

HARAMATA



No. 46, March 2004



*Local people
making
decisions*
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Cover: Lucy Njeri casts her votes during Kenya's third multi-party general elections in December 2002.
Photo: RUINET

Editorial

Decentralisation is a priority for an increasing number of governments in sub-Saharan Africa and real efforts are being made to devolve decision-making and financial resources to locally elected government bodies. Decentralisation is not, however, new to Africa's drylands where there exists a long history of decentralised decision-making, particularly with regard to natural resource management through a complex mix of indigenous institutions. Over the last century these indigenous leadership structures have been undermined by the same centralised nation states that are now implementing decentralisation policies.

Many of the articles and book reviews in this issue of Haramata address the decentralisation theme. The Feature article describes how Local Agreements for natural resource management (NRM) are emerging to fill the gap left by the erosion of traditional leadership and the failure of state NRM mechanisms. The interview with Alais Ole Morindat and the article on national pastoral fora both highlight the importance of building the capacity of civil society to engage in dialogue with national and local policy makers.

Implicit in the articles is the acknowledgement that decentralisation is unlikely to restore responsibility for managing natural resources to indigenous institutions as they historically did. This is because many of these institutions are no longer legitimate in the eyes of local people or because too few in authority recognise, understand or respect indigenous leaders or the institutions they represent. If decentralisation is to be more than an interesting administrative exercise, we need to build the capacity of local communities to strengthen the legitimacy of their institutions and make their priorities intelligible to those in authority.

Cathy Watson

Decentralisation in Practice in West Africa

Workshop in Uppsala

IIED and the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of Uppsala convened an international workshop on 'Decentralisation in Practice: power, livelihoods and cultural meaning in West Africa'. This took place from 4-6 May 2004, in Uppsala, and focused on the three themes of power, livelihoods and cultural meaning.

In the last decade, several West African countries have devolved political and administrative power to elected local government bodies in rural areas. This process of decentralisation varies from country to country in both the pace of change and the models adopted. However, in all cases its effectiveness depends on the extent to which central government is willing to transfer real power to local government bodies and on the legitimacy of these bodies. This issue forms the first of the workshop's three themes and raises a number of questions such as: who is 'capturing' the decentralisation process for their own benefit, how are marginalised groups able to participate, and what is the relationship between good governance and decentralisation?

The success of decentralisation also depends on the extent to which the newly elected government bodies can support community livelihoods, the second theme of the workshop. To achieve this, they need to manage natural resources effectively, provide appropriate and accessible basic services, seize new economic opportunities and manage the transfer of resources from central government. Cultural meaning, the third workshop theme, is also a crucial element affecting the decentralisation process, and includes the potential tensions between new, elected bodies and existing culturally-based but

possibly less democratic institutions.

The Workshop will provide an opportunity for scholars, NGOs, civil society and government practitioners, donor representatives and other interested individuals to debate the issues surrounding these three aspects of decentralisation in the West African context, and to discuss strategies that can help make decentralisation work to develop and empower local communities. The Workshop builds on a Sida and DANIDA-supported programme 'Making decentralisation work', implemented by IIED in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal.

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East Africa trade pact signed

Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have finally signed a customs union agreement, four years after they embarked on their latest attempt at regional integration. The original East African Community collapsed in 1977 due to the war against Idi Amin and political and economic differences. In 1999, the three countries signed a treaty re-establishing the Community, but agreements on economic and political union have taken until now to be finalised.

Together Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda represent 90 million people and a gross domestic product of US \$25 billion. The three countries now hope to be able to pool resources, boost trade and take advantage of their combined markets. The new protocol will liberalise trade, removing tariff and other barriers to trade to establish an integrated market within the group, whilst maintaining a common external tariff.

While many business leaders are positive about the new agreement, some concerns remain. There are fears that Kenya's private sector, which is considerably more advanced than its neighbours',

will dominate the region. The agreement aims to address this issue with an 'asymmetric' system, whereby Tanzania and Uganda will open their markets to Kenyan competitors gradually over the next five years, while Kenya will open its market immediately.

Another potential complication is the different regional blocs to which the three countries already belong. For example, Tanzania is a member of SADC (the Southern Africa Development Community), while Kenya and Uganda are members of COMESA (the Common Market for East and Southern Africa). This varying membership could undermine the potential of the new customs union to act as a unifying force. However, Alfred Kilewo, managing director of Tanzania Breweries, remains upbeat, as he told the BBC: "We believe the customs union protocol will set the ground for business development in East Africa."

New Director for IIED

Many readers will already know Camilla Toulmin. She joined IIED in 1987 when she established the Drylands Programme and launched the Haramata bulletin. You will be pleased to know that in February 2004 she was appointed as Director of IIED. Camilla has worked mainly in Africa, on decentralisation, governance and land tenure issues. Her most recent work includes research on changing rights to land in West Africa, livelihoods and poverty in Mali, challenges and opportunities relating to decentralisation and collective management of common resources. In addition to her work at IIED, Camilla has also been a member of several boards including the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR), and the UK's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.



Oil boost to Chad's economy

Chad's primarily agricultural economy will be boosted by oil exports this year. Over 80% of Chad's population relies on subsistence farming and livestock raising for its livelihood, while the bulk of export earnings are provided by cotton, cattle and gum arabic. The economy has long been handicapped by its landlocked position, high energy costs, and history of instability. It relies on foreign assistance and foreign capital for most public and private sector investment projects. Since 2000, a consortium led by two US companies has invested \$3.7 billion in major oilfield and pipeline projects in southern Chad to develop oil reserves estimated at 1 billion barrels. Oil production is scheduled to come on stream in late 2003 and oil exports to begin in 2004.

World Day to Combat Desertification

June 17 is the World Day to Combat Desertification. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was adopted on 17 June 1994 and came into force on 26 December 1996. The objective of the UNCCD is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones. In commemoration of the adoption of the Convention, the United Nations General Assembly established June 17 as World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD). The first World Day was celebrated in June 1995. This year's World Day marks the ninth anniversary of the Convention.





Alais Ole Morindat is the Training Coordinator for the RECONCILE/IIED Reinforcement of Pastoral Civil Society Programme in East Africa, based at the Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS-TCDC) in Arusha Tanzania. In his interview with Haramata, Alais discusses the changes in pastoral policy making in Tanzania and shares his view of the future.

J Will you tell our readers something about the Pastoral Civil Society Programme?

We are designing a generic course on pastoralism and policy for pastoral leaders working with CBOs and NGOs. The idea is to empower pastoralists to engage with policy makers and to drive the agenda for their own development.

J How do you foresee this type of training benefiting pastoralists?

The training will build the necessary knowledge and skills for pastoralists to be able to fight their corner and engage meaningfully with government. Only in this way can pastoralists become integrated into the social, political and economic life of their countries.

J Surely the question of citizen participation in policy processes is a problem for all the peoples of East Africa.

Why focus on pastoralists?

This is a response to the imbalance in policy attention that has been given to pastoralism compared to other land use and livelihood systems. For example in Tanzania, policies tended to emphasise agriculture and pastoralism was regarded as a backward way of life, adding to environmental degradation and contributing little to the national economy. As a result, the national policy framework did not provide space for pastoralists to get involved.

J You use the past tense. Is this because you feel the situation has now changed?

Certainly it is changing. For example, there is space for pastoralism within *Vision 2021*¹, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and related strategies, in particular the Agricultural Sector Development Programme. I sit on one of the Task Forces for that Programme, together with other pastoralist organisations, to represent the interests of pastoralists. I therefore see many positive changes within government in favour of pastoral interests.

J How successful have pastoral representatives been in informing the direction of the Agricultural Sector Development Programme?

