and educational factors are involved. Moreover, handicrafts are an important source of income for women and their families.

Families in this desert area depend primarily on their animals, and using the wool that is otherwise discarded provides them with an alternative source of

We taught them more than just the act of weaving

income. The use of easily available raw materials (making natural dyes, for example, from onion leaves or curcuma), means that no additional costs are involved. Above all, this work provides income opportunities to the Bedouin women as it is work they can do at home. Due to the local traditions, women can find it very difficult to work outside of their homes or to travel to other villages. One of the reasons why our work has been such a success is because we take these limitations into account when planning where to do trainings, making it much easier for women to participate.



The threads and colours we use are related to the environment and to the general context we live in.
Photos: Eatemad Rafallah Abdallah

Not an easy road But I also faced many difficulties when I started working. It was not easy to convince the Bedouin families or the local authorities of the importance of what we were doing. Many of them openly questioned the benefits, wondering if it was worth investing any time or money. In addition, it was difficult to go to places like Alqura and Nuju'. Women cannot freely leave their houses, so it was necessary to meet women in their homes. I also had to get the approval of my parents to travel abroad, and working outside, and travelling long distances between pastoral clusters was challenging.

I had expected that many men would not support the training initiative, as their wives and daughters would become more independent as they would earn their own income. This is why I decided to talk to them first, and to present what we were planning to do. We were able to convince families to let their daughters and wives participate, by highlighting the financial and educational possibilities this could bring, in addition to the cultural benefits. Given the general difficulties women face in working outside the home, it was important to find partners who would support the cause. The participation of Sheikhs and village elders was positive, as they welcomed the idea. They understood that this move would reflect positively on all Bedouin women. The Matrouh radio station also helped us reach all families directly and promoted the trainings, explaining what we wanted to achieve, and encouraged listeners to join us.

My personal journey My work in the spinning and manufacturing unit helped me discover something I really wanted to do and develop further. In only two months, with the encouragement of all those involved, I was promoted and became a team supervisor, and went from being a trainee to a trainer for other girls and women. These changes took place rather quickly because I had a dream and I really wanted it to come true.

During the past four years I have gained a lot of experience and I have become more known in the field. In 2011 joined a meeting organised by the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous People, WAMIP, in India. I participated alongside 50 other pastoralists from many other countries. Later, I also joined other global pastoral gatherings, in Kenya in 2013 and in Morocco in 2015. I am also a member of the Arabian Pastoralist Communities Network. I have come to know many institutions that work in the field of pastoralism and handicrafts, most of which are interested in building women's capacities.

My work in the spinning and manufacturing unit helped me uncover and pursue my dream. Along the way, I found many supporters, but also came up against people who did not see the benefits of my work. Nevertheless, I am convinced of the benefits of keeping our ancestors' traditions alive, and of involving women in the process. These ideas reflect what we do and who we are: our heritage is alive in our traditions, customs and crafts, and also in the food we eat every day. It is true that the general context is difficult, and that living in the desert is challenging. But we can learn a lot from our heritage and culture.

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Building the Arabian Pastoralist Communities Network



The Arabian Pastoralist Communities Network emerged from one community's struggle to assert their land rights. In the face of injustice, a local cooperative learnt that in order to participate in local decision making processes they needed to build relationships with national, regional and international organisations.

Khalid Khawaldeh

Dana is a small mountain village about 1300 metres above sea level in the south of Jordan. The place has been inhabited for more than 4000 years, and the architecture that stands today was built in the traditional Ottoman style in the 15th century. For hundreds of years, people from the Ata'ta tribe, originally pastoralists, lived there. This was the case until recently, when the people of Dana suffered two great injustices. The first occurred in the 1960s when they lost their customary land to a reforestation project, and the second when

their land was turned into a nature reserve in the early 1990s. As a result, most of Dana's families moved to the nearby 'new' village of Qadisiyah. The current population is about 15,000 people, all of whom either lived in Dana or are descendants of the original Dana population.

Unheard voices Dana's population tried to stop the reforestation project and the establishment of the reserve, but they lost both battles. They lacked sufficient information to effectively protest, and did not know about their rights. They were unable to



In order to face the challenges that came with the loss of their land, some of Dana's families formed a cooperative. Photo: Jorge Chavez-Tafur

compete against the power and influence of the reforestation department (a government department) or against the organisation managing the reserve which had influential contacts in the capital, Amman. The only compensation received from the organisation managing the nature reserve was the promise of 500 job opportunities which never materialised.

In 1994, in order to face the challenges that came with the loss of their land, some of Dana's families organised themselves into a cooperative which is now known as the Dana and Qadisiyah Local Community Cooperative (or the Dana Cooperative). Yet they soon saw that without key contacts in Amman, they had few opportunities to influence the decisions made about their land.

This was confirmed when one of the young members discovered online that an international meeting had taken place in Dana a few years before. One of the outcomes of the meeting was the 'Dana Declaration', which stipulated that conservation projects consider the rights of local communities. Ironically, although the meeting took place in the village of Dana, the people of Dana had not been informed. Instead, only those employed by the nature reserve had been invited to attend. Quite surprisingly, the meeting was held in English. None of the attending employees

understood English, and the purpose and outcomes of the meeting were not explained to them. Another irony is that one of the meeting's organisers was the organisation managing the nature reserve, but they themselves have not taken the declaration into consideration.

Building a network Finding out about the Dana Declaration meeting was a turning point for the community and its cooperative in many ways. The members of the Dana Cooperative understood the importance of the internet and of the English language for communication outside of their community. They set up an IT and community centre in Qadisiyah which has become an important space for community members to learn computer and language skills, as well as to organise education and awareness raising programmes. Besides strengthening the community from the bottom up, the cooperative began to broaden their network.

They contacted other pastoralist and indigenous communities in similar situations, tapping into their networks and alliances, and learning about their local and international achievements. The cooperative took every opportunity to meet international and United Nations organisations to find out what these organisations were doing, and what support they were able to offer. Using these new 'friends', the cooperative built a robust network, part of which developed into the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous People (WAMIP). The Dana Cooperative was one of the co-founders of this alliance which was created in Segovia, Spain in 2007. The first general meeting of the alliance included hundreds of participants.

Since then, the cooperative has participated in different international events, meetings, negotiations and consultations. For example, they have contributed to the development of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (2012). The cooperative was able to discover what several international organisations were doing in other parts of Jordan, and connected with the World Initiative

The Dana Cooperative took every opportunity to meet international and United Nations organisations.

Photo: Jorge Chavez-Tafur





While reaching out to international organisations, the cooperatives members have not lost sight of their communities' challenges and opportunities. Photo: Jalal Hammad IUCN

for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The Arabian Pastoralist Community Network

At one of the meetings of the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous People (WAMIP), the Dana Cooperative suggested that WAMIP needed to deepen its work. In order to bring about the necessary changes at a local level, the cooperative suggested that WAMIP should work first regionally, then nationally and then at a local level, and that by working in this way, WAMIP would benefit from the international environment and support available.

In December 2013 in Nairobi, WAMIP made the decision to start regional networks. At the same time, the Arab delegation attending the meeting suggested that the Arabian Pastoralist Community Network (APCN) be formed. The delegation proposed that the APCN be independent from WAMIP, but work closely with them and other international alliances for the benefit of pastoral communities.

In April 2014, with the support of IUCN's West Asia office, the APCN held its first meeting. Representatives of pastoralist communities from different Arab countries were invited to attend and participate in the establishment of the network. The aims are to develop a large alliance powerful enough to support local pastoral communities in Jordan and in other Arab countries, and to encourage decision makers and stakeholders to support local pastoral populations. One way to do this is to give local communities control over their resources, while supporting them manage these resources in a sustainable way. This will enhance the pastoral communities' participation in and contribution to the national economy. It will also help to

protect the local ecosystems by working with those who directly benefit from and reside in these ecosystems.

