

LIVELIHOODS, LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS AND AGROBIODIVERSITY— THE PASTORALIST COMPONENT

A project of

Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA)

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

in collaboration with:

Local nomadic pastoral communities in Iran

Organisation for Nomadic Peoples of Iran (ONPI)

Forest, Range and Watershed Management Organisation
(FRWO), Iran

PROGRESS REPORT

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Prepared by

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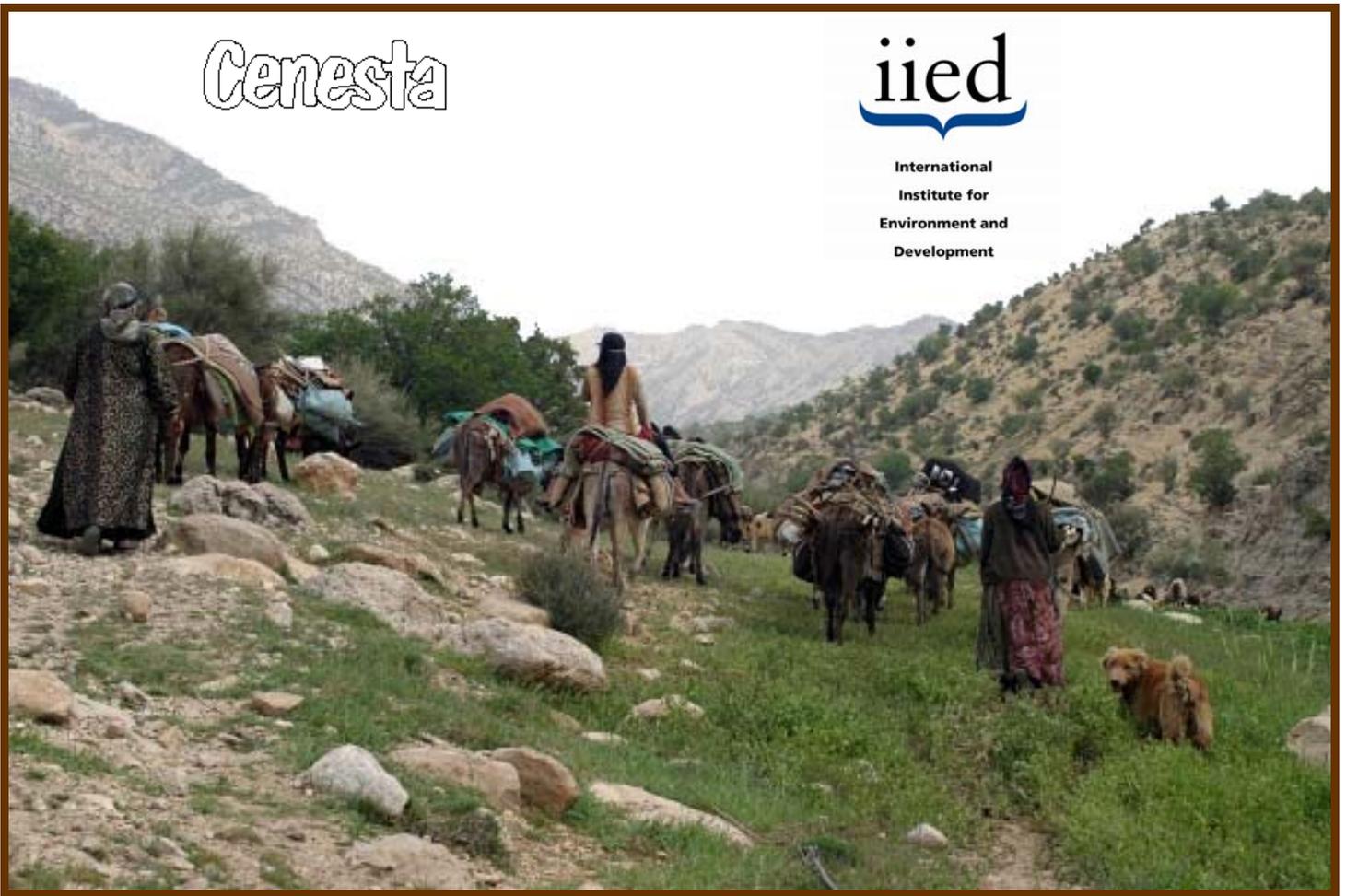