I remember the national meeting to discuss livestock production at the beginning of the process, to which many pastoralists and pastoral representatives were invited. I noticed that some of the pastoralists' presentation skills were poor, which limited their ability to influence the debates. In this connection, I think that initiatives that help build the capacity of pastoralists to engage more effectively with policy makers are timely and useful.

¹ Tanzania's strategy for the 21st century

What other challenges do Tanzanian NGOs face in seeking to influence policies in favour of pastoralists and pastoralism?

I think the biggest challenges NGOs face include: articulating the rationale for pastoralism in ways which can be understood by policy makers; the problem of NGO accountability to the pastoral community and keeping pastoralists informed of what they are doing on their behalf; finding ways of engaging in dialogue with government rather than confrontation; keeping up-to-date with new international policy initiatives; and finally, securing adequate resources to enable NGOs to work in a sustainable way.

Do pastoralists in Tanzania have a single voice?

No, and this is a problematic issue. There is tension between those who want to see pastoralists already speaking with one voice and those who want it to evolve slowly over time. There are others again who respect diversity and do not think it is necessary for pastoralists to speak with a single voice. In my view, if one voice is to come it must come from the pastoralists themselves and include traditional leaders, leaders of women and leaders of youth, not just the NGOs. There has been a big push from the outside for a single voice and this has not been successful.

Some of the policy initiatives in Tanzania include a push for privatisation of the common land on which pastoralists depend for their survival. What is your view on this?

I think privatisation is a major threat that pastoralists and their organisations need to be aware of and develop clear strategies for coping with. They need to look at the opportunities within the Village Land Act for protecting their lands from allocation to outsiders. However, in order to be effective pastoral NGOs also need to be more focused and stop wasting time on side issues. They must

start by listening to what pastoral communities are saying, identifying aspirations and fears, carefully analysing the key issues and presenting the findings to the authorities.

You were recently part of a team which assisted Kilosa District Council. What were you asked to do?

We were asked to help establish the circumstances leading to a major conflict between farmers and herders a few years ago, in which about 40 people lost their lives. We learned that the conflict was about access to natural resources. We also learned that there was no framework for dialogue between the two groups and that this was a major cause of the violence.

What action has been taken as the result of your findings to address the problems?

A number of committees have been formed to encourage dialogue between the two groups and raise awareness. The District is developing land use plans to demarcate village boundaries and enacting by-laws that will be binding for both groups. They are also seeking funds for a project to ensure that pastoralists have adequate access to pasture and other natural resources.

What do you think is the place of national policy in addressing problems like those in Kilosa?

National policy can create a positive environment for development and for managing conflict at District level. At the same time, the actual implementation of policy has to be carried out at the District level, and that is where capacity needs to be built.

Haramata would like to thank Michael Ochieng Odhiambo, Executive Director of RECONCILE (Resources Conflict Institute), for conducting this interview.

Burkina Faso is getting greener

‘Is Burkina Faso getting greener?’ was the title of an article in the June 2002 issue of *Haramata*. It described a new study analysing the extent of environmental rehabilitation in the northern part of the Central Plateau of Burkina Faso from 1980 to 2000. The study is now complete and some of its key findings are as follows:

- Millet and sorghum yields increased by 50-60% between 1984-88 and 1996-2001 while the size of the cultivated area remained constant in two of the three provinces studied.
- Investment in livestock by both men and women has increased substantially and livestock management has begun to shift from extensive to semi-intensive. Increasingly farmers are trying to maximise the amount of manure available to improve soil fertility.
- Since the beginning of the 1980s, soil and water conservation techniques have been applied to at least 100,000 hectares of land and thousands of hectares of highly degraded land have been rehabilitated.
- Most villages studied have seen rising local water tables (of 5 m or more), due to increased infiltration of rainfall and runoff. This process generally began one or two years after the introduction of soil and water conservation.
- The study noted a significant decrease in rural-urban and rural-rural migration since the start of soil and water conservation initiatives in the villages. In twelve study villages the population remained stable from 1975-1985, but increased by 25% between 1985 and 1996.
- In villages with soil and water conservation, 60% of those interviewed perceived a reduction in rural poverty since the early

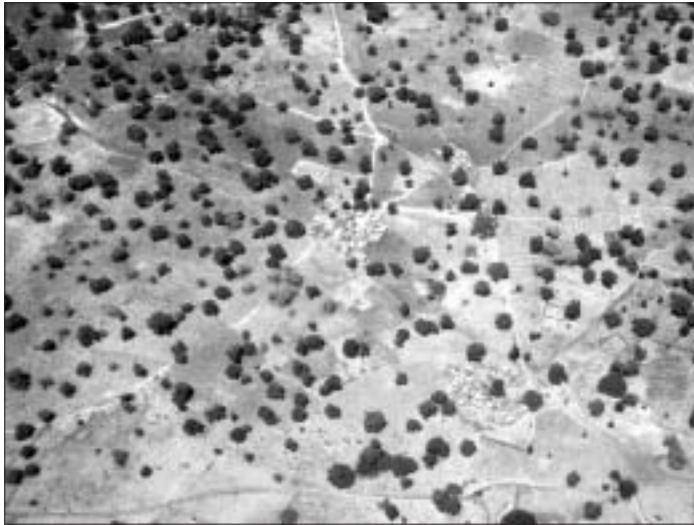
The greening of Ranawa

The land around the village of Ranawa was degraded, all the wells ran dry at the end of the rainy season and most families had a structural food deficit. Between 1975 and 1985, 25% of the population of the village of Ranawa left to settle elsewhere. In 1984 the OXFAM-funded Agroforestry Project mobilised the population of Ranawa to begin the construction of contour stone bunds and improved traditional planting pits.

As a result, degraded land was brought back in production, water levels in the wells began to rise, farmers started to plant trees and protect natural regeneration, cereal yields increased and household food security improved. This meant that money that previously spent on buying food, was now used to buy livestock. Around some of the wells, vegetable gardens have been created, which contribute to improving local diets as well as increasing cash income. On some fields cotton is now grown, which was unimaginable 10–15 years ago. Whereas in 1980 only two families in this village owned cattle, now all families have at least one head of cattle, a clear indicator of the accumulation of wealth. The population of Ranawa doubled between 1985 and 1996, when not a single family left the village and some migrant families returned.

1980s. In villages without soil and water conservation all interviewed noted an increase in rural poverty.

It is clear that in many villages on this northern part of the Central Plateau the spiral of degradation has been reversed and rural poverty has decreased. However, this does not mean that all problems



Farmed dense parkand in Ranawa

have been solved and external support is no longer needed. Much cultivated land still needs to be treated with soil and water conservation methods and on non-cultivated lands the vegetation continues to degrade. However, there is hard evidence that the economic, environmental and demographic impact of investments in soil and water conservation have been substantial.

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Increasing Africa's share of international livestock trade

Many African people living in the drylands depend on livestock production and trade for their livelihoods. Annual production of meat in Africa is estimated at 10 million metric tonnes, while milk production is around 25 million metric tonnes. However, Africa accounts for less than 5% of world production, compared with developed countries' figure of 63% (for meat) and 48% (for milk).

Among the many factors that limit African access to international livestock markets, the presence of animal diseases is a key barrier. Developed countries in particular are extremely concerned about the so-called 'transboundary animal diseases' (TADs). This concern is reflected in international trade standards, which state that unless a country (or a zone of a country) is proven free of TADs they cannot export to other countries that are free of those TADs. The OIE (*Office international des épizooties – World Organisation for Animal Health*) has identified the 15 most significant TADs that can spread rapidly between countries and/or have the potential to affect the human population, 12 of which are endemic to sub-Saharan Africa. The list includes BSE (mad cow disease), Foot and Mouth disease, Rift Valley Fever, rinderpest and Contagious Bovine Pleuro-Pneumonia (CBPP).