Local roots The Dana Cooperative has developed good relationships with the local branches and offices of various international and intergovernmental organisations. This has provided opportunities for local and national support, and the opportunity to link with other groups and pastoral communities. The cooperative, although a relatively small organisation, has used regional and international alliances to develop a sphere of influence and a regional network that affects positive change at the local level.

In short, this is the story of a small organisation which has used regional and international alliances to develop a sphere of influence and a regional network, and with it promote change at a local level. It has had a positive impact because, while reaching out to international organisations, the cooperative's members have not lost sight of their community's strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities.

The journey towards empowerment has not been easy, but it has provided the opportunity to reach out to similar communities in Jordan, the Arab world and beyond. Helping to share experiences, knowledge and practical ideas, the organisation has supported other organisations to strengthen skills and knowledge and fulfil objectives that service and enhance their communities. This, in turn, contributes towards food security, and has a strong economic, social and cultural impact. There is no doubt that this experience is relevant to local communities struggling under similar circumstances.

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Local solutions for forcibly confined flocks



Pastoralist societies face many difficulties when their traditional livelihoods change, and when sedentarisation becomes the norm. A local organisation providing livestock services, as seen in Palestine, can play a very important role.

Alessandro Cristalli

Bedouins have lived in the Negev desert and Galilee for thousands of years. By means of mobile herding and farming, they thrived in a heterogeneous ecosystem with different levels of aridity. They selected sheep and goat ecotypes creating pure breeds and refined a livelihood characterised by sensitivity for the environment, hospitality, openness and ingenuity. But since the 1940s, they have faced enormous challenges. Especially since the Israeli occupation in 1967, most Bedouin families have gradually become sedentary. This is largely the result of having a growing number of families and livestock confined in a relatively small area; and at the same time, the adoption of alternative sources of income. But it is also a result of the presence of Israeli settlers and competition for land. Since 2014, a total of 3,860 new settlement units have been announced,

and it is estimated that today, there are more than 500,000 settlers in the West Bank.

Problems when 'hanging in'

Bedouins who have not stopped raising animals still see themselves as pastoralists. They feel that their culture and, essentially their livelihood strategies, have not changed. But they are not always ready to respond to the new challenges. The process of fencing and confining small and large ruminants in pens and stables brings several needs. For instance, replacing grazing with the purchase of forage, and providing animals with well water are common challenges in terms of organisation and finances. Investing in proper animal housing and buying hay or agricultural by-products requires funds and knowledge. It also forces people to adopt proper hygiene practices for disease prevention – especially when there are no

veterinary services. These aspects are all connected to an overall farm management strategy, and include the need to develop and implement a business plan.

For many reasons, those who have joined a sedentary life have not received the necessary support from the authorities, nor have they benefited from the plans, policies and services that have been tried at different levels. Bedouins have secured sufficient food for their communities. But the Palestinian Authority has not been able to secure the funds which are necessary, nor the expertise and skills, to provide the support they need. Making a difficult situation even harder, the West Bank has seen record levels of animal diseases and zoonoses in the past few years (such as brucellosis, chlamydiosis, toxoplasmosis and salmonellosis). All of them affect animal production and reproduction, and many affect humans as well. International organisations have provided support and tried to address these issues with both emergency and development initiatives that try to work with Bedouins and address their needs.

Sourcing support Among these initiatives, one of the most promising has been the establishment and growth of the Palestinian Livestock Development Center (PLDC), based in Tubas, since 2004. PLDC pursues the development of the rural animal production sector, focusing on small ruminants. In order to do this, it delivers technical services to farmers, and at the same time it works to develop the technical capabilities of small ruminant breeders. PLDC is an endogenous self-help initiative established by members of the Palestinian civil society and Bedouin pastoralists. At the moment, it has 400 members each paying 120 shekels per year (about US\$30). This gives them the right to vote in all meetings, to elect its authorities, and also to receive services.

With five veterinarians and two agronomists working as mobile units, they deliver veterinary assistance and artificial insemination services. Diagnosis is supported by a fully equipped laboratory, while feed is produced by two mills. It also plays another important role: it helps the Ministry of Agriculture to fulfill its role as implementer of veterinary policies for delivering prophylactic vaccination, animal disease diagnosis and artificial insemination. Since 2007, PLDC has received support from Oxfam, and it has therefore been able to reach a larger number of people, covering the area controlled by the Israeli Civil Administration (also known as Area C).

A good example Even if sedentarisation is not the preferred route of all pastoralists, it is seen by many as an inevitable process, and as a trend which is unlikely to stop. But when Bedouins settle down permanently, they still see themselves as pastoralists, even if under different conditions. Therefore, they need support for adapting to these new conditions. The authorities often consider that their contribution to the local or regional GDP is negligible, and therefore not worthy of any investment. In many cases, the international aid system has helped fill these gaps, but the possibilities of providing a sustainable contribution are limited. Endogenous initiatives supported by external actors seem to be a successful approach, even if it is clear that they need to be nurtured for several years before they can stand on their own feet. PLDC is showing that local solutions are the best option.

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Five veterinarians and two agronomists work as mobile units to deliver technical services to farmers.

Photos: Alessandro Cristalli



Working towards a

brighter future

Herders in Palestine face many challenges as a result of the occupation, fluctuating rainfall and a general lack of services.

Supporting herders to increase their capacities to assert their rights has been an important step towards sustainable pastoralism.

Atef Mahmoud Mohammad Beni Odeh

Animal production constitutes 48 % of the total agricultural sector in Palestine. Just under half of the sector is made up from small ruminants, namely sheep and goats. But the reality of herders in Palestine, shaped by the occupation, is difficult. Fodder for their herds is not easy to come by as they cannot freely access the necessary inputs – land, water and seeds. Moreover, this is compounded by inadequate health services for their herds and a lack of marketing channels for their products.

In this context, since September 2013, Oxfam Italia has been implementing the Food Security Governance project, in partnership with the Palestinian Livestock Development Center in Tubas, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees in Gaza, and the Pales-

tinian Agricultural Cooperatives Union in Ramallah. Its activities were designed to support goat and sheep herders in the governorates of Jenin, Tubas, Nablus, Jericho, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron and Gaza, to improve their living standards and achieve food security. The project focused on supporting herders to increase their awareness of their rights and their ability to protect their property and manage their animals in a sustainable way given their resource constraints.

Challenges compounded Due to the Israeli occupation, herders' movements are severely restricted. They risk being deported if their land and pastoral areas are confiscated, or when military trainings take place. This applies to all municipalities and clusters, even though the risk varies between them depending on the distance from the settlements or from cities such as Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem – where the threat to land confiscation is the highest. This situation contributes to overgrazing and the inability to access water. In combination with irregular rainfall patterns, and the lack of a comprehensive programme to manage the few remaining pastoral areas, the result is insufficient fodder throughout the year. Growing fodder crops is also frustrated by the climate, the lack of access to land as well as prohibitively expensive seeds due to high transportation costs, taxes and rising prices on the international market.

In terms of animal health, support from private and public institutions has not been sufficient. For herders, this is a constant concern, especially because of the high costs of drugs and veterinary services. Moreover, the Ministry is not able to provide the necessary vaccines against diseases such as brucellosis, Rift Valley fever and chlamydia. Finally, when animals are to be sold, herders face a lot of problems in terms of quality, security and distribution, leading to significant losses. They lack marketing channels and protection from imported products in the local markets. Moreover, the individual herders often lack the skills to improve the quality or add value to their products. It is thus not surprising that the number of families in Palestine whose livelihoods depend on raising sheep and goats declined significantly between 1990 and 2015. In this period, the number of female sheep and goats declined from 1.5 million to 730,000.