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ACROYNMS

<i>Agh s̄aqq̄al</i>	Community Elder (literally, a “white beard”)
<i>Alachiq</i>	Circular tent made of felt and an elaborate wooden infrastructure, used by nomads in cold climates, including among the Shahsevan and the Turkmen. The Qashqai use <i>qara chadir</i> or black tents made of goat hair
<i>Bonku</i>	Clan among the Qashqai, equivalent to the <i>gōbāk</i> of the Shahsevan
CBPR	Community Based Participatory Research
CEESP	IUCN Commission for Environmental, Economic and Social Policy
Council of Elders	Council for Sustainable Livelihoods, a new name for the reconstituted customary Council of Elders at each tribal level of organisation
DoE	Department of the Environment, Office of the President of the Republic
El/ il	Confederation of tribes (Turkish/ Persian resp.)
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FRWO	Forest, Rangeland and Watershed Management Organisation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information System
<i>Gōbāk</i>	A collection of <i>obas</i> in the Shahsevan Confederation of tribes. <i>Gōbāk</i> (literally “navel”, signifying common descent from a common— often female— ancestor) It is the rough equivalent of <i>bonku</i> among the Qashqai.
<i>Gōbāk bashi</i>	Head of <i>gōbāk</i>
ICARRD	International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IPC	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty
IUCN	World Conservation Union
<i>Khan/ El-b̄ay</i>	Head of the Confederation of Tribes (among the Qashqai/ Shahsevan, resp.)
<i>K̄adkhoda</i>	Traditional Head of a sub-tribe
<i>K̄alant̄ar/ b̄ay</i>	Head of the tribe (among the Qashqai/ Shahsevan, resp.)
NEE	Non-Equilibrium Ecosystem
NRB	Natural Resource Bureau, which is the name of the provincial apparatus of the FRWO
<i>Oba</i>	Nomadic camp made up of a number of tentholds who migrate, work and manage rangelands together
<i>Oba bashi</i>	Head of the <i>Oba</i>
ONPI	Organization for Nomadic Peoples of Iran
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PGIS	Participatory Geographic Information System
<i>Reesh sefid</i>	<i>Agh s̄aqq̄al</i> in Persian
RIFR	Research Institute for Forests and Rangelands
<i>Sanduq</i>	Community Investment Fund
<i>Tayefeh (tayfa)</i>	Tribe (in Persian/ Turkish)
Tenthold	A nomadic “household”
<i>Tireh (tir̄ə)</i>	Sub-tribe (in Persian/ Turkish)
WAMIP	World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples
WISP	World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism
<i>Yurt/ yurd</i>	Realm, territory, homeland of a tribal unit (Turkish)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Migratory nomadic pastoralists have lived and migrated through most of Iran since they first domesticated livestock around 10,000 years ago in the Zagros Mountains.¹ Their lifestyles, based on seasonal migration, have been in harmony with the laws of nature. A combination of rich cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge,

¹ Zeder, MA and B Hesse. The initial domestication of goats (*Capra hircus*) in the Zagros mountains 10,000 years ago. [Science. 2000 Mar 24;287\(5461\):2174-5](#)

particularly of the local plant and animal diversity differentiates them from other social groups. However, the sedentarisation process that started in the 1920s has forced them to integrate themselves gradually in the rural and urban cultures. Therefore, the mobile nomadic communities seem to be losing some of their traditions and customs. Some have even forgotten their local languages or dialects and have



adopted those of the areas in which they have settled.

At this point in time, the very survival of the 700 tribes of indigenous mobile nomadic communities in Iran necessitates special attention. The best way to address their livelihoods is to help them regain their mastery over their migratory pattern of life and the restitution of their

rights over their natural resources that have been taken away by force by both the State and non-indigenous private operators. When their rangeland resources—on which they have depended for thousands of years—were taken away by a USA-inspired and -directed nationalisation programme, *no one asked them their opinion*. This project has taken up an integrated approach to helping the tribal confederations of Iran revitalize their customary social organisations and empower them to choose their own sustaining livelihoods and agricultural biodiversity models—through a rights-based approach which has been unique in the country in its bold and innovative approaches that seem to be making great impact on national policy and the lives of the nomadic communities.

The present project has concentrated on helping mobile nomadic communities to reorganize themselves in two related social and economic institutions of Councils of Elders and Community Investment Funds (*sandugs*), respectively. Through innovative and flexible initiatives, the CENESTA project team tries to offer a social/economic self-management model to the local communities. This model is derived from tribal traditions but replaces the authoritative kinship relations with democratically elected representatives to run the Councils and their corresponding *sandugs*. The ideal shift in the characteristics of decision making powers is presented schematically in Annex One.

It is clear that bringing about such a change in the structure of tribal communities is not a paved and even process. The project has tried to consider all the elements that may promote or hinder the process. For best social and economic outcomes, a coalition of local-level stakeholders has been generated to carry on communication and discussion on how to take advantages of opportunities for positive change.

The project has attempted to:

- raise awareness among all the social actors, especially policy makers and government bureaus, on the capacity of mobile nomadic life for sustainable land and natural resource management and for poverty alleviation;
- build capacity of pilot community members and their Community Elders;

- promote appropriate policies and set the stage for making required legal changes at national level;

through the activities that are described in this report.

Overall, very important policy and practice impact is being achieved. The project has moved from being considered a radical departure from the accepted way of doing things in the government machinery that was barely tolerated, to an approach that holds great promise for helping both public policy and the indigenous nomadic pastoralist tribes see a shining light at the end of the tunnel and a way out of the social-cultural, policy-practice, economic-financial and ecological-natural resource management bottlenecks.

Without exaggeration, all this is thanks to the untiring efforts of the nomadic pastoralist communities of Iran, the patient and hard working folks at CENESTA, and the financial and intellectual support that has been made possible through the IIED programme.

ACTIVITIES

Since February 2005, the date of the Farmers' Exchange workshop in India, the project team has organised many workshops and consultative meetings at local and national levels to reach a common understanding on project goals and on ways to deal with the problems of the stakeholders, with the essential task of expanding the pilot experience in the Kuhi subtribe to other subtribes and tribes in the Qashqai Confederation of Tribes, and beyond. As an example, a summary table of all the workshops held for the expansion of the project in the Shahsevan Confederation is available in Annex Four. Other activities are as follows:

Local Level

- Attending regular meetings with relevant government bodies, such as the Office of the Governor-General of the Province of Fars as well as the relevant District Governors, ONPI, FRWO, Department of the Environment, Management and Planning Organisation, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Industry, especially the Handicrafts Organization;
- Involving concerned government experts in the project;



- Carrying out SWOT analysis workshops with local community members and related government specialists;²
- Organizing conflict management meetings among the tribes and strengthening their sense of unity and solidarity;



- Playing an influential role in the relations between the police and security forces and the local communities;
- Organising special permits from the Handicraft Organization that allows them to receive special loans and grants for developing their handicrafts. Handicrafts are a very serious and important source of livelihood for tribal peoples, especially women;