The presence of these diseases in Africa has essentially resulted in the exclusion of African livestock from international trade, particularly to the lucrative markets of developed and largely disease-free countries. Efforts to change this have focused on the eradication of TADs from all or part of a country, which is proving virtually impos-

sible for most African countries (with the exception of rinderpest, now close to extinction after many years of effort and considerable expenditure).

A recent paper by a team from the African Union's Interafrican Bureau of Animal Resources (IBAR) and the Zimbabwean Ministry of Agriculture presents an alternative strategy to address this problem. Based on the fact that total eradication of TADs, even from only part of a country, is extremely difficult and costly, the team suggests an approach based primarily on the safety of the actual livestock commodity to be exported. The idea grew out of a study commissioned to look at the feasibility of livestock export systems and export zones – geographically defined (e.g. fenced off) areas, free of a specified disease. The study showed that while disease or infection free zones are acceptable to international bodies such as the OIE, in Africa the disease situation is such that they would be extremely costly to establish in many parts of the continent. As an alternative, the 'compartmentalisation' of the livestock production system might be a possible, albeit difficult, method of promoting exports from dryland areas. This would entail isolating the production system from contamination by other systems, enabling existing supply chains, markets and processing units to continue to be used.

However, the authors felt that the best approach would be to distinguish between different exportable livestock commodities, and establish acceptable levels of risk for each one. For example, matured beef from which the bones and lymph nodes have been removed is known to bear considerably less risk of transmitting foot and mouth (and other diseases) than fresh beef that still contains the bones. Such commodities are therefore low risk irrespective of the prevalence of disease in the area from which they originate. For such a 'commodity-based' approach to international trade to replace the

current requirement of national or zonal freedom from disease, developing nations will need to lobby the international standard setting bodies such as OIE and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The processing of livestock commodities also presents a significant opportunity for increasing Africa's share in international livestock trade. As well as eradicating the infection risk in some products, processing has the additional advantage of increasing profit through adding value. However, the implementation of such a system still requires the establishment and maintenance of international certification standards, which presents a significant challenge, and on increasing the capacity of African veterinary services to provide the necessary certification of the commodity,

If the system can be adjusted to allow this commodity-based trade then dryland areas will have a greater opportunity to access lucrative international markets. The revenue from such sales could then be channelled into increasing productivity and eradicating the TADs, thereby helping to develop Africa's livestock sector and support millions of poor livestock keepers.

For further information and copies of the full paper, please contact Gavin Thomson, Interafrican Bureau of Animal Resources (IBAR), African Union (AU), Maendeleo House, Loita Street, P O Box 30785, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel +254 (0)20 226447, Fax +254 (0)20 212289. E-mail: gavin.thomson@oau-ibar.org



Local NRM agreements: a tool for joint governance

The Sahel is home to a number of different groups who compete over the use and control of its natural resources: farmers and pastoralists, indigenous and migrant groups, community organisations and the private sector, and so on. The management of these natural resources is based on a combination of traditional and modern rules, which at times come into conflict with each other. In recent decades, traditional leadership structures have been eroded and former natural resource management (NRM) strategies based on state intervention or repression have failed. At the same time, climatic uncertainty, a fragile ecology, growing land and population pressure, poverty and the breakdown of traditional social systems are increasing people's dependence on natural resources. In this vacuum, a growing number of Local Agreements for NRM are emerging.

Definition and scope of Local Agreements

A Local Agreement is a set of regulations drawn up in a participatory manner by as many stakeholders as possible, in order to promote equitable and sustainable natural resource management. It aims to bring together divergent interests and overcome the danger of one or other group's interests dominating to the exclusion of others, in particular vulnerable groups such as transhumant herders and outsiders. It involves three key elements:

- **Legality:** Local Agreements must fit within the framework of existing laws and regulations

- **Legitimacy:** Local Agreements initiated by communities themselves are most likely to succeed
- **Profitability:** commitment to Local Agreements depends largely on their ability to provide benefits for the community, ideally for all interest groups (the 'win-win' principle)

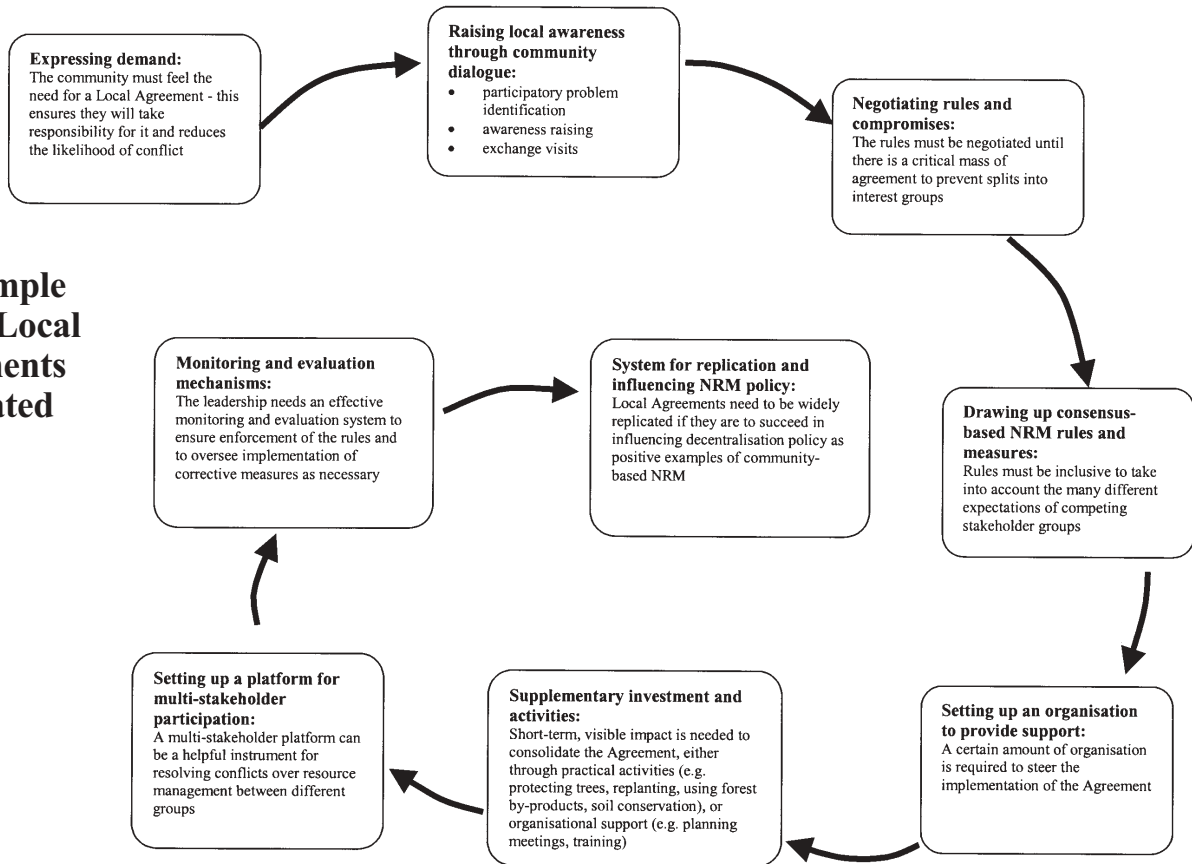
Local Agreements are known by a variety of names (see Box below). Essentially, however, they are all based on a combination of enforceable rules, negotiated agreements and management processes. They may be verbal or written, and may be the result of community discussions or of external influences such as NGO projects or the local administration. The scope of Local Agreements can be difficult to determine, as they may be implemented at different levels. For example, some rules may apply to communal resources, whereas others apply to those used on an individual basis. They may apply to a single resource, or to several diverse resources, such as forests, farmland, pasture, or fishing grounds.