Recognising the communities' needs In discussions with all herders, the project field team analysed this general context and identified the communities' needs. One important strategy that they decided to pursue was to set up local committees within each cluster so that local communities will be able to organise and play a more effective role in solving their problems and ensuring that the authorities recognise their situation. More than 75 committees

were formed, each of them made up of at least seven individuals from the cluster, including men and women of all ages. Two members from each committee act as focal points, representing their cluster in all meetings that take place outside their cluster.

As a first step to claim their rights in front of the most relevant decision makers and authorities, the focal points of all the pastoral clusters in each governorate met at the Governorate Committee, joined by representatives of the Agriculture Directorate, the local Government Directorate, and a representative of the local council of

Their best asset is their own community's capacities and resources

each cluster. Three main meetings were held. The first meeting took place in February 2014 and included cluster focal points from Jenin, Tubas and Nablus. The second was in April 2014, including cluster focal points from Jericho-Jerusalem. The third meeting was in June 2014, with the cluster focal points from Bethlehem-Hebron. In total, around 140 herders and an additional 60 representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Local Government, local councils, municipalities and some elders participated in these meetings.

After the meetings at the governorate level, the focal points looked at the best way to address their cluster's

Local committees were formed so that communities could claim their rights in front of important decision makers. Photo: Atef Mahmoud Mohammad Beni Odeh





Meetings were held and the main conclusion was that aid from others is a short-term solution which, most often, does not meet the communities' needs. Photo: Atef Mahmoud Mohammad Beni Odeh

problems. The main conclusion was that expecting aid from others is a short-term solution which, most often, does not meet the community's needs. They were keenly aware that their best asset is their own community's capacities and resources, and that increasing awareness of their rights would be paramount. The Alsahel Company, a specialised group based in Ramallah, trained the community representatives on how to build a problem tree, to systematically identify and tackle the problems of their cluster. They focused on local solutions considering the resources that were both available and accessible.

Greener pastures One of the solutions that has been implemented is the regeneration of the remaining pastoral spaces. The herders cooperated with the Agriculture Directorates in each governorate, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, to do this. Their work has helped to reduce families' production costs as healthier pastures naturally lead to more available fodder and healthier animals. A flow-on benefit has been that with healthier herds, the quality of their products has improved and this has opened up more marketing options.

All participants agree that all parties needed to join

efforts – including the Ministry of Agriculture, the co-operatives and the civil society associations, all breeders and the international financing institutions. They need to prepare a medium-term plan for the sustainable exploitation of the available resources, and to work in a complementary manner. This is a sector that needs the attention of decision makers and specialists, providing guidance and support when needed and running awareness-raising campaigns among breeders, as the best way to ensure positive results and impact.

The most important elements, however, are the pastoralists themselves. The increased interest in self-reliance supports the notion that community participation is a way to ensure the continuous practice of pastoralism in the region. This understanding paved the way for other creative projects within each cluster. A real change occurred in the way the herders looked towards the future, as they started to rely on themselves to defend and develop their livelihoods.

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As a way of life that goes back thousand years, pastoralism has played a very important role in shaping societal relations and defining our diets, culture and religion. While always in motion, over the last 50 years pastoralism has evolved more rapidly, as 'modern' agriculture gained popularity as a way to meet industry's insatiable demands for raw materials.

The nomadic and semi-nomadic ways of pastoralists and their need to access large tracts of grazing land stands in the way of modern agriculture. The fencing off of large grazing lands either for commercial agriculture under freehold tenure, ecotourism, wildlife and export farming has pushed pastoralism to the brink of collapse, affecting the rural economy in many countries. This has led to conflicts as pastoralists now compete with crop farmers and other pastoralists for access to remaining lands and water sources. This situation has worsened under climate change. Pastoralists received little attention in public policies, most of which seek to entice foreign investment. Despite recognition of the importance of pastoralism in regional and global policies, implementation at national levels is minimal. The few existing national policies focused on livestock are limited to promoting commercial livestock rearing for the domestic market or to earn foreign exchange. For example, by prescribing stocking rates for pastoralists in order to curb environmental degradation and to avoid spread of diseases to commercial herds.

As a consequence, herds have shrunk and ownership has changed. Before the 1980s in Zimbabwe, women and children used to own cattle, goats and sheep, but today this is no longer so. Now, any remaining livestock are all owned by the heads of the households, most of whom are men. This has affected the livelihood options, nutrition security and decision making of women and children. In addition, pastoralist women's contributions in the form of herding (where social norms permit), rearing, milking, feeding, cleaning and more often has a layer of invisibility around it. In situations of increased conflict, as is happening in east Africa, pastoralists have been facing unprecedented levels of threat and militarisation. This further exacerbates the marginalisation of women and children.

The marginalisation of women within an already vulnerable pastoral society is rarely mentioned in policy debates. We urge our governments to protect pastoralism as a way of life and to establish conflict resolution mechanisms to address the many challenges that pastoralists face in the 21st century, especially the women among them. This must happen through meaningful consultations with pastoralists, building on their indigenous knowledge and initiatives for resilience.

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Women pastoralists: neglected in the 21st century