- Obtaining an industrial permit for the establishment of a meat processing and packing plant for organic animal products of the Qashqai tribal Confederation;³
- Continuing the registration of new *sanduqs*;
- Accompanying the Shahsevan nomadic pastoralists in their spring and fall migration;
- Meeting the community Elders of the Shahsevan tribes in order to discuss the issues of customary rangeland management, migration, devastation of migration routes and difficulties in moving the livestock to summering grounds;
- Participating in the Development Conference for Moghan Plain and presenting a paper on the “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists;”
- Visiting the summering grounds of the Shahsevan Confederation and escalating to Mount Savalan in honour of the rebirth of the Shahsevan Tribal Confederation. This took place on the first day of Virgo (*Shahrivar* or *Sombola*), around 21 August, named Shahsevan Day by the Shahsevan Council of Elders;
- Initiating the implementation of the project among the Shahsevan Confederation;
- Conducting preliminary assessments for spreading the project to the Bakhtiary Confederation;

² See Annexes Two and Three for separate results.

³ It is estimated that the building will be 2,700 square meters, located in a land of 10,000 square meters. All sorts of livestock will be purchased to offer packed red meat, and other products. The estimated fixed capital of \$653,000 will enable the purchasing of 3,000 tons of tribal livestock, pack 300 tons of red meat and 100 tons of other products and employ 32 community members. This initiative will mean higher incomes for both the tentholds and the community *sanduqs*.

National Level

- Holding consultative meetings with authorities in relevant government bodies to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project and to find comprehensive recommendations at the policy level;
- Signing a five-year Letter of Agreement with ONPI;
- Obtaining the agreement of the Department of the Environment on a process for the formal recognition of a Community Conserved Area, comprising a local wetland in the summering grounds of Shish Bøyli tribe of the Qashqai;
- Organizing meetings with the Iranian Government working group with the purpose of reaching basic agreements on common issues prior to participation



in the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in Porto Alegre, Brazil;

- Conducting a study of three different systems of natural resource management—the customary range management system, the prevailing government/expert-based system and the

new non-equilibrium ecosystem (NEE) approach;⁴

- Promoting the concept of NEE approach among government experts and decision-makers;
- Organizing meetings between representatives of the local community and the heads of ONPI, FRWO and GEF;
- Facilitating the participation of local community Elders in the International Day for Wetlands Conference in Zabol, Baluchistan, Iran.

International Level

- Initiating and maintaining relations with international organizations such as FAO, IPC, ICARRD, IUCN/CEESP, IIED, WAMIP, WISP, Slow Food Movement, UNDP, Wetlands International, Via Campesina and others;
- Attending International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) (International Planning Committee, and FAO meetings).

ACHIEVEMENTS AND OUTPUTS

Replication of the Project in Other Nomadic Communities

One of the major achievements of the project is reflected in the attempts to replicate a real model for sustainable livelihoods among nomadic pastoralists. Establishing

⁴ The lessons from this study are presented in this report

Sanduqs alongside Councils for Sustainable Livelihoods at different levels of tribal structure has been pursued by the project team from the beginning and particularly after the farmers exchange meeting in India. The project that once started with the Kuhi sub-tribe has now expanded to other subtribes and tribes among Qashqai and Shahsevan nomadic tribes. So far Councils of Sustainable Livelihoods have been formed in five more sub-tribes of the Shish Bøyli tribe, including the Heybätlu, Kolählu, Qərəyarlu, Qurt and Ərəbcherpanlu. These Councils have all been registered to strengthen their legitimacy. Moreover, the Council for the Shish Bøyli tribe has been established and registered. The formation and registration of such entities indicate the level of progress in bringing the nomadic pastoralists together and help them demand their basic rights. Such expansion happened with remarkable speed and was warmly received by the stakeholders.



Furthermore, a project concerning the corridors of migratory routes to wintering and summering grounds is now being implemented for the Shahsevan Confederation of Tribes in Ardabil Province. The Shahsevan Confederation consists of 32 tribes, dwelling in northwest of Iran in the territory of Azerbaijan and is one of the largest tribal confederations in the country. In the past, the head of the Confederation, *El-Bəy*, would be appointed by the State, often in a process of mutual negotiation, and he, in his turn, would appoint the head of each tribe, called *Bəy*. Tribes are divided into sub-tribes, each headed by an *Aq səqqəl*. Sub-tribes among the Shahsevan Confederation are considered a political and administrative division. The core group of this entity, *Göbək*, is relatively large and includes 20 to 30 *Obas* that originate from common ancestry and date back three to six generations. The name of the sub-tribe is usually derived from that common ancestor.

After conducting preliminary assessments, orientation and brainstorming sessions were organized. Applying the lessons learnt from the experience of the Qashqai Confederation reduced the time needed for setting up Councils among Shahsevan tribes. So far, the Councils of Elders of the following tribes have been established: Moghanlu, Təklə, Talish Mikail, Hüseyn-Hajilu, Milli-Seyidlər, Kəlash and Qurtlar. Their Councils of Elders have come together to found the Council of Elders of the Shahsevan Confederation for Sustainable Livelihoods. As founders of this organization, they have registered the *sanduq* with relevant government bodies. In the case of Iran, this is the first time that a whole nomadic pastoralist confederation has succeeded in attaining a legally recognisable status and an opportunity for carrying on its future self-



Permit for establishment of a collective meat processing and packing plant

development plans and in reviving its cultural and tribal identity.