Otherwise known as...

Local Agreements go under a variety of names and forms, such as:

- local codes
- codes of conduct
- traditional village land-use regulations
- customary land management agreements
- set-aside plans

An example of how Local Agreements are created



The impact of Local Agreements

Local Agreements have an impact in four key areas:

- **Institutional and political impact:** Local Agreements establish a dialogue between a range of stakeholders, including government administration, elected local authorities, CBOs and NGOs and help to foster joint governance for NRM. The process of establishing a Local Agreement results in the creation or strengthening of local institutions to monitor and implement it. These institutions often mediate between the extension services and other local organisations on environmental issues.
- **Economic benefits:** improved NRM can lead to income diversification (through for example gathering of forest products, crafts, eco-tourism, small enterprise) and can result in substantial economic benefits. For instance, in 1997 gathered produce sold at the weekly market in Toubatoul, Senegal, generated FCFA 21 million for local communities.
- **Enhanced social cohesion:** building on existing and traditional NRM mechanisms in the creation of a Local Agreement strengthens local knowledge and reinforces social ties. This can enhance social cohesion and help create ways of dealing with future conflicts.
- **Conservation of biodiversity:** Local Agreements protect biodiversity through the management of natural resources. The most visible impact thus far has been the regeneration of tree and shrub cover, and the restoration of soil eroded by the wind. Soil fertility has also improved thanks to the re-growth of the nitrogen-fixing *Acacia albida*. Improved soil conservation also encourages water retention at waterholes and reduces further wind erosion.



Local Agreements facilitate a broad overview of land management, bringing together different sectors such as fishing and riverbank development.

Local Agreements in the Sahel: issues and challenges

In spite of this encouraging picture, a number of challenges remain. In some countries, the legal basis of Local Agreements remains vague and their compliance with existing legislation cannot be taken for granted. At the same time, some groups may not consider themselves bound by the Agreement and may refuse to accept the penalties. Others may exploit the right to apply penalties to the detriment of other groups. Enforcing verbal, as opposed to written, Agreements can be particularly problematic.




In a context of decentralisation Local Agreements offer great potential for sustainable NRM. If they are to become part of the legal process, however, their scope must be broadened to the level of the Commune (municipality) and they must be ratified by the Rural Council. This scaling up poses a considerable challenge for the effectiveness of Local Agreements.

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Challenges for land tenure reform in the drylands

How to raise awareness of the importance of drylands? This is the question the Global Drylands Imperative (GDI), an informal group of international organisations, donors, NGOs and individuals interested in drylands development, co-ordinated by the UNDP Drylands Development Centre (DDC) tries to address. It aims to raise awareness about the importance of the drylands among policy makers and particularly targets the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The GDI has carried out a study of land tenure reform, based on case studies from around the world which concludes that the complex multiple use systems characteristic of drylands environments are frequently at odds with the legal basis for land tenure. The three key strategies of flexibility, adaptability and diversity that underpin dryland communities' livelihoods are under threat as the context is changing. Common resource areas are indirectly threatened by the commercialisation of production and trade, by urban links, and by political systems attempting to replace or undermine traditional systems. The study concludes that:

-  Modern legal systems are struggling to understand and support evolving customary land tenure regimes.
-  Land tenure reform requires effective legal systems.
-  Landscape-sensitive approaches are a necessity for effective land tenure reforms.



-  Countries whose economies are in transition face particular challenges of market-based reform.
-  Collective and private land tenure reforms can undermine communal co-operation.
-  'Privatising pastoralism' can lead to unregulated resource use.
-  Land tenure security is difficult in uncoordinated institutional environments.
-  Water development in the drylands can change land-uses and bring conflict.
-  Conflict in dryland zones limits options for land tenure reforms.

Based on these conclusions, the GDI identifies a series of challenges for policy makers and suggests some possible responses:

Challenge 1: *How can we ensure that land tenure systems and land tenure reform processes are truly participatory, accessible and transparent?*

Commit to transparency and public participation in land tenure.

Challenge 2: *What actions can be taken at local, national and international institutional levels to support the legal aspects of land tenure security and reform?*

Where appropriate, intervene in land markets and ensure that the

redistribution of public land is fair, while supporting the development of effective and accessible land information systems.

Challenge 3: *How can national processes address the overlaps and contradictions between informal and formal, customary and modern, and 'hybrid' land tenure systems?*

Commit to developing systems of land tenure that respect the local and customary traditions.

Challenge 4: *How can potential conflict over the use of land and its resource be minimised?*

Officially recognise that land and its resources in the drylands typically have multiple users.

Challenge 5: *How can the rights to control land of marginalised groups, including women, be promoted and protected?*

Ensure marginalised groups are benefiting from land distribution programmes where the legal means are accompanied by awareness-raising.

Challenge 6: *How can land tenure systems and land tenure reform processes take a holistic, comprehensive and co-ordinated view of institutional and physical environments?*

Promote collaboration amongst all actors.

The study concludes with a call to policy-makers, academics, NGOs and members of dryland communities to engage in a sustained and inclusive dialogue to address the needs of marginalised drylands people.

For further information, please contact: Global Drylands Imperative, UNDP Drylands Development Centre, Nairobi, Kenya. Email: ddc@undp.org Website: www.undp.org/drylands

Can the market deliver land redistribution?

Most of us would agree on the desirability of an equitable redistribution of land, particularly where land ownership is strongly concentrated in the hands of a few, as in Latin America and Southern Africa. Greater equity in access to land would not only help reduce poverty in rural areas, but also create the basis for sustained economic development, as the experience of several East Asian countries shows. How changes in land distribution may be achieved in practice is however hotly debated.

Over the past fifty years, successful land redistribution programmes across the world have combined free negotiation, fiscal incentives for land transfers, and compulsory land acquisition (e.g., Italy, South Korea, Taiwan). In all cases, the existence of an element of compulsion proved crucial for the success of the reform programme. Where progress with land redistribution has been slow (e.g. in the Philippines and in many Latin American countries), this seems to owe more to lack of political commitment than to the institutional hurdles associated with expropriation. And yet, since the 1990s, some international donors have emphasised the inefficiencies characterising “bureaucratic” land reform processes and have forcefully argued for “market-assisted” land redistribution. This involves land purchases at negotiated prices by the state or by reform beneficiaries with financial support from the state (“willing seller, willing buyer”). This approach, the argument goes, will result in more rapid and efficient transfers of land from the hands of a few to the hands of many. Whether this is true or not remains to be seen.

New insights have come from South Africa. Here, a history of colonial settler economy and apartheid has resulted in an extremely

inequitable land distribution, mainly along racial lines. After the demise of apartheid, the new democratic government launched a comprehensive land reform programme, including land redistribution, land restitution to those dispossessed during the apartheid regime, and tenure reform to provide greater security for farmers' land rights. The land redistribution component is centred on a variety of market-based tools, particularly land purchases by beneficiaries using grants from the state. The conditions for these grants were revised in 2000 with the new Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme, essentially to favour land purchases by commercial black farmers.

A recent research project of the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) of the University of the Western Cape has assessed the progress of South Africa's land reform process since its initiation. In October 2003, PLAAS launched the final report, which includes a comprehensive assessment of all the different components of the South African land reform programme.¹

The research findings reveal that although the pace of land redistribution has increased over the past few years, the official targets are far from being met. Moreover, while the amount of land transferred each year has generally increased, the numbers of beneficiaries per year has decreased, suggesting that households have been able to obtain larger grants and buy larger plots under the LRAD programme. Factors hindering land redistribution include residual legal restrictions on farm subdivision, constraints on access to land auctions (a major form of land transfer) for land reform beneficiaries, and segmentation of the land market, as land sales tend to happen within the social networks of landowners.