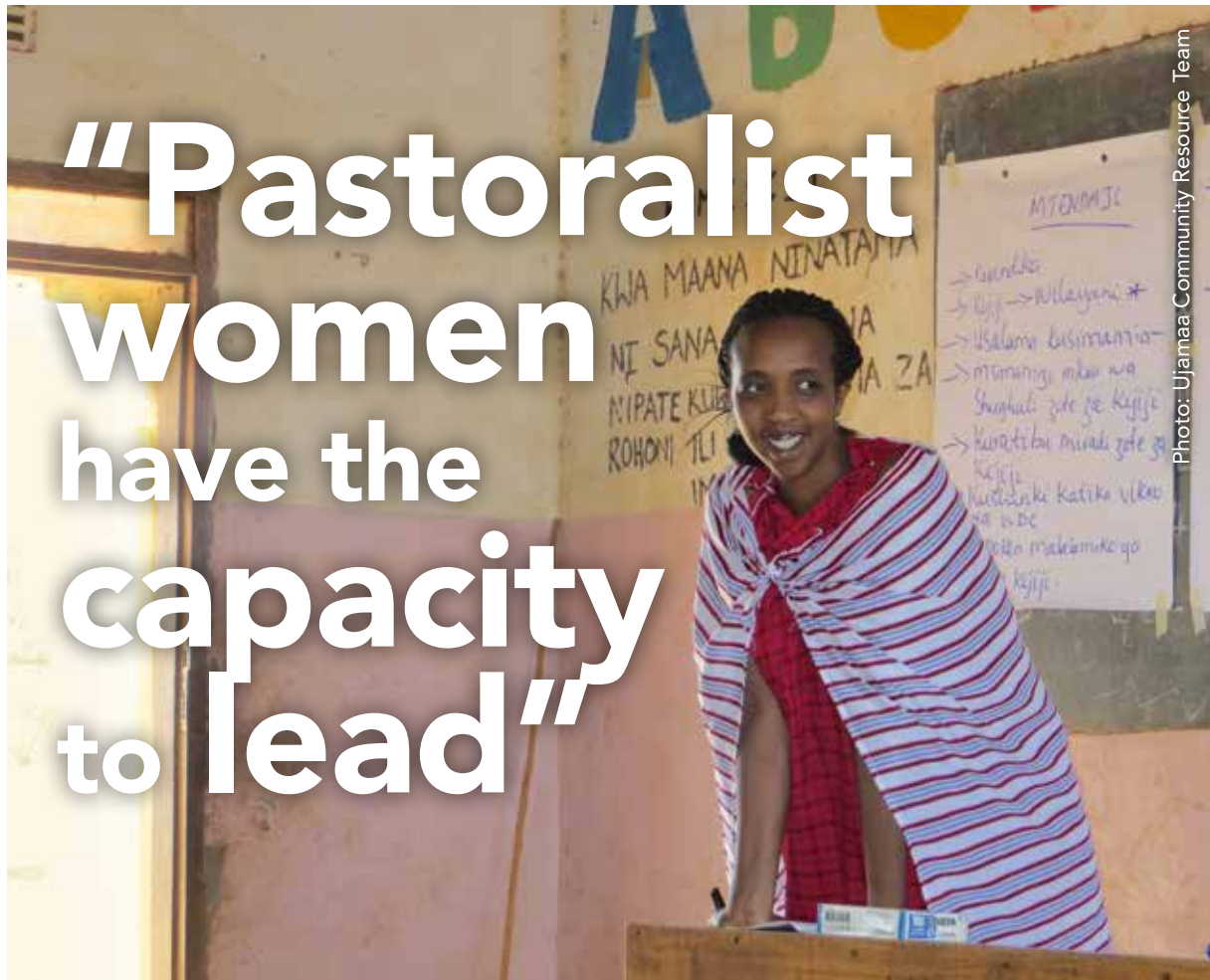


Photo: Ujamaa Community Resource Team

"After my university education I felt I had to work for change in my community." Paine Eulalia Mako is a Masaai and a pastoralist in Tanzania. She works to connect grass roots and national level campaigns for pastoralists' land rights. Much of her work is about empowering women to take the lead and claim what is rightfully theirs. Paine explains why women have been most active in their communities' recent struggles for land.

Interview: Madeleine Florin

How has Tanzanian pastoralists' access to land changed recently?

There has been a lot of restriction of pastoralists to certain areas of land. There are several factors contributing to this increased restriction. But generally in Tanzania, large scale investment is increasing and this has a huge impact on pastoralists' access to land.

Most of the areas that investors are interested in (for conservation, wildlife management and hunting) happen to be pastoral areas.

When investors come in, most of them go through the government and there is rarely appropriate communication with pastoral communities to let them know what is happening. There is a lot of friction between

the investors and pastoralist communities because by the time the government and an investor have come to an agreement, pastoralists have not had any opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect them.

What are the consequences of increased land rights restrictions for pastoralists? Increased restrictions cause increased livestock death and ultimately hunger amongst pastoralist communities. Land is a very important resource for pastoralists. As you know pastoralists are nomadic in nature. They move from one place to another in search of pasture to sustain their livestock. When you restrict them from moving, the sustainability of the livestock is also strained. They will not be able to survive for long in a restricted area once the dry season arrives. The land dries up and we have to move out and look for greener pastures and water for our animals. So, especially in the dry season, if there is no pasture or water, there will be no milk to take care of our children and our families.

In Loliondo, my home and where I work, we have several investors. Some have direct links with our communities and we find agreements together. But we also have problems with investors who come in through the government. For example we have had several struggles with a hunting company that has been in the area since 1992. In 2009 during a major drought, the company blocked access to a vital area for grazing and watering our livestock in the dry season. The company had backing from the government and the communities were left on their own. There was mass death of livestock as a result. We have had several of these type of problems across Tanzania.

Can you explain why women pastoralists have been most active in the recent struggles for land rights? Women have to react because they are most impacted by each case of land grabbing. It is relatively easy for men to move to other areas to look for alternative forms of livelihood. But for women, who have five or six children to look after, how will they move and where will they go? Women have a strong attachment to their land. They ask: “where will our children live if we don’t speak out? If

The women went all the way to speak to the Prime Minister and the national press



Paine leads a women’s rights and leadership programme. Photo: Ujamaa Community Resource Team

we don’t act, the men will not act on our behalf. They do not feel the same about the future of our children.”

We see that women come together, contribute the little they have and are prepared to go all the way to the national level. In Loliondo, the government wanted to create a 1500 km² conservation reserve that would restrict pastoralists’ access to their village land. In 2013, it was the women who came out strongly to fight. They went all the way to speak to the Prime Minister and the national press.

In the villages, women also struggle to influence change in the traditional, all male, leadership structure. Women are taking steps to participate in decisions and hold local leaders accountable for their actions. For example, there are cases where male leaders of the village council accept bribes to give outsiders access to village land. In one such case in Simanjiro District, Manyara Region, a group of women occupied the village council office in order to have their land rights recognised. They slept for five nights on the ground until their claims were heard by the village council.

How do you support women to uphold their rights? I am the gender coordinator for the Ujamaa Community Resource Team and I lead the women’s rights and leadership programme. In this programme we organise women’s leadership forums. The forums include training on empowerment, women’s rights, land rights and traditional management practices. For example, we simplify laws such as the village land act so that women know their rights and can defend them.

A forum usually has 24 women participants with each woman representing a sub-village (administrative



A lot of women now say: “we have the knowledge, I know my rights and how to acquire a piece of land.” Photo: Ujamaa Community Resource Team

unit within a village). The women are elected by other women in their communities as they are responsible for sharing their lessons from the forum. Traditional leaders from the village council are also included in the forums. This is a way to show the broader community that pastoralist women have the capacity to lead and to promote acceptance of these type of changes.

As well as empowering women to have access and control over land, the challenge we face now is about economic empowerment. I hear a lot of women saying, “we have the knowledge, I know my rights and how to acquire a piece of land. But without the resources to support myself – I still have a challenge.” This is why, as an organisation, the Ujamaa Community Resource Team also addresses economic empowerment. For example, in one community women have set up a cattle dip business which ensures they have their own income.

Why is it so important to support grassroots actions as well as advocate for land rights at the national level? These two levels need to be connected because things happen at the top which affect people on the ground. We empower and consult at the grassroots level so that pastoralists are able to reach higher levels to claim what is rightfully theirs. The women’s rights and leadership forums is a good example. We also play a role when pastoralists are not aware or able to participate in decisions and discussions at the regional or national level.

For example, recently there was a land policy review conducted by the government. It took place in a very short space of time. We worked to ensure that if people at the village level could not attend the region-

al meetings arranged by the government, we could at least represent their issues at that platform.

Another example is the constitutional review due to be finalised in 2020. The government review team visits villages but they don’t take the responsibility of ensuring that all people are able to participate and they do not visit all the villages. Again, we work to make sure that people are aware that this is happening and that there is an opportunity to participate and have their voices heard.

If pastoralists have their land rights and economic independence, how different would Tanzania be?

It will be different when pastoralists have access to and control over their resources.

Pastoralism in Tanzania will be seen as an official mode of livelihood. The government will give more weight to pastoralists. They will be recognised for their role in supporting the national economy and Tanzania’s daily food and basic needs.

Although we have a lot of struggles, there is a lot happening on the ground. And, it is the women who are coming out strongly and are fully prepared to forge the change we need.

Has your work inspired other communities and women under similar circumstances?

I don’t want to take credit for things that don’t link directly back to mine and colleagues’ work at the Ujamaa Community Resource Team. Generally though, our successful approach of working with traditional leaders to influence change is being used more widely now. In the Maasai pastoral system, and generally in pastoral systems in Tanzania, male traditional leaders make rules and regulations in the community. These same traditional leaders are very influential in the community and are able to bring about change. We work together with them, especially for acceptance of women as equal beings capable of engaging in community development. More and more communities and particularly women are engaging with the traditional leadership system to influence the changes they want to see in their communities.