The project is also trying to extend its realm of work to another mobile nomadic community, the Bakhtiary Confederation. The project staff have prepared the ground for the expansion of the project to this tribal territory. The three confederations of Shahsevan, Bakhtiari and Qashqai are the largest Confederations of tribes in the country. The CENESTA project team have selected the tribes of Hamule, Babadi, and Duraki as the highest priority tribes for replication of project experience after paying several exploratory visits to the area and organizing workshops to introduce and offer orientation on the project objectives.

Conflict Resolution

The life and livelihood of nomadic pastoralists is entwined with livestock and pasture. The natural resources on which the pastoralists rely for their livelihoods determine their social and cultural behaviour. Sometimes the scarcity of resources and their surrounding conditions create tensions and conflicts among community members. Such enduring differences and clashes have caused some tribal and rural communities to attack each others' grazing lands and seize them. Competition over control of the pastures and the rights of using them has been the main source of differences between rural and tribal communities. However, there are certain types of conflicts that plague the nomadic pastoralists themselves. The arguments can go on for years and in some instances, end in violence. They basically happen over the utilization of pastures and fodder, or over moral and cultural problems. According to the norms of nomadic life, the loss and damages endured by the sufferers should be compensated. It is not necessarily expected to pay for the compensation in financial terms. There are other ways to end a dispute, such as rehabilitation, retaliation, raids, reconciliation through marriage between two members of conflicting sides, mediation, guarantees of compensation provided by the Elders and other tribal ways.

With the decline of tribal social organization in recent decades, all of the traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution have also weakened. Currently, disputes between rural and tribal communities as well as those among the nomadic pastoralists themselves are handled by judicial and security institutions. It takes authorities long years to get through the cases, which rarely end in favour of the nomadic communities or remain unresolved.

The present project aims at strengthening the traditional social organization of the tribes. It has therefore put the revival of the customary conflict resolution mechanisms close to the top of its agenda. The heads of the Councils and the project team have been encouraged to take this issue seriously and find ways to resolve such conflicts through traditional and customary mechanisms. The achievement of the project in this regard is quite remarkable. To date, Elders of the Councils have successfully resolved many conflicts, some of which had started twenty years before. In certain cases, their interventions have prevented severe catastrophes. Currently, these Elders are busy solving a conflict of many years between two sub-tribes of Shish Bøyli over a piece of grazing land.

In the past three years, CENESTA has undertaken a facilitation role to enhance the leading role of the Councils. It believes that the sooner the communal spirit of the nomads is



regained the less violent will be the conflicts that break out among them. The case stories in Annex Five reflect how conflicts can be reduced in the long run.

Study on Sustainable Use of Rangelands

Nomadic life is inseparable from rangelands, be it as the main resource of an economy/livelihood based on pastoralism, or as the territorial habitat that guarantees the survival of nomadic pastoralism.

On the other hand Iran's rangelands play a highly important part in the balance of nature including:

- maintaining the ecological balance in the arid and semi-arid ecosystems of the country;
- prevention of human-induced desertification; and
- conserving the biological diversity of its flora and fauna.

During the events of the last 100 years, these range territories have been subject to encroachment and have been badly degraded (Figure 1). These events, coupled with the determination of different governments to modernize the country. This model relied on imported development styles and insisted on the sedentarisation of nomads and the usurping their lands through nationalisation presented as agrarian reform. The resulting policies and practices had a devastating impact on the nomadic lifestyle and the age-old ability of nomadic pastoralists to conserve their natural resources and their biological diversity.

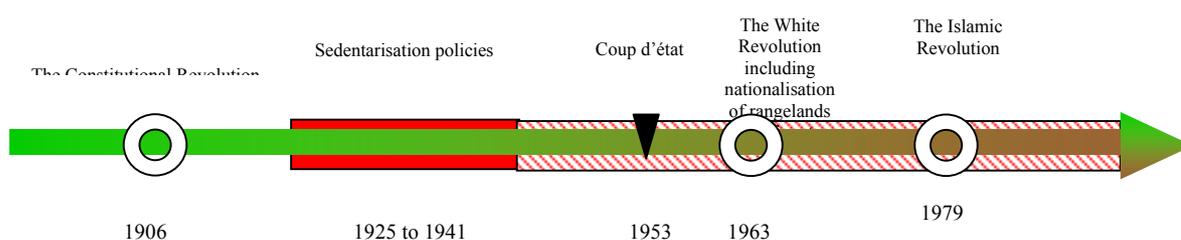


Figure 1. Historic events in Iran affecting nomads and rangelands.

In consequence, the invaluable nomadic traditional knowledge of natural resource management is disappearing and being substituted by a bureaucratic centralized system based on outmoded north American schools of range management and science.

With the introduction of the Non-Equilibrium Ecosystems theory, the basic principles of the dominant expert-based system (like succession, climax, and carrying capacity) are now being questioned in arid and semi-arid ecosystems.



What have we done?

Given these problems, this study was designed to find an appropriate solution that guarantees the sustainable use of the remaining nomadic rangelands (the conservation of rangelands alongside nomadic livelihoods).

To benefit from the experiences of the three groups (Community Elders, government experts and

national and international researchers competent in the latest advancements in the science of range management), the research was based on participatory action research (PAR) frameworks.

Part of the project was dedicated to learning the principles of these frameworks with the help of literature review and guidance from scholars such as Dr. Mansoureh Tajik⁵ and Dr. Bob Fisher⁶.