¹ Ruth Hall, Peter Jacobs and Edward Lahiff, 2003. *Evaluating Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa - Final Report* Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

In South Africa, the report sparked very lively discussions among government agencies, NGOs, researchers, trade unions and other civil society groups, and is a very good example of how research can be used to promote an informed (and animated, if need be) policy debate. But the implications of these research findings go well beyond South Africa, and hold important lessons for the worldwide land redistribution debate. First of all, it is clear that progress using market-based mechanisms crucially depends upon the willingness of landowners to sell and on the availability of adequate financial resources for the state to support land purchases. More importantly, substantial questions remain as to the capacity of market-assisted programmes to achieve swift land redistribution on the one hand, and to benefit the poorest of the poor on the other.

Rather than in a single, "more efficient" type of institutional arrangement, the way forward may well lie in a "menu of options" including different mechanisms for land acquisition and combining elements of compulsion, incentive and free negotiation. These different elements may be mutually reinforcing. For instance, the threat of compulsory acquisition may make landowners more "willing" to sell at fair prices to land beneficiaries, thereby making market-based mechanisms more effective and speedy. Ultimately, the success of a land reform programme depends upon the existence of a strong political will to change the land distribution of the country, challenging if necessary the strong landed interests resisting the reform.

For more information on the PLAAS research project, please contact:
plaas@uwc.ac.za



Mobile slaughter slabs and meat distribution: innovative responses to drought in Afar, Ethiopia

How to mitigate the effects of drought? This was the question FARM-Africa had to address in its work in Ethiopia's Afar Region where it had been focusing on livestock marketing, animal health, food and fodder production through the Afar Pastoral Development Project. In response to the 2002 drought, FARM-Africa initiated an emergency programme, which ran from January to June 2003. The programme used a range of responses to mitigate the effects of the drought, including animal health, fodder production, livestock purchasing and meat distribution.

Livestock were purchased by the programme and slaughtered at



Credit: John Fox

River Awash at Hali Debi-i.

mobile slaughter slabs, operated by the project's Mobile Outreach Teams. The meat was then distributed (either fresh or dried) to the pastoral population, focusing on expectant and breastfeeding mothers. This enabled offtake of cattle that were likely to die anyway (thus reducing pressure on the range), increased income for pastoral households from the sale of stock, and the provision of nutritious famine relief food for vulnerable groups in the community. The remaining livestock offered the best opportunity for rehabilitation of the herds. The slaughtering was organised through the local leadership: the 13 sub-clans were allocated alternate days to slaughter their animals, according to a daily quota (which was usually well below the actual demand).



Credit: John Fox

Mobile outreach camp in Dewe Wereda Zone 5

An evaluation of the emergency programme concluded that the programme had been successful in meeting the drought mitigation needs of the Afar pastoralists. This success was in part the result of the combination of activities. The slaughter and meat distribution was enhanced by the provision of famine relief grains by other organisations, together with the programme's own activities to support animal health, produce additional fodder, and provide supplementary feeding for breeding stock. The evaluation also concluded that the operation would not have been possible without FARM-Africa's prior involvement in the area, which provided strong links with the community and local leadership enabling co-operation and joint planning between FARM-Africa, the pastoral community and local government bodies.

For further information, please contact: farmafrica@farmafrica.org.uk, website: www.farmafrica.org.uk



Empowering pastoral women: Reflect in Samburu District, Kenya

Abolishing the need for a text book, the Reflect approach to adult learning and social change was conceived and piloted by ActionAid in 1993-95. The approach enables groups to develop their own learning materials by constructing maps, calendars, matrices, diagrams or using forms of drama, story-telling and songs, which can capture social, economic, cultural and political issues from their own environment. In this process the development of literacy and other communication skills becomes closely linked to the engage-

ment of people in wider processes of development and social change.

In 1998, ActionAid carried out a baseline study in Samburu District, Kenya. The survey results showed that literacy among Samburu pastoral women was as low as 35%. The women traditionally have low status, are not allowed to own property, and play a limited role in community meetings and local structures such as school committees. The Reflect programme was introduced the following year, with the aim of empowering women to play a more equitable role in society.

The women met in three groups of 15, to discuss and analyse issues affecting their daily lives. Each discussion concluded with an Action Plan. After three months the groups decided to merge, conducted an election, wrote a constitution and registered as a self-help group with the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. The joint Action Plan included three main activities: cutting trees for sale (based on the policy of planting two seedlings for each tree cut, and giving 10% of the profit to the local primary school to support the education of girls); literacy, to improve their confidence and their ability to support their children in their school work; and establishing small kitchen gardens around their homes.

The group obtained a room in the local school, which has become a resource centre and meeting room for other community initiatives. They have diversified into other activities, including advocacy for girl child education. Their activities earned them a membership at the local District Education Board, and on various occasions they have engaged local leadership, including the District Commissioner on issues affecting their rights. For instance, they demonstrated against an area chief when he confiscated and sold their timber supplies.

The women have encountered some resistance to their activities

among local leaders, including the Chief and Councillor, as well as some of the local men. However, other men have joined the group and provided support to the women in their activities.

Otiende Elijah, Reflect Practitioner, Kenya

For further information on Reflect, please visit: www.reflect-action.org. There are a number of regional and national Reflect networks around the world, bringing together Reflect practitioners and organisations. They are all linked in a global network, the Circle for International Reflect Action and Communication, CIRAC. The African regional Reflect network is called PAMOJA, and brings together national networks in many African countries (contact: pamoja@infocom.co.ug).



National pastoralists' fora: the pros and cons

A major challenge facing pastoral communities in East Africa is how to ensure that pastoralists' concerns are included in policy processes that have a bearing on their livelihoods. This is an issue of governance that pastoralists share with other interest groups within society, but which for pastoralists is compounded by two factors. First, pastoralists are relatively under-represented in decision and policy-making frameworks across East Africa. Secondly, pastoralism and pastoral land use are generally perceived in policy circles to be backward and ecologically unsound, with policy stipulations

seeking to discourage transhumance and promote settlement and cultivation.

To address this challenge, pastoralists are exploring various strategies that seek to create an effective voice for them at the national level. Previous experience in Kenya with the Kenya Pastoralists Forum (KPF) serves as a model on which pastoralist groups in Uganda and Tanzania have sought to build. Through the creation of the Pastoralists Parliamentary Group (PPG), KPF managed to create a formidable framework for articulating pastoralist concerns to the KANU government at a time when citizen engagement with the government was sorely lacking. In spite of the KPF's subsequent decline, its achievements and those of the PPG provide inspiration for other East African pastoralists.

However, the diverse composition of pastoralists in East Africa poses its own unique challenge to pastoral organisation at the national level. The pastoral agenda in East Africa is in fact made up of a whole series of questions and agendas. In Kenya, the concerns of the pastoralists in Wajir and Turkana and those of pastoralists in Kajiado, Narok and Tana River may be generally similar but very different in detail. The Karimojong and the Ankole in Uganda are pastoralists, but in the details of their challenges and concerns they could very well be from different countries. In Tanzania the word 'pastoralism' is equated in the minds of many people with the Maa-speaking communities to the North of the country, but there are many pastoral communities in the West and the South who want to be heard on the pastoral question. The situation becomes even more complicated when hunters and gatherers are brought on board.