Paine: “We empower and consult at the grassroots level so pastoralists are able to [...] claim what is rightfully theirs.” Photo: Ujamaa Community Resource Team



Pastoralist youth as agents of peace

Several pastoralist groups inhabit the semi-arid areas of Northern Kenya: the Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Borana and Rendille. Since its independence in 1963, this part of the country and its people have been marginalised and routinely denied access to public services. As a result, pastoralist territories have become highly insecure. For years now, inter-communal cattle raids have been taking place, terrorising the civilian population and killing hundreds of people. Not surprisingly, a common notion has emerged that pastoralists are inherently violent people. Youth have been key to violent relations among Kenyan pastoralists.

Traditionally, young men of warrior age are expected to raid neighbouring groups to obtain cattle to pay bridewealth or to replace decimated herds after periods of drought. Yet, the escalation of violence in Northern Kenya is, above all, a result of the increasing presence of arms and ammunition, which youth use to protect communal herds. With pastoralist landscapes becoming violent environments, the movement of cattle from one place to the other requires a 'security' plan between groups of youth to prevent cases of ambush and loss of animals.

But there is hope. The peacebuilding efforts of local, educated and young pastoralist men and women have become increasingly prominent since 2009. One of the most notable is the Laikipia Peace Caravan. This was a platform that involved young people from different ethnic groups travelling as a group to areas of high tension and working together towards peace. They arranged peace meetings in markets, churches and schools. The convergence of educated pastoralist youth speaking with a common voice has been critical in bringing previously warring communities together. They were able to obtain community and governmental support to implement several key projects at inter-communal boundaries, including schools, water pans, markets and a public library.



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As a result of the efforts of pastoralist youth, incidences of cattle raiding have reduced significantly. Moreover, the role of educated youth as change agents to stem violence goes further. It shows that violent relations among pastoralists in Northern Kenya has more to do with the structural challenges resulting from more than half a century of state marginalisation. Education not only gives youth alternative livelihood options but enables them to seek a new paradigm in governance, development, and peacebuilding. This is paying dividends after decades of failed state 'peacebuilding' policies.

Maintaining a pastoralist's way of life requires tenacity. From transhumant beekeepers in Mexico to new peasants in Europe, these are stories of pastoralist-led initiatives that challenge marginalisation in political processes.

Catalonia

Shepherd school

While it is true that pastoralism is increasingly revalorised across Europe, the number of flocks and shepherds in the region remain low. For a great part, this is due to the lack of economic opportunities for rural youth, who opt for other livelihood strategies. To address this problem, a handful of initiatives seek to facilitate generational renewal by providing future pastoralists with the support and training they need. One of these initiatives is the *Escola de Pastors de Catalunya*, a shepherd school created in 2009. The school's objective is to support new peasants interested in pastoralism and to show that peasant agriculture is economically viable. The course lasts one year and includes theoretical and

practical modules. At the school, apprentices spend time acquiring theoretical knowledge that ranges from animal breeding to renewable energies and from botany to conflict resolution. Moreover, they gain practical experience by attending seminars and working alongside veteran shepherds. After developing technical and managerial skills, shepherds may choose to settle as livestock farmers or as transhumant shepherds. Another problem facing new peasants

is access to land. To tackle this problem, the school works closely with Terra Franca, a non-profit born in 2013, that brings together land owners and new peasants under common agroecological projects.

For more information contact **Escola de Pastors** (info@rurbans.org).



Photo: Escola de pastores

Informed choices

Communities in North Dakoro, Niger, face increasingly unpredictable weather triggering emergencies, and a reduction in pasture and water availability. This situation that puts pastoral livelihoods in danger is due to the impacts of climate change and an increasing herders' population (largely due to conflicts in neighbouring countries). The community has implemented SCAP (*Systèmes Communautaires d'Alerte Précoce*). It is a community-based Early Warning System developed with the support of CARE. Community members collect, share and analyse relevant indicators and information that helps herders to cope with the unpredictable circumstances. Information concerning rainfall patterns, availability of water and pasture, opening dates of fields, the location of annual festivals, prices of goods and animals in local markets, or the existence

Niger

of possible epidemics are collected. The information is transmitted through mobile phones that are charged using community managed solar panels. Pastoralists are now able to make more informed choices, taking action when an emergency is announced, or predicted. For example, when a bad season is announced and a shortage of pasture expected, pastoralists can reduce their herds by selling some animals before it's too late, and using the income to buy food and medical products for the rest of the herd.

For more information contact **Hiya Maidawa** (mhiyamaidawa@gmail.com).



Photo: Cliche Moustapha

China

Tibetan herders diversify their options

In 2010, the Kegawa Herders Cooperative was established in a Tibetan pastoral region of Qinghai Province, China. Following decades of centrally-planned development, this was the first time in many years that local community members had come together for a common purpose on a purely voluntary basis. They began to develop a range of creative ways to advance community interests based on local resources and knowledge. The government quickly recognised the value of this grassroots initiative. Now with over 90 families as members, the cooperative produces and sells livestock-related products which provide employment and generate income for the community. This 'coop' approach is now upheld by the government and favourable policies support its replication. Through such community-level governance of natural resources, new economic opportunities have been identified and maximised (for example, the sale of yak wool for production of high-quality thermal clothing), and now there is more collaboration amongst pastoralists. Equally, environmental monitoring occurs regularly – including of wildlife, grasslands, and glaciers – and climate awareness and environmental conservation (including the



Photo: Marc Foggin

charismatic snow leopard) are new trademarks for these Tibetan herders. Moreover, pastoral voices are heard more effectively and widely than before, social cohesion and empowerment are increasing, and new opportunities are being trialed and demonstrated. People's sense of identity is also being restored and strengthened, with increasing pride in Tibetan cultural heritage and in pastoral livelihoods.

For more information contact Dr. J Marc Foggin
(foggin@plateauperspectives.org).

Mexico

Sailing to pastures new

Transhumant beekeeping is not the first thing one thinks of when talking pastoralism. Yet, mobile beehives are common practice in modern apiculture. Like most pastoralist societies worldwide, transhumant beekeepers face many obstacles that challenge their livelihoods and lifestyles. In Mexico, many beekeepers are looking for ways to extend the usually short blossom period and they do so by looking for new pastures for their colonies. Beekeepers in the coastal state of Veracruz have extended their niche to mangrove forests, which they reach by motor boats. The success of producing honey this way has become such, that fishermen in other states in the Gulf of Mexico have

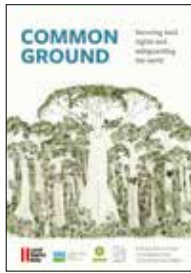
started adopting mobile apiculture as well. With the support of researchers from ECOSUR, experienced beekeepers train fishermen in beekeeping in a farmer-scientist partnership that started in 2012. With this move to new pastures, everybody wins. Fishermen have an alternative source of income and transhumant beekeepers reach local markets thanks to the advisory support of ECOSUR, which helps raising awareness

amongst consumers who usually don't eat honey. Moreover, researchers observe how beekeeping, once again, contributes to local economies and conservation of fragile ecosystems.