In this respect, the following activities have been undertaken or are in progress:

- Collaborating with numerous international scholars, especially Drs. Michael Coughenour, David Swift, Carol Kerven and Roy Behnke.⁷ Three of these scholars have visited the tribal rangeland territories and have supported CENESTA's efforts to domesticate the concepts and approaches of the Non-Equilibrium Ecosystem approach. CENESTA organised public and professional lectures by Dr. Behnke and facilitated discussions with both community elders and government experts and decision-makers. His main lecture at the RIFR.⁸ was entitled: "Range Ecology at Disequilibrium: Questions about Managing Iran's Rangelands." Other project efforts have included the translation and publication of the summary chapter of his book "Range Ecology at Disequilibrium."
- Organizing meetings, workshops, and interviews with local nomads and villagers as well as experts and managers of related government offices in provinces and districts. This has enabled the project team to note the views of each group about migration and sedentarisation in their problem areas (*i.e.* legal and operational obstacles, intrusion and land occupation and appropriation, etc.) and the degree of success or failure of policies (*i.e.* grazing permits, range projects, and balancing livestock with rangelands).
- Following up problem areas with relevant authorities in order to find the root causes (legal or policy related).
- Finding legal or technical frameworks acceptable to all stakeholders in order to analyze the interviews.
- Textual analysis of the interviews to find commonalities and main problem areas in the discussions.
- Participatory mapping activities with the nomads and GIS sections of FRWO/NRB and DoE in order to define customary territories and prepare a base for registering other spatial information.



⁵ University of Massachusetts at Lowell.

⁶ Honorary Associate, Division of Geography, University of Sydney.

⁷ Research Associate, Macaulay Institute, Aberdeen, UK.

⁸ See Annexes 6 and 7 for a video and powerpoint presentations.

- Discussing with high ranking FRWO authorities in order to prepare them to accept the results of the research and study the feasibility of policy proposals (communal range projects in dogbone⁹ nomadic territories to be managed by *sandug*-Councils of Elders’).

Where are we heading?

At this time, the interviews, problem follow ups, textual analysis, and participatory mapping activities are ongoing and might lead to integrated results such as lists of common problems with spatial/geographical aspects.

Future steps and visions of the project:

- Empowering the Councils of Elders and their affiliated *Sandugs* to undertake the management (conservation and utilization) of rangelands.
- Preparing proposals for legal reforms to increase tenure security, maintain the customary rangeland use and prevent conversion of land to non-pastoralist uses
- Reduce conflicts among stakeholders.
- Designing economic activities compatible with seasonal grazing (*i.e.* medicinal plants, ecotourism, etc.).
- Participatory designing of “dogbone range projects” which acknowledge customary and communal nomadic rights, benefit from their traditional natural resource management knowledge, combining it with the latest approaches to range science.



IMPACT ON NATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Existing government policies on the livelihood of mobile nomadic pastoralists are in a dilemma. On the one hand, the ONPI and other relevant government bodies try to deliver required services and subsidies to the nomadic communities, and on the other hand, they make a persistent effort to sedentarise them for good, despite the failure of such policies over the past eighty years. The policy of sedentarisation has been pursued as a single-minded strategic objective for both the medium and the long term. The Iranian government, through its apparatus of central planning and budgeting, has regarded the migration of the nomadic tribes as a hindrance to the development of



⁹ including summering, wintering, and migratory routes.

the country, ignoring both lessons from history and the experience of other countries, many of which have gone back to a policy of full support to nomadic pastoralists. Consequently, the sedentarisation of the mobile pastoralist communities has been turned into the official policy of the State in its Fourth Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan.

In contradistinction to the mainstream approach of the government towards the mobile pastoralist society, this project has elaborated a fully participatory model of development based on the following characteristics:

- Replicable in other similar situations;
- Adapted to the social organisation of the nomadic pastoralists;
- Efficient due to its participatory nature;
- Easily institutionalized;
- Ecologically adapted to the environment through the dual mechanisms of relying on indigenous, time-tested knowledge of natural resource management while taking into account the latest range science and management theories and approaches;
- Rights-based, and
- Innovative while, and because, based on customary institutions.



Given the above situation, the project has adopted a strategy of working with both the government and the nomadic pastoralist tribes at all levels of organisation possible. In practice, this involves:

- Strengthening the pastoralist tribes through the reinforcement of their own customary institutions. In this way they can be better organised to pursue their rights and negotiate changes in policy and practice in their favour;
- Pursuing a multi-pronged programme of legal support to pastoralists including:
 - Seeking to enforce existing laws regarding prohibition of allocating any land that has been traditionally used by nomadic pastoral tribes;
 - Legal education;
 - Legal reform;
 - Recognition of customary law
 - Legal aid to nomads in trouble over natural resource rights and claims.
- A social communication programme to increase awareness of government officials by:
 - Exposing them to the tribes' own views, visions and priorities for sustainable development (livelihoods and the conservation of nature and natural resources);

- Bringing about self education and awareness of the nomadic pastoralists about their own predicament and solutions;
- Engaging government experts in debate and discussion of issues related to strategies for natural resource management by encouraging a two-way flow of information and knowledge of NEE as well as indigenous knowledge of range ecology and management;
- Placing project personnel and the implementing body (CENESTA) within the layers of policy and decision-making by:
 - Accepting the invitation of the nomadic pastoralist tribes to become institutional members of the Councils of Elders of the tribes. For example, the legalised Statutes of each Council of Elders has a integral Unit of the Council at the appropriate level (e.g., at the level of the Kuhi sub-tribe, made up of 14 natural clans, CENESTA is institutionalised as the 15th Clan and participates as a member of the Council of Elders of the subtribe, while for the Shahsevan Council of Elders consisting of 32 Tribes, CENESTA is the 33rd Tribe). This stipulation was initiated by the |Kuhi subtribe, the original pilot community with which the project started to work, for reasons that they felt they wished to provide an incentive for CENESTA to stay linked to the tribal council in order to continue to provide the services and institutional linkages that it is uniquely capable of providing. Other tribal units saw the advantage of this arrangement and decided to emulate it. The honour thus bestowed on CENESTA serves both ways: to enhance the legitimacy and access of the tribes to national and international opportunities, and to serve as an additional unifying element of solidarity and social communication among tribal entities that have never before in history felt linked.
 - Accepting to join any government policy and decision making or consultative bodies that could enhance the process. An example is provided by the national steering committee for desertification control. This body operates under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and has the Chair of CENESTA as a member of the Committee. CENESTA collaborates actively with the elaboration of national projects and policy and other documents where it can bring about understanding of favourable policies and practices that recognise the value of migratory pastoralism for the conservation and sustainable/ equitable use of natural resources;
 - Changing the mainstream view of nomadism from wrongly being considered a security, political and military issue to one that has everything to do with sustainable development (=sustainable livelihoods and the conservation of sustainable use of nature and natural resources). The project has made great strides in this respect,