The challenge posed by diversity exists not only between communities, but also within them. Pastoral communities are far from homogeneous and their indigenous governance frameworks far from

all-inclusive. Women and youth are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation in patriarchal systems where age plays a major role in determining status and authority. But there are also vulnerabilities associated with clan-based authority systems, poverty and now HIV/AIDS. In these circumstances, it is not so easy to talk of a single voice at the national level that will speak for all pastoralists.

No wonder then that this issue keeps cropping up at pastoral fora across the region, but never with a clear solution. At a recent meeting of Tanzanian pastoralists organised by the Tanzania Pastoralists and Hunter-Gatherers Organisation (TAPHGO), the need for a single, credible and legitimate national voice for pastoralists was once again underscored. It was suggested that the Government of Tanzania is keen to listen to pastoralists, but does not know who to listen to in the absence of such a framework.

This suggestion raised a number of concerns. How can the government require a single voice to listen to in a decentralised governance system where institutions for citizen input into policy processes and decision-making exist from the village to the national level? The question was raised whether governments can only engage with citizens in policy formulation and implementation through civil society formations like the one proposed and it was suggested that this might in fact be an acknowledgement of failure by governments to be accountable to their people.

There may well be more value in supporting the diverse interest groups of pastoralists to become more inwardly accountable to their constituencies and to develop their capacity for effective advocacy before pushing for a national framework. Surely, unless and until pastoral CBOs, national pastoral NGOs of youth, women and men, Pastoralist Parliamentary Groups and pastoral traditional institutions are properly and democratically organised so that they truly speak for and are accountable to their members, little can come out of a

national framework bringing all these diverse voices together. For development partners to push for national pastoral forums in the absence of this is to set pastoralists up for an experience reminiscent of the rise and fall of KPF.

Michael Ochieng Odhiambo (ekmoo@africaonline.co.ke or michael@reconcile-ea.org). For more details about the TAPHGO meeting, please contact Moses Sangale, (taphgo2000@yahoo.com)

It pays to invest in the drylands

Why invest in drylands? A new perspective on investing in the drylands has been developed by the Global Mechanism of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). A publication promoting both public and private investment in the drylands and focusing on Africa, is due to appear later this year.

The case for more investment in Africa's drylands is based on the positive evidence of sustainable land use practices implemented by farmers and livestock producers in areas such as Machakos, Kenya, northern and eastern Burkina Faso, and northern Nigeria. In other areas, there is evidence of a transition to more sustainable management of natural resources and the adaptation to changes in the economic environment (for example in Maradi Department, Niger, and in Diourbel Region in Senegal). At the same time, other projects in African drylands have shown favourable economic returns on public investments. These examples demonstrate that small producers are both able and willing to invest. These and other examples are highlighted in a forthcoming study by Chris Reij and David Steeds: *Success stories in Africa's drylands: Supporting advocates and answering sceptics* (Contact Chris Reij for further information cp.reij@dienst.vu.nl).

The Global Mechanism also questions the assumption that pro-

duction constraints are the primary reason for stagnation in African agriculture. Long-term agricultural data from West Africa demonstrate adaptability and market responsiveness on the part of producers, and the drylands are no exception. Where new markets have been found, as in northern Nigeria, incentives for private investment and sustainable management have been strengthened.

Drylands have historically suffered from weak investment incentives. However, the success stories suggest that significant resources can be released even in poor communities and that increased participation in markets can be good for the environment when controlled by small, family producers. A study commissioned by the FAO Investment Centre further explores this issue and sets out the options for policies to promote private investment (D. Knowler et al, 1998: *Incentives systems for natural resources management: the role of indirect incentives*. Download a copy from www.fao.org/tc/tci/NMRrept2.pdf).

The assumption that the Sahel is suffering from runaway degradation or desertification is also challenged by satellite data showing a 'greening' of the region over the last 20 years, supported by tree management survey data. Policies are needed that recognise and support the values placed by small producers on their environment.

In the light of this debate, several international agencies are reviewing their policies and strategies for dryland development, moving away from the dominance of technical interventions to become more 'people-centred'.¹

Haramata would like to thank Mike Mortimore of Drylands Research for this contribution. www.drylandsresearch.org.uk

¹ See for example the UNDP DDC Challenge Paper series; and the Durban Group 2004 publication *Change, chance and choice in Africa's drylands: a new perspective on policy priorities*.

Supporting decentralisation in Mali

In common with a number of Sahelian states, the Government of Mali has been implementing a policy of decentralisation, whereby specific powers and financial resources are devolved to democratically elected local authorities.

A partnership between national and international actors has been supporting this process in Mopti and Timbuktu regions. Begun in late 1999/early 2000, the two *Support to Rural Municipalities* projects (Projets d'Appui aux Communes Rurales - PACR) are the result of collaboration between the Malian government, UNCDF (United Nations Capital Development Fund), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) as well as the Belgian Survival Fund (for Timbuktu) and the Government of Luxembourg (for Mopti). The partners came together at a workshop in Bamako (November 2003) to share experiences and lessons learned from the projects thus far, and a report has been produced summarising the findings.

PACR approach in Timbuktu and in Mopti

The project aims were: to encourage civil society participation in identifying development priorities with the local authorities, to promote participation in the provision of infrastructure and natural resource management, to increase local investment to reduce poverty, and to increase the capacity of local elected officials to manage the process. The approach of the projects was based on the hypothesis that there is a strong relationship between improving good governance and reducing poverty. Thus far, the partners conclude that progress in political democratisation can indeed support economic growth, and vice versa.

Capacity building of local institutions for community development

The projects developed a number of tools to provide support to Rural Municipalities. The skills and capacities of local stakeholders (including elected councillors, local representatives of line ministries, village-level associations, the civil society and the private sector) were strengthened in a number of key domains (including participatory planning processes, financial management, etc.). The result was increased community involvement in planning and the mobilisation of financial resources. Follow up and accompaniment after the training proved important in consolidating what had been learned.

However, some challenges were encountered. Focusing on strategic long-term plans when historically most agencies in the region have been operating short-term, emergency-orientated programmes has proven difficult. There are considerable logistical challenges in managing a decentralised system over a broad geographical area (inadequate banking facilities at local level, and the large distances between the different government authorities for example). The local bodies often lack an understanding of national sector policies, and therefore fail to take them into account when designing local development programmes. Environmental management was also identified as a key area neglected in the current process of decentralisation, because of the reluctance of central agencies to devolve significant environmental stewardship to local stakeholders.

Community development programmes

Investment in grassroots development activities forms a key part of the projects. Under the decentralisation policy, municipalities are responsible for planning, implementing and maintaining these community investments. During the first three years of the Timbuktu

project, for instance, over 400 mini-projects were identified and established in 27 municipalities, covering agriculture, culture, business, education, livestock, water, fish, health and transport.

The key challenge encountered was the difficulty experienced by the municipalities, which are still financially not very robust, in maintaining the new infrastructure. Further attention will be given in future to the capacity of the municipalities to maintain and sustain new investments.

The partnership

A review of the partnership concluded that the establishment of a common vision for the projects, coupled with the freedom to challenge each other, had contributed to the success of the partnership. The support and responsibility given to the Government of Mali by the other partners was also a key factor. In addition, the need to remain flexible, to evaluate the partnership periodically, and to develop adequate channels of communication was also noted.

Impact on national policies

The lessons learned and the best practices of the two projects have already had a significant impact on national policies (for instance, in the ways investment funds are allocated or the institutional performance of the Municipalities is assessed). Through these projects, UNCDF supported the creation and the operations of the ANICT (national entity in charge of providing Malian municipalities with local development funds).

For further information, please see: www.uncdf.org/english/countries/mali

Contacts : UNCDF/ New York : Angelo Bonfiglioli (angelo.bonfiglioli@undp.org) and Cyril Guillot (Cyril.guillot@undp.org); UNCDF/Bamako : Djoumé Sylla (djoume.sylla@undp.org) and Michiel Bourgoundien (michiel.bourgoundien@undp.org)

How did you rate *Haramata*?