Photo: Nicolas Défos

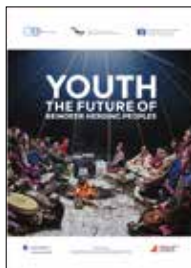
For more information contact Rémy Vandame (remy@ecosur.mx)



Common Ground: Securing Land Rights and Safeguarding the Earth

Oxfam, International Land Coalition, Rights and Resources Initiative. 2016. Oxfam GB. 52 pages. ISBN: 9780855986766

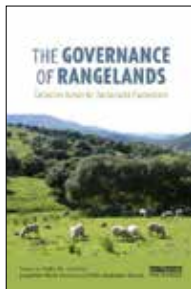
Although protecting half the world's land, indigenous people and local communities formally own only 20 %, with the remainder being vulnerable to land grabs. This report has been published alongside a call to action by the International Land Coalition (ILC), Oxfam, and the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), together with more than 300 organisations and communities all over the world. They aim to double the amount of community owned land by 2020. The report explains why protecting community lands is so important. Pastoralist communities have long been considered the cause of desertification but actually play an essential role in combating climate change and providing food security. Recognising their role as pillars of environmental adaptation is one of the core messages of this report.



Youth: The future of reindeer herding peoples

International Center for Reindeer Husbandry. 2015. 126 pages. <http://reindeerherding.org/projects/eallin/full-report/>

This report was presented in April 2015 to the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Canada. It is the result of more than four years of community based workshops where more than 160 young reindeer herders from Russia, Mongolia, Finland, Sweden and Norway confronted each other in the context of the EALLIN project. EALLIN means 'life' in the Sami language, because, "for us, the reindeer is everything. If we lose the reindeer we lose our language, our culture, our traditions and the knowledge to move in the nature." Issues such as health, loss of cultural heritage, technology access, lack of education, land access and predators are brought up in the report, reflecting the most urgent struggles that young herders in the circumpolar area are facing, and that need to be tackled if their lifestyle and cultural heritage are to be protected.

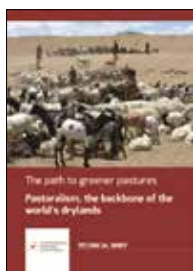


The Governance of Rangelands: Collective Action for Sustainable Pastoralism

Pedro M. Herrera, Jonathan Davies, Pablo Manzano Baena (Eds). 2014. Routledge, 298 pages. ISBN: 9781138785144

<https://www.book2look.com/embed/9781317665168>

Grasslands, shrublands, savannahs, and woodlands: these are rangelands, often communally managed by the pastoralist communities inhabiting and crossing them. Despite evidence of the beneficial effects of livestock mobility and communal governance in these areas, often governmental policies are eroding the autonomy of these grassroots systems. So how can pastoral communities adapt their traditional institutions to a constantly changing environment, taking advantage of the latest innovations? How can lost or degraded institutions be recovered? Can new institutions be created from scratch where lacking? These are the main questions explored in this publication, through a variety of success stories in pastoralist governance. The eleven case studies from the Middle East, Africa, Asia and America set an example based in cooperation, providing resources for the improvement of pastoralist governance: from legal steps, such as securing the rights of pastoralist communities on their territories, to participatory systems, that strengthen the voice and visibility of the communities.



The path to greener pastures. Pastoralism, the backbone of the world's drylands

Andreas Jenet, Nicoletta Buono, Sara Di Lello, Margherita Gomasasca, Cornelia Heine, Stefano Mason, Michele Nori, Rita Saavedra, Koen Van Troos. 2016. VSF International.

Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International supports small scale farmers through projects focused on livestock production, animal health and welfare. This report provides practical recommendations for policy makers and institutions to deal with the struggles of pastoralist communities. The publication presents an extensive account of the current state of pastoralism, with surveys of members and leaders of pastoralist communities in eight hotspots around the world, and various informants in 26 countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. The economic, human, cultural, social and political capital of pastoralist communities is recognised here, as their relevance in biodiversity conservation, food safety, income and employment generation in drylands and marginal areas becomes clear. The recommendations elaborated call on policy makers, asking them to recognise the value of pastoral communities promoting their involvement in the management of water resources, reforestation programmes, and climate change adaptation. A new approach is suggested, that draws on 'community capital' to promote its growth.

More on pastoralism

UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) have neatly summarised the discussion around **pastoralism in the context of the post 2015 agenda**. A list of overlooked facts, myths, and emerging issues leads to the recommendations for strengthening sustainable pastoralism, ranging from improved access to technologies, to the promotion of consumer awareness. Some relevant issues for pastoralism are also touched upon in the recent report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition on the **roles for livestock**.

Launched last year by the FAO and other partner governments and organisations, the **Pastoralist Knowledge Hub** is an online

platform for practitioners, advocates, and pastoral communities to learn, share and connect. It offers a selection of materials, from reports, to videos and tool-kits related to every dimension of pastoralism – social, economic, political and environmental. The Hub is also meant to promote discussion among pastoralist organisations, allowing them to share news, concerns and issues they need to discuss with fellow pastoralists or with the support of experts. It is hoped that pastoralist communities might find in the hub a space to project their voices into the political arena and have more influence over policy debates.

Taking a look back, in 2010 ILEIA published an issue of *Farming Matters* titled, '**Going for more**



animals'. The discussion around strengthening pastoralism and the need for better policies was already relevant and the magazine also offers successful examples of nomadic livestock management.

A close-up photograph of three guanaco heads, looking directly at the camera. They have brown, shaggy fur and large, upright ears. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the same animals in a natural, outdoor setting.

Yarns from the desert:

sustainable guanaco management

As with most wild ungulates, guanacos compete for pasture with domestic livestock. In Southern Patagonia, Argentina, conflict between guanaco conservation and sheep rearing has increased in recent years due to severe droughts and increased desertification. Ranchers hope to declare guanacos as a 'pest species' and are starting culling programmes. But a group of pastoralists living in a protected area have taken a different approach, thereby successfully combining live guanaco management with economic empowerment.

Gabriela Lichtenstein

La Payunia Provincial Reserve is located in the Malargüe Department, in the south of the Mendoza province in Argentina. The reserve covers approximately 6,540 km² of state-owned and private lands. It was created in the 1980s in order to preserve the rich flora, fauna, archaeological and scenic beauty of the area. As is the case for other protected areas created in that period, the participation of local people in the design and establishment was very limited. Due to the harsh living conditions, limited amenities and lack of basic services, as well as remoteness from markets and schools, La Payunia is sparsely populated, with only about 150 people living in 42 family groups. These families are widely dispersed and separated from each other. The local economy is based on extensive grazing of goats and sheep to a lesser extent. Limited state and private investment in management has led to low animal productivity, adverse selling conditions, low income, and consequently exacerbating economic marginalisation and environmental degradation.

Conflict resolution Under these challenging circumstances, in 2005, some inhabitants of La Payunia and surrounds asked the Provincial Department of Renewable Natural Resources for technical advice in order to develop an alternative source of income, and also to reduce conflicts between domestic livestock and guanaco populations. To put some of the advice in to action, they decided to set up the Payun Matru Cooperative. The goal of the cooperative was to implement live shearing of guanacos in order to link conservation with improving their economic situation. The cooperative also aimed to preserve their local culture and encourage young people in particular to remain in the area, rather than leave for nearby cities.

Environmental authorities saw the initiative as a way of creating incentives for local people to accept and help secure the Payunia Protected Area, and to contribute towards guanaco conservation. Thanks to the active work of the cooperative's president and the technical advisors, the project gained support from several local and international stakeholders, and the cooperative's social capital increased over the years.

A growing network The ability of the cooperative to collaborate with multiple partners contributed towards the shearing project's resilience and created a safety net. As the project developed, collaborations emerged with local and national Departments of Renewable Resources, field biologists and conservation NGOs. This gave the cooperative members more visibility. For example, they participated in conferences and met with government

ministers. This increased their negotiating power with potential clients, and they became more empowered – both politically and economically.

The experience merged community development with scientific research and with time, the guanaco captures became 'open air labs', where IUCN's Animal Welfare Protocol for guanaco captures was developed and many young scientists were trained. Cooperative members improved their management and shearing methods and have become experts on guanaco management with high animal welfare standards. Recently, several members were hired by producers from Patagonia to share their expertise on guanaco management.