and can claim success which is much appreciated by relevant State institutions as well as the tribes;

- Help organise regular and occasional meetings and workshops where government officials at different levels (from District governors and line ministry personnel to high level national heads of Departments) are invited to take part and enjoy dialogues with pastoralists and project experts;
- Taking advantage of every opportunity to encourage international exchange of experiences by organising to have government officials and community Elders participate in international gatherings and other events;
- Promote both real impact on the economy and livelihoods options of pastoralists through the mechanism of the community investment fund while revitalising a sense of identity of the tribe and pride and confidence in itself;
- Bringing about awareness of the experiences of other societies in the world, not only in developing countries, but also in technologically advanced ones who have all changed their policies back to support of migratory pastoralism after learning from their mistaken policies following World War II. This is important for Iran who has always had an eye on the developed world for models of development to emulate.

The project has had a disproportionate share of influence on national policies and practices, yet it is in a critical moment of history where, if support to its operations continues, it can have decisive results that would change the course of history for national policies and practices. It

still needs time to ensure that its activities and achievements have been translated into policy papers and have influenced the mainstream approach at the national level. However, despite all the legal restrictions, the current capacity of the Fifth National Plan, which specifically emphasizes the transfer of central managing power to civil society organizations at local levels and focuses on the participation of the people in planning for

community development, has allowed the project staff to attract the support of the authorities at middle levels of administration and decision making. The support is more evident when one looks at the list of the government departments¹⁰ at the provincial level that collaborate with the project.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been collected from different workshops:

¹⁰ Including FRWO, ONPI (that has signed a five year letter of agreement with CENESTA), district and sub-district Governor's offices, and Rural Research Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

About Local Communities and Respect for Customary Values

- Facilitating the participation of local communities in the planning and implementing phases of every development project in their realm, due to their valuable indigenous knowledge and the need to build up their capacities for self-development;
- Understanding the sense of attachment of local communities to their tribal realms and territories that that is a source of their tribal identities and leads to caring for nature and natural resources;
- Planning of the most appropriate means of livelihood for nomadic pastoralists through their own participatory action research;
- Recognizing the difference between “rural” and nomadic communities with respect to land issues;
- Providing equal opportunities for migratory nomadic communities with respect to the enormous resources spent on sedentarisation, and this without taking away their best lands for the ill-fated sedentarisation programmes;
- Organizing workshops for all stakeholders in tribal territories to present the outcomes of participatory development projects;
- Ensuring the management by local communities and indigenous peoples of their own organizations and their own territories;
- Granting collective ownership and access rights of their own customary territories to nomadic pastoralists through their customary social organizations.



The National Policy Level

- Putting an end to the sedentarisation policy of the government;
- Putting an end to the policy of transferring ownership of tribal lands to private sector and government institutions;
- Levelling the ground for the continuation of migration along with offering sustainable livelihoods to those willing to sedentarise, but away from the traditional territories of the tribes;
- Establishing legal aid units and emphasizing respect for existing laws that prohibit absolutely transfer of land traditionally used by pastoralists to other stakeholders;
- Reversing the Nationalization of Natural Resources Act in favour of restitution of rangelands and forests to the indigenous tribes and local traditional communities who have used them sustainably for hundreds, if not thousands, of years;
- Ensuring that all development plans for the nomadic communities facilitate their participation, are endogenous and based on their own priorities

expressed through their own analysed processes, and are carried out by their own recognised customary institutions;

- Recognizing the fact that the surplus population of nomadic pastoralists have always settled somewhere, usually without taking up critical spaces of range needed for the survival and continuation of the migratory way of life;
- Raising the issue of land tenure rights and reviving customary land management systems;
- Replacing individual ownership by collective management;
- Preventing land grabs and transfer of ownership of tribal territories, most specially in migratory routes;
- Revitalizing the traditional and indigenous systems that harmonize with the natural, geographical, socio-cultural, and economic conditions of the pastoral regions and territories;
- Returning to the idea of community management of tribal territories;
- Defining mechanisms for community land use instead of conflicts over land ownership;
- Avoid change of land use in rangeland territories of tribes;
- Capacity building for government experts to create a belief in facilitation as the primary means of promoting appropriate development, while instilling in them that such facilitation should be done by outside and disinterested parties, not by government agents;
- Acknowledging the priority of community interests over individual ones and defending individual interests within the framework of community interests;
- Bearing in mind that participatory planning for mobile nomadic communities is a new phenomenon;
- Relying on indigenous social capital and capacities while planning for and with local communities and indigenous peoples;
- Utilizing approaches that are compatible with indigenous social systems to avoid sharp clashes with the dominant administrative system;
- Enabling critique and analysis of evolving models through documentation of the experiences;
- Reflecting the results of conferences attended to others and learning from those experiences.