During 2003, we carried out an evaluation of *Haramata* and the *Issue Papers*, which consisted of a readership questionnaire and two peer group discussion meetings with small numbers of *Haramata* readers in Nairobi and Dakar. We would like to thank all of you who took the time to return your questionnaires and all who organised and participated in the regional meetings. We value your comments and suggestions. An external consultant has evaluated the findings and produced a final report.

Some readers will remember that we carried out a similar exercise in 1996. This time we had a lower response rate to our questionnaires (5.3% compared to 9%), however most of the responses were full ones with many providing written contributions as well as answering the specific questions. The respondents also represented a wide range of organisation, which suggests that the response included perspectives from the full diversity of readership. This, together with the more detailed information produced by the meetings, provided valuable evidence on which to base the evaluation.

The evaluation focused on whether *Haramata* and the *Issue Papers* are achieving their purpose of providing relevant and timely information to a broad range of actors involved in Drylands development and how this could be done more effectively.

The quantitative results from the questionnaire were strongly positive. The publications are being received and read by the full range of audiences making up the target readership, the majority based in Africa. The various sections of the bulletin proved almost equally popular. The *Issue Papers* were widely praised. The policy of trying to cover relevant developments in both Anglophone and Francophone Africa and of publishing in both French and English

was strongly welcomed. The only caveat was the difficulty most respondents in Africa faced in using the World Wide Web to access and download documents in digital form. Very few of you found this an easy or practicable alternative.

Amongst many valuable insights from the peer group meetings, the most striking was the extent to which readers – be they actors working with grassroots organisations or policymakers, teachers or trainers, documentalists or researchers – have a great need for information which they can actually use. The peer group in Dakar argued that the publications should make more effort to target grassroots users. However the evaluation takes the view that the intermediary role of the readership is of great value and should be more consciously supported.


The evaluation concludes that the publications continue to fulfil an important and valuable role and that their longevity should not obscure the current relevance of their content. It supports their aim to bridge a linguistic and cultural divide.


However, improvements could be made. Existing goals of increasing local authorship and news from local academic and research institutions need to be achieved. Also the database of subscribers needs to be more targeted. Other recommendations include increasing relevant content on gender issues; producing a clearer and less cramped design for the bulletin; taking more active steps to increase the readership; making individual items available on-line in a form which supports web-e-mail transmission; and working towards a searchable archive of content, which, in the long term, could be made available through other channels.

Look out for the new look *Haramata* soon!


With thanks to Mike Powell for his analysis of the evaluation findings and production of the evaluation report.


What you said


 *It's really good to have complex issues and research written up in a brief, intelligible and accessible way. I find them an excellent model and often cite them as such – Indian NGO*


 *There is a poverty of information in this part of the world but “this poverty is not just a function of the absence of information, but the absence of relevant, easily accessible and user friendly information” – Comment made at Nairobi meeting*


 *In my capacity as a trainer of rural development officers, I draw on many articles to explain certain topics and give examples’ – Government Department, Benin*


 [with regard to bridging the anglophone-francophone divide by trying to cover initiatives from both regions] *There is great and unexplored potential for increasing South-South relationships. This partnership could help to overcome the many inefficiencies of North-South programmes, as Southern actors are often better placed to understand the problems of their Southern colleagues, based on their own experience – Community Group, Senegal*

 *So far excellent work done – Bariki K.Kaale, Tanzania*

 *I must congratulate you for your high level professionalism in the production of Haramata. It is small and beautiful. Well done! – Ekundayo J.D Thompson, Nairobi*

 *The text is too dense with too much writing – Comment made at Dakar meeting*

 *Everything is perfect at present. Perhaps you could go deeper on some subjects, such as sustainable integrated development, and the participation of women – Zongo Francois, Burkina Faso*

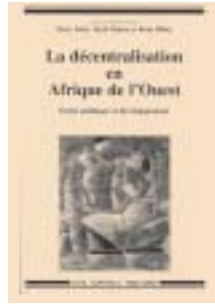
 *I think you are doing exactly the best, more grease to your elbow – Baako M. Abdulai, Ghana*



***Decentralisation in West Africa: between politics and development*, Marc Totté, Tarik Dahou and René Billaz, Karthala 2003 (in French)**

In recent years there has been considerable excitement about the process of decentralisation in West Africa and the growth of local democracies counterbalancing the dominance of central governments. Former centralised state structures have been dismantled and a variety of local structures – local government bodies, private services and community organisations – have emerged. Ten years after most of these changes occurred, it is time to take stock and examine their real impact, beyond the official rhetoric. What precisely has happened? Is decentralisation a process driven by grassroots communities in response to local demand, or is it in fact a new way of promoting the old model of development?

Decentralisation in West Africa: between politics and development addresses these questions in an accessible way. It describes the process of decentralisation at community level, including local experiences of confrontation and arbitration, and outlines the opportunities and constraints, both technical and organisational, facing devel-



opment in the future. The result is a coherent picture of the connection between development and decentralisation.

This book is primarily aimed at development practitioners and managers, public authority officials and elected representatives, and at researchers from the disciplines involved. It has therefore an educational angle, evident in the attempts to clarify concepts and models. More generally, it is also aimed at those who question current development processes and modes of governance, whether in the South or in Europe.

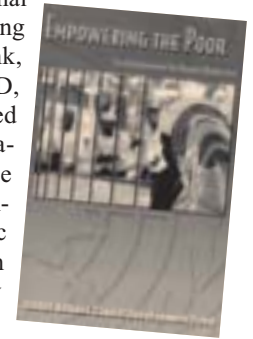
Obtain copies from www.karthala.com or Karthala, 22-24 Blvd Arago -75013, Paris, France.

***Empowering the Poor: Local Governance for Poverty Reduction* Angelo Bonfiglioli, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) New York, 2003**

In recent years, poverty reduction has become one of the highest priorities of international development, as evidenced by the Millennium Development Goals. *Empowering the Poor: Local Governance for Poverty Reduction* explores the links between poverty reduction and decen-

tralised governance. The first section of the book focuses on an analysis of poverty, poverty reduction strategies, and how poverty reduction may be facilitated by decentralisation linked to good governance. The second section describes UNCDF's work in supporting improved governance through decentralisation.

In the first section, evolving definitions and an analysis of cross-cutting issues related to poverty offer a useful reference guide for those involved in poverty alleviation work for the first time, or others who are rather overwhelmed by the plethora of poverty reduction initiatives. It describes some of the approaches being developed by different international institutions (including the World Bank, UNDP, UNCTAD, IFAD and selected bilateral organisations). While recognising the limits of democratic local governance¹ in achieving poverty reduction, the book



¹ Good governance is defined as 'a set of organisations and a set of mechanisms/procedures intended to manage local public affairs'



argues that decentralisation is an essential precondition.

The second part of the book outlines the work of UNCDF, its strategic results framework, its focus on local government and good governance and its operational experience through its Local Development Programmes (LDP), in particular the efforts made to target the poor better. As such it provides a useful summary of UNCDF's operational approach. It also includes a very accessible summary of the 'poverty and environment' nexus, which should perhaps be mandatory reading for all development and environmental professionals.

The book's analysis of local governance for poverty reduction leads to four key conclusions:

- There is no linear relationship between democratic decentralisation, local governance and poverty reduction
- In order for decentralisation to occur there must be political will to relinquish power, authority and resources to local government
- Democratic decentralisation and governance are not necessarily pro-poor
- Complete decentralisation cannot be accomplished and is not even desirable – the most successful pro-poor experiments have involved commitment from

central government, particularly with regard to challenging the resistance of local elites.