Towards value adding The cooperative was always keen to sell processed goods instead of raw guanaco fibre. Given the intensive labour requirements to process the fibre, the next step was to get a semi-industrial mill. In 2012 the Argentinean Ministry of Science and Technology launched a call for proposals targeted at smallholders who could develop camelid fibre value chains. Public-private consortia had to be established in order to apply for this funding so the cooperative formed a consortium with the National Research Council, the National Institute of Industrial Technology and Malargüe Municipality. They were awarded funding to develop the technology needed to support the establishment of a guanaco fibre value chain that would benefit local pastoralists. The project financed some infrastructure for guanaco capture, the installation of a fibre processing plant in a remote village near the protected area, import of specialised machinery from Canada (including the necessary adaptations), capacity building and, the development of guanaco products and by-products.

The guanaco

The guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) is the largest native herbivore and main consumer of vegetation in arid and semi-arid environments of South America. Because of this, the guanaco plays a fundamental role in the local ecology. For instance, it is the main prey of the largest native carnivore, the puma. From a historic and cultural perspective, this species has been essential for the survival of local populations for 10,000 years. More recently, they were used by Tehuelches, Onas and Yamanas indigenous groups for clothing, food and shelter. Guanaco fibre is amongst the finest animal fibres, yet value chains are rather under-developed.



Guanaco shearing. Photo: Federico Biesing

Challenges The processing plant was installed in mid-2015 and since then, cooperative members have learnt how to process guanaco fibre in order to produce different products, such as dehaired fibre, tops and yarns. They also learnt how to process other animal fibres such as vicuña, llama, sheep and cashmere as well as to produce felt. Women tend to work at the mill, whereas most of the guanaco management activities are performed by men. At the moment, all members keep their own economic activities alongside their work with the cooperative because income is still limited.

A challenge, which is shared between the cooperative and other private producers, relates to the lack of an established, transparent market for guanaco fibre and a small overall market demand for the processed products. The similarity between guanaco and vicuña fibre calls for the development of easy methods to help authorities controlling exports and imports to tell them apart.

As in the case of other pastoralists, the Payún Matrú Cooperative faces constraints in realising the economic potential of their system owing to high transaction costs. These include long distances to markets or final consumers, difficulties for marketing and creating distribution channels, limited access to credit facilities and excessive government bureaucracy.

Growth and success Despite these challenges, the cooperative's membership continues to grow. Many of the new members are young people hoping to make a life in the area, and avoid migration. Training opportunities, the high state investment, technical support and the possibility of generating an alternative source of income are attractive to the youth. In the words of cooperative member Eleuterio: "In the town of Malargüe there are a number of job

This collective work has inspired individual pastoralists to dream of new projects such as revegetation

opportunities, whereas here in the protected area we can only work with the goats. Having a mill here, in the middle of nowhere, has brought job opportunities for many people." But the activities around guanaco management and working at the mill are not only an economic activity, but also a social and cultural event. They provide an opportunity to meet and share experiences with a variety of people and to get organised. This collective work has inspired individual pastoralists to dream of new projects such as revegetation and sheep shearing.

This experience shows that guanacos can be managed collectively and opens new alternatives for guanaco conservation in Argentina and camelid sustainable use in the Andean region. As in the case of vicuña management, the case highlights that the collective management of wild camelids provides more than just economic benefits for local producers. Hopefully the possibility of adding value to wild camelid fibre at the local level will inspire other communities in the Andes to follow this path.

Gabriela Lichtenstein (lichtenstein.g@gmail.com) is coordinator of Proyecto PA.IS, and a researcher of the National Research Council (CONICET) based at the National Institute of Anthropology and Latin American Thought (INAPL) in Argentina.

Cooperative member getting ready to grab guanacos.
Photo: Gabriela Lichtenstein



A photograph of a man herding a group of camels in a dry, open landscape. The man is in the foreground, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and a patterned skirt, holding a stick. The camels are walking in a line behind him. The background is a vast, flat, arid landscape under a clear sky.

Better approaches in support of pastoralism

Pastoralism is a way of life for between 200 and 600 million people. Despite this, the future of many pastoralist societies is under threat. Representatives belonging to more than 100 pastoralists' organisations from 38 countries endorsed a statement expressing the needs and priorities of pastoralists. Outlined in this article, the statement is a call for the rights, culture and knowledge of pastoralists to be recognised, valued and supported.

Margherita Gomasca and Michele Nori

"Pastoralism is the main livelihood in many drylands, mountainous and other areas, where other forms of agricultural practices are not feasible. Pastoralists contribute to efficient management and governance of rangelands and protection of natural resources. In such challenging territories pastoralism presents the best livelihood strategy to

provide food, income and employment. These benefit pastoral communities, but also those living in farming areas, urban centres and coastal regions." These words open the pastoralists' and extensive livestock breeders' statement that was adopted by pastoralists' representatives from Africa, Latin America and Asia at the special session on pastoralism at IFAD's Farmers' Forum. The statement makes a number of recommen-



A special session on pastoralism preceded the sixth Farmers Forum held in Rome in February, 2016.

Photo: © VSF International

dations to policy makers – and especially to IFAD – on how to support them through both investment and inclusion in policy dialogue.

Empowerment Pastoralists are marginalised in most parts of the world and are rarely consulted on policies that affect them. While societies and citizens increasingly recognise the value of pastoralism, many still regard it as backward and as a threat to national security. Some ministries or policies still try to lure (or even force) pastoralists into permanent settlements. While pastoralists want their voices to be heard, they are often not given the opportunity for this, and they lack the ability or the tools to organise and gain political influence. This may be because the issues are technical in nature (for example in food safety), policymakers are unwilling to subject drafts to scrutiny by advocacy groups, or pastoralists are poorly organised politically. As outlined in their statement, pastoralists need more support in capacity building and institutional strengthen-

ing of local, national, regional and international organisations and their networks. Strengthened pastoralist organisations can more effectively engage in policy dialogue, advocate for their interests and contribute to initiatives that benefit pastoralism. For example, pastoral parliamentary groups have appeared in some countries (e.g. in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and India) to press for pastoralists' interests at the national level (see page 8). At the international level, initiatives, such as the the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP) and the Pastoralists' Knowledge Hub, aim to strengthen regional networks of pastoral civil society and facilitate their participation in policy dialogue.

Land rights and tenure Pastoralists rely on livestock mobility and communal land for their livelihoods. Access to land and tenure rights remain a major concern for pastoralists worldwide. Rules on land tenure vary widely among countries, but most formal legal systems do not recognise or guarantee customary tenure rights. The discovery of oil and minerals, the expansion of intensive cropping, urbanisation and the designation of nature reserves and wildlife parks have boosted interest in pastoralist territories. Such uses often occupy the best-watered land, cutting off herders' access to pastures and water sources they rely on in the dry season. These uses also contaminate natural resources. As written in their statement, "often investments come in the name of public interest and national development but directly and indirectly they harm our livelihoods by grabbing land, water and other natural resources."

In order to guarantee access and user rights to land and water, governments have to recognise and protect customary land-tenure rights, traditional rules and rangeland management norms, and communities should be able to formalise their customary and collective tenure. Formalising customary land tenure

Pastoralists at the Farmers' Forum

IFAD's Farmers' Forum is a bottom-up process of consultation and dialogue between smallholder farmers' and rural producers' organisations from all over the world and IFAD and its member states. A special session on pastoralism preceded the sixth meeting, held in February 2016. The special session and its statement were the result of a participatory consultation process that was facilitated by Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International (VSF-Int) and its members. Five regional meetings of pastoralist civil society organisations (in West and Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, North Africa and West Asia, Central and Southern Asia and Latin America) were organised to prepare for the special session. In parallel, VSF surveyed pastoralist practices and realities in seven pastoralism 'hotspots': the Arkhangai in Mongolia; the Altiplano and Chaco in South America; Wagadou and Gourma in the Sahel; Tiris Zemmour in the Sahara and the Afar and Chalbi areas in the Horn of Africa.