About International Experiences

- Opening the discussion on land tenure rights and reviving customary land management systems at national and international levels;

- Using the global experience on the restitution of migratory routes to the indigenous communities.

LESSONS LEARNT

- Building capacities for government officials at national, provincial and local levels needs the involvement and support of all stakeholders;
- Respecting indigenous values and traditional knowledge of natural resource management will help us to achieve project outputs;
- Signing official Letters of Agreements with relevant government departments requires their active participation as well as carrying out multi-partner cooperation.
- Local communities getting organized around a common cause with full solidarity is one of the most important outcomes in the project.
- Participation of all stakeholders, or their representatives, in workshops and consultative meetings helps them get involved in different stages of the project effectively.
- Documenting the local, national and international experiences contributes to gaining deeper understanding of project objectives and extraction of lessons from these experiences.
- Appropriate transfer of international experiences and indigenizing those practices plays a significant role in encouraging the stakeholders to welcome the experiences and to study and learn more about them.
- involvement of stakeholders in participatory action research helps with the success of the project.
- Holding periodic debriefing sessions for reporting back to national, provincial and local authorities on project activities and its achievements affects positively the progress of the project.
- Participatory documentation of customary rights with respect to traditional management systems of indigenous communities is one of the significant achievements of the projects.
- Empowering the local communities and training professional facilitators selected from the community and working group members is another major achievement of the project.



FUTURE PROSPECTS

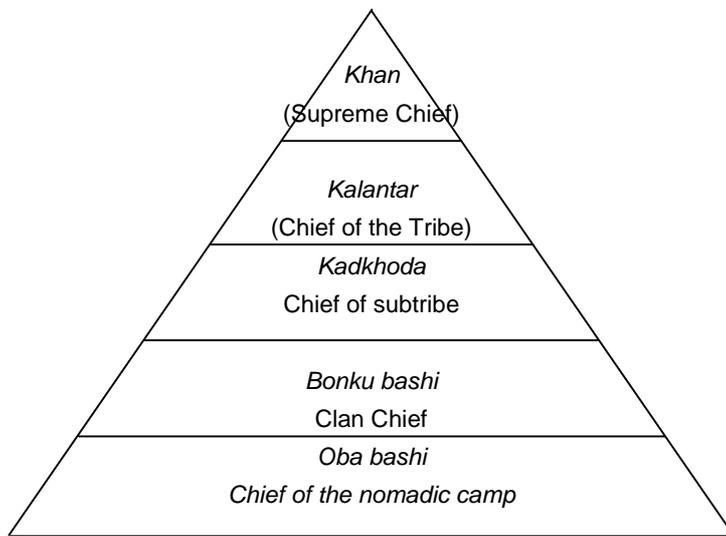
- Expansion of revived Councils of Elders and their associated *sanduqs* to other tribes;
- Establishment of federations of *Sanduqs* at higher levels of organisation of the nomadic tribes of the country;
- Establishment of the National Union of *Sanduqs*
- Establishment of the Legal Centre for Protection of the Rights of migratory nomadic pastoralists;
- Expansion of the project by empowered members of the Councils with improved capacities;
- Establishment of Women's Councils of Elders and *sanduqs*;
- Guiding and supporting *sanduqs* to implement wealth generating activities, including for the nomadic youth;
- Returning the legal ownership and access to rangelands for migratory nomadic pastoralists following their own tribe's customary territories and social organisations.



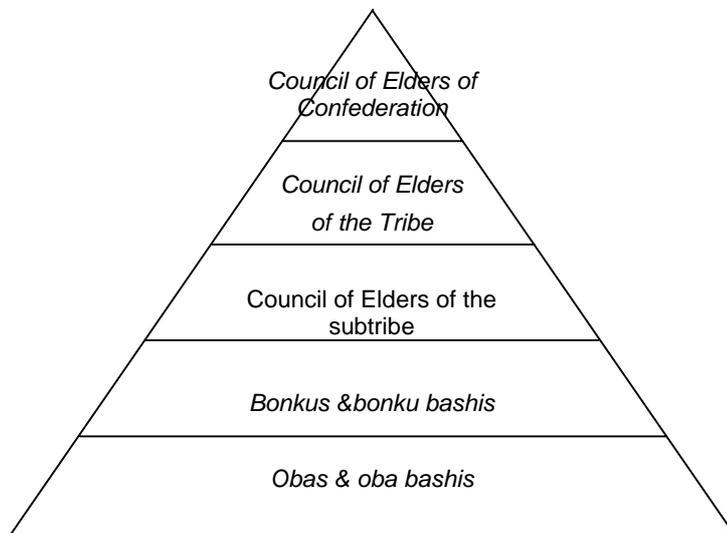
Annex One

Management Structures

The traditional management structure and Social Organization of the Qashqai



A Participatory Management Organisation (based on the Councils of Elders) and a Democratic *sanduq* for Nomadic Communities among the Qashqai



Annex Two

SWOT with CENESTA and Kuhi Council

Strengths

1. Ecological and Environmental

- ✓ Applying indigenous knowledge of sustainable use of rangelands;
- ✓ Believing that the basis of livelihood of the community is dependent on the conservation of nature and natural resources;
- ✓ Recognising that the seasonal migration of nomadic pastoralists between summering and wintering grounds is essentially to conserve nature and its biodiversity resources;
- ✓ Recognizing the value of the biodiversity of special ecosystems, such as wetlands;
- ✓ Preparing a Community Register of medicinal herbs by the women of the nomadic pastoralist tribes.

2. Social and Cultural

Recognition of:

- ✓ Distinct cultural and social identity;
- ✓ The positive role of the kinship system and social affinity;
- ✓ Designing the mode of organisation of the tribes on the basis of their traditional social organization;
- ✓ Decision making and planning skills of the nomadic community;
- ✓ Function of mutual aid and common property systems of range management;
- ✓ The participation of tribal women in international meetings;
- ✓ Effective support of women in organising workshops;
- ✓ Women's active participation in "problems and priorities" meetings.

3. Economical and Financial

- ✓ Establishment of the sanduqs (Community Investment Funds);
- ✓ Enabled to carry out investment projects.

4. Legal and Policy

- ✓ Revived values of customary law concerning use and management of rangelands;
- ✓ Existence of laws and regulations regarding the management of pastures and environmental resources of nomadic pastoralists;
- ✓ Involvement of the local community in formation of their Councils;
- ✓ Maintaining effective regular relationships with relevant government departments;
- ✓ Obtaining the support of ONPI and FRWO for the project;
- ✓ Other tribal constituencies welcoming the replication of the project in their territories and tribes, matched with the replicability of the model to other subtribes, tribes and confederations;
- ✓ Having the ability to participate in international meetings and gatherings.

Weaknesses

- ✓ Unconventionality of such participatory projects for local communities sometimes causing difficulty in understanding the approach;
- ✓ Some local community members are not yet fully convinced of the effectiveness of such an approach;
- ✓ Expectation of the local communities in making quick progress.
- ✓ Lack of sufficient capacity to write and submit acceptable wealth-generating projects to national and international funding agencies, and insufficient action to get there;
- ✓ Lack of absorption of financial assistance from government agencies
- ✓ Time needed for understanding among local community members given the weakening of customary institutions
- ✓ High expectations of some community members for financial support from CENESTA instead of going after wealth generating activities;
- ✓ Disparity of views among the community members on the ways for conservation and rehabilitation of biodiversity.

Opportunities

- ✓ To gain financial support of the government bodies;
- ✓ To utilize the facilities of ONPI as a partner of the project;
- ✓ Having legal support at the national level for the replication and expansion of the project;
- ✓ The special place of the tribe in the international context as a founding member of WAMIP;
- ✓ Interact with relevant law-making government bodies with respect to migratory nomadic pastoralists and natural resources;
- ✓ Mutual trust between the local community and the government bodies;
- ✓ Potential to influence the process of the formation of national institutions and organizations concerning migratory nomadic pastoralists;
- ✓ To make the most of supportive national and international capacities in favour of expansion and replication of the project;
- ✓ The increasing social convergence and solidarity in parallel with the dissemination of the project and the implementation of wealth generating activities.

Annex Three

SWOT with the Council of Elders of Shish Bøyli Tribe

Strengths

- ✓ We have gained integration, unity and solidarity;
- ✓ Our programmes are more systematic now;
- ✓ We have hope for the future;
- ✓ We have practiced participatory and consultative methods;
- ✓ Sub-tribes have gotten to know more about each other's problems;
- ✓ We have become aware of our managerial status;
- ✓ Government officials acknowledge our contribution;
- ✓ We have come to know the relevant government bodies;
- ✓ Government authorities approve of our plans;
- ✓ Sub-tribes and clans have been recognized;
- ✓ The confederation has been recognized at the international level;.
- ✓ We are now members of WAMIP;
- ✓ We have not allowed our past achievements to be neglected;
- ✓ We have taken part in international conferences;
- ✓ We have been able to associate with other tribal communities of the country;
- ✓ There is now unity and integrity among sub-tribes;
- ✓ The conditions for collective and participatory collaborations have been prepared;
- ✓ The hidden values of ecosystems have been acknowledged;
- ✓ Natural resources, such as our wetland, are better utilized;
- ✓ We have been empowered to solve our own problems;
- ✓ We tend to accept participation and have attempted to institutionalize this concept;
- ✓ We have identified our strengths and weaknesses;
- ✓ We retained our ethnic cultural and tribal identity, such as the Turkish language;
- ✓ The sanduqs are now registered as a legal entity;
- ✓ We now understand the various legal and judicial issues;
- ✓ The sanduqs were extended to other tribes and sub-tribes;
- ✓ We have been able to submit proposals to implement development projects;
- ✓ Members of nomadic camps, clans and sub-tribes have gotten closer to each other;
- ✓ Our conflicts and disputes are now resolved by ourselves and our Elders;
- ✓ The traditional tribal structures have been revived and conserved while adapting themselves to modern conditions;
- ✓ The Elders have gained respect;
- ✓ The nomadic pastoralists have gained self-confidence;
- ✓ Other people now take the nomadic pastoralists seriously and rely on them;
- ✓ We have obtained communal solidarity against harassments and incursions by sedentary people;

- ✓ A social organization of confederations is now established;
- ✓ And especially, we now have recognized Elders.

Weaknesses

- ✓ There is no fixed place for holding gatherings;
- ✓ We need more in depth presentation of the different facets of the project;
- ✓ There is a need for helping CENESTA to know the complexities of tribal communities adequately;
- ✓ The project still needs to fit in perfectly with the community;
- ✓ People have not done away with their suspicions completely yet;
- ✓ The objectives of the wetland project and its funding mechanisms need to be better explained to the local communities;
- ✓ People have not received enough education on the community based and civil society organizations;
- ✓ Insufficient advocacy on the advantages of the project has caused certain problems;
- ✓ There is a need for a bulletin for internal circulation among the council members to encourage them to communicate with each other;
- ✓ We talk more than we act;
- ✓ The project does not have starting capital;
- ✓ Some members of the Councils of Elders do