The book contains case studies of projects from around the world illustrating UNCDF's approach to supporting local governance. The book represents an extremely useful resource for many development professionals with an interest in looking outside their sectoral box.

Obtain copies from www.uncdf.org or UNCDF, Two UN Plaza, 26 Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA.

Institutionalising participation in community land management: the case of Thiès, Senegal Serigne Mansour Tall and Bara Guèye (in French)

Institutionalisation of participation series, edited by Michel Pimbert

Towards the end of the 1980s, participatory approaches developed and expanded rapidly in francophone West Africa. At that time, the 'Gestion des Terroirs' (GT)¹ approach was the main methodology for

¹ Village land-use planning

natural resource management, and presented a positive opportunity for the development of participatory tools and techniques.

In this case study, IIED's Drylands Programme and its partners describe a programme to institutionalise participation in GT programmes in Senegal. The programme's implementation strategy, based on the creation of learning groups, was based on the hypothesis that the capacity of grassroots organisations to learn and adapt to changes in policy and practice is a key element for sustainable rural development. After an analysis of the learning process and its context, the authors present methodological, practical and institutional lessons drawn from this participatory approach.

In particular, the authors emphasise that local forums now provide an efficient mechanism for stimulating reflection and dialogue on policies and programmes at the grassroots level. Moreover, in spite of high levels of mobility among administrative personnel, some technical government structures are developing ways of integrating participatory processes into their everyday activities.

Obtain copies from www.iied.org or IIED, 3 Endsleigh St., London WC1H 0DD, UK.



Community-based animal health care: training and policy videos

The Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology (CAPE) Unit of the African Union has produced two training videos: *Community-based Animal Healthcare: the How-To-Do-It Videos*. The videos describe the key issues to consider when setting up a community-based animal health system and are targeted at veterinarians and project managers within NGOs, government, or the private sector who wish to establish or improve a community-based project.

Video 1 covers community participation, sustainability issues, and the role of vets. The second video looks at participatory approaches to adult learning, project monitoring and evaluation, and how to influence policy. A short booklet accompanies the videos, describing how they can be used in training and awareness-raising workshops.

Community-based animal healthcare systems are becoming increasingly popular as a

means to improve primary-level veterinary services in marginalised areas. However, the success of community-based approaches ultimately requires support from policy makers. In response to this issue, CAPE has produced a third video, entitled *Community-based Animal Healthcare: Issues for Policy Makers*. This video presents the key issues for policy makers to consider when assessing community-based animal healthcare systems. It also describes ways to involve policy makers in learning more about community-based approaches and formulating appropriate policies.

The videos are available free of charge on a 'first come first served' basis, with priority given to partners in Africa. To obtain a copy of the video, please email CAPE (CAH@oau-ibar.org), specifying your preference for PAL, NTSC or SECAM format; your preference for video tapes or DVDs; and your full postal address.

For further information, please contact: CAPE Unit, African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources, P O Box 30786, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya. Tel +254 (0)20 226447, Fax +254 (0)20 212289. Website: www.cape-ibar.org

World Forum on Agrarian Reform

In spite of the various international targets to reduce world hunger over the last few decades, the world food situation has deteriorated in recent years, according to a recent report by the FAO. Three quarters of the world's poor and hungry are rural, many without access to sufficient land or indeed any land at all to provide them with food. Agrarian reform therefore continues to be a vital issue in the fight against poverty, to ensure that poor producers have access to and control over their land, seeds, water and other productive resources. Currently, a range of reform processes are being developed in diverse countries such as South Africa, Brazil, Indonesian and the Philippines to try to address these issues.

The *World Forum on Agrarian Reform – New challenges in land management and access to natural resources in the 21st century* has been convened by a group of concerned organisations to provide a forum for debate on this topic. It will take place in November 2004, in Valencia, Spain and will focus on two key themes: lessons of agrarian reform in the 20th century; and strategies for agrarian reform at the beginning of the 21st century.

RESOURCES

The Forum provides an opportunity for indigenous organisations, researchers, NGOs and experts to debate these issues. Consumer and environmental groups, government bodies, international multilateral, banking and co-operative institutions will also be invited. The Spanish organisation CERAI (Centre for Rural and International Agricultural Studies) is acting as secretariat for the Forum's organising committee and can be contacted for further information: Sergio Escribano, email: fmra@cerai.es, or visit www.cerai.es/announcingWFAR.pdf



**World Conservation Congress
Bangkok 17-25 November 2004**

"People and Nature – Only One World" is the theme of the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress, to be held in Bangkok, Thailand from the 17th to 24th November this year. The Congress is the general assembly of IUCN members, which takes place every three to four years, and focuses on the business of the IUCN, together with thematic reviews of the work of its six commissions. The World Conservation Forum will run concurrently (from 18th-20th November) and aims to bring together

over 3,000 of the world's leading specialists and practitioners to address the key challenges in conservation and sustainable development today. A series of workshops, exhibitions, training, launches and other events will focus on four broad themes:

- Ecosystem management – bridging sustainability and productivity
- Health, poverty and conservation – responding to the challenge of human well-being
- Biodiversity loss and species extinction – managing risk in a changing world
- Markets, business and the environment – strengthening corporate social responsibility, law and policy

For further information, please contact Mrs Jane Ganeau, Congress Officer IUCN, tel: ++41 (22) 999-0294, fax: ++41 (22) 999-0010. Email: jane.ganeau@iucn.org, Website: www.iucn.org/congress/index.htm

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Prospects for pastoralism in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan: from state farms to private flocks

Carol Kerven (Ed), London and New York, Routledge Curzon, 2003

Transformed by decades of Soviet social engineering, pastoral systems in Central Asia are now facing new challenges brought about by rapid economic transition. During the Soviet era, traditional systems based on seasonal livestock mobility were collectivised into heavily subsidised state farms and geared to industrialised livestock production. In the 1990s, most Central Asian countries privatised state farms, cut state support and opted for market mechanisms. The substantial economic changes brought about by these reforms have directly affected the livelihoods of many rural households, including pastoralists. However, these effects are still little understood by analysts and policy makers.

This book documents the impacts of economic transition on pastoral livelihoods in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Its findings are based on a series of field studies bringing together a range of disciplines (from social anthropology to economics, from veterinary to pasture agronomy and climate ecology), and covering a range of topics (agrarian reform, vegetation dynamics, pasture and livestock management, etc).

While a more open economy brings about new opportunities for



effective pasture land and livestock management, this book demonstrates that it also creates new challenges, particularly due to the withdrawal of most of the state support upon which collective farms depended. The pace of the reform process therefore crucially affects its outcome. The comparison between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – two countries with different approaches to the speed of privatisation – provides interesting insights. In Kazakhstan, the privatisation of state farms and the cessation of state support (particularly subsidised fodder and other inputs) within a very short period of time has resulted in massive destocking and reduced livestock mobility. A few individuals have managed to prosper in the new context, but many others have been left more vulnerable and impoverished. In contrast, in

Turkmenistan a gradualist approach to privatisation has avoided many of these negative effects and achieved greater stability for pastoralist livelihoods.

This book constitutes a valuable resource for readers interested in the dynamics of economic transition. It is also excellent reading for all those working on pastoralism across the world. Indeed, some key challenges faced by pastoralists cut across the very different political, economic, social, cultural and ecological contexts in which they operate. One example is the recurring tension between the need for livestock mobility in environments characterised by seasonally and spatially variable resources on the one hand, and government attempts to promote greater intensification of livestock production on the other. Greater exchange between analysts and practitioners working on pastoralism in different areas of the world, as well as between pastoralists themselves, may help achieve better understanding and better policies.