Photo: © Tim Dirven for VSF Belgium



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Rather than regarding pastoralists as a problem, policy makers should see them as a major ally and indispensable to safe governance and sustainable management of sparsely populated areas.

using group Certificates of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO) is one tool that has had some success in Tanzania. In the context of Tanzanian national law CCROs provide legal rights to communities to resist land grabbing and manage their natural resources according to their way of life (see interview on page 32).

Supporting mobility Mobility is key to enhancing livestock production as the herds move in search of pastures and water. Mobility is also strategic for trading as well as to manage risk due to drought, conflict, disease outbreak, or in other periods of hardship. Restricting mobility poses serious challenges to pastoralists' livelihoods, economy and overall security. In West Africa, for instance, there is an historical interdependence between the landlocked Sahelian countries and the coastal countries in the south. Sahelian pastoralists move with their herds to neighbouring coastal countries to find pastures during the lean period (transhumance corridors), while high demand markets in the coastal countries welcome their livestock and products (marketing corridors). However, the increasing obstacles to convey their herds across different territories or to get access to watering points, as well as the high administrative burdens (high and even illegal taxation), are a major concern for millions of pastoralists.

Often investments harm our livelihoods by grabbing land, water and other natural resources

Fair markets for pastoral products Pastoralism is a major contributor to the economy of many countries. In Sudan, for example, it accounts for 80 % of the agricultural gross domestic product. Pastoral communities seek additional and better marketing options to ensure they receive fair prices for their products. A typical example is meat, milk and dairy products. When producing these products, pastoralists often ensure high standards of animal welfare and environmental protection. Despite the high demand for these products and services by urban consumers, the way in which value chains are managed or governed does not accordingly benefit pastoralists.

Efforts and investments are needed to tip the balance in favour of pastoralists. For instance, adequate and accessible infrastructure, education, technical training to guarantee quality standards of livestock



A delegation of pastoralists at the special session of the Farmers Forum. Photo: © VSF International

products, capacity building and micro finance are some practical measures mentioned by pastoralists.

Moreover, value-added products are an especially important source of income for women who face additional constraints such as unequal access to resources and decision making roles. The role of women in a Mongolian pastoralists' cooperative shows that women's participation in fair markets can lead to improved gender relations as well as food security for households. The Arvidjin Ar Delgerekh cooperative in the Khangai mountains focused on the yak fibre production and processing. Women took on the role of spinning and knitting baby yak fibre. Compared with previously selling raw yak fibre to middlemen, the yarn and knitted products are a way for women to contribute to their families' income. Moreover, the women's active role has led to a more inclusive governance of the cooperative itself. Evolution of camel milk marketing in northern Somalia (Puntland and Somaliland) has also shown how women's agency is critical in fostering social change and economic development under difficult conditions.

Adapted services Pastoralist areas are often poorly provided with basic services compared to other areas in the same country. In northeastern Kenya, for example, only one-third of primary-aged children are enrolled in school: half the national rate. Only a tiny minority of children attend secondary school, few households have access to electricity, safe drinking water or pre-natal care and, only half the children are vaccinated. Similar discrepancies are found in other countries.

As well, provision of animal-health services is extremely important to pastoralists, not only to protect their livestock assets (which ultimately assures their food security) but also because such services are often the only link to public institutions. Health (both for

humans and for animals) and education services are needed that are adapted to the mobile lifestyle of pastoralism. These services may be mobile themselves, such as the mobile schools programme which moves with the Turkana in Kenya, or offered at convenient locations, such as at different fixed sites in each season. One way to promote animal health services to mobile and dispersed populations is through Community Based Animal Health Workers (CAHWs): livestock keepers that have been trained and provided with a basic animal health kit, and who work at community level in permanent connection with a veterinarian.

"We are part of the solution"

Today, herders are not only asking for services for their livestock, or rights to their lands. They demand for their recognition as citizens of a wider society: "Pastoralism is more than livestock production; it is a way of life, a culture and an identity. We pastoralists are citizens and our rights, culture and customary institutions should be recognised and respected."

Rather than regarding pastoralists as a problem, policy makers should see them as a major ally and indispensable contributor to the safe governance and sustainable management of sparsely populated, marginal areas. Efforts to support pastoralism need to be focused on the local area or territory (which might involve a regional framework), rather than on national-level policies. They need to build on the pastoralists' own knowledge, traditional organisations and social networks; recognise and protect customary land-tenure rights; and support herders' mobility also through the provision of adapted services.

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A call for climate resilient food systems

Climate change is real and the impacts are already upon us. Family farmers and peasants, through virtue of their intimate relationship with the natural environment, are amongst the first ones to feel the impacts. They are also on the frontline when it comes to taking actions, to safeguard their way of life and mitigate climate change. Family farmers are not alone in these activities, there are also a growing number of citizens engaging in climate change activism and researchers working with farmers to manage the risks from climate change. For example, researchers and citizens lobby governments to invest in renewable energy and create policy that supports farmers who store carbon in the soil.

What does agroecology – as a science, movement and practice – have to offer here? Certainly agroecology offers ways to cope with and prepare for threats such as increasingly uncertain and extreme weather events. In contrast to ‘climate smart agriculture’ and other top-down approaches, agroecology builds resilience as it is grounded in local and relevant knowledge, low external inputs and both biological and cultural diversity. For example, for peasants, climate variability is an inherent feature of the environment in which they live. This is reflected in their choices and adaptive practices related to combinations of crops, varieties, animals and, to planting, storage and post-harvest techniques.

Moreover, agroecology can contribute to mitigating other threats posed by climate change, such as biodiversity loss through mass extinction. For instance, tran-

sitioning from existing production paradigms, like global commodity markets based on industrial agriculture, to local and regional food systems reduces the carbon footprint of food production and transportation. It also reduces reliance on fossil fuels.

The June 2017 issue of Farming Matters will explore the strategies that family farmers and civil society are developing to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. How do these strategies help amplifying agroecology as a practice and a movement, and how do they feed into the science of agroecology? We are particularly interested in hearing about grassroots experiences where family farmers have innovated or revived old farming practices to cope with extreme climatic events and uncertain weather. And what is the greater socio-political relevance of these experiences? Are you working towards climate resilient food systems? Share your story with the Farming Matters community.

Articles for the June 2017 issue of Farming Matters should be submitted **before 1 March 2017** at www.farmingmatters.org

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**“OTHERS TRY TO
SABOTAGE THE
COMMUNITY, BUT
THE PARLIAMENT IS
BRINGING EVERYONE
TOGETHER”**

Indian pastoralist, page 8

**“A group of women
occupied the village
council office in order
to have their land
rights recognised. They
slept for five nights on
the ground until their
claims were heard by
the village council”**

Paine Eulalia Mako, page 32

**“PASTORALIST BREEDS CANNOT BE REDUCED
TO ASSEMBLAGES OF GENES. THEY REPRESENT
KNOWLEDGE ACCUMULATED OVER
GENERATIONS, NOT ONLY OF THEIR KEEPERS,
BUT ALSO LEARNT BEHAVIOUR OF ANIMALS”**

Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, page 15

**“I am convinced of the benefits of
keeping our ancestors’ traditions alive,
and of involving women in the process”**

Eaetemad Rafallah Abdallah, page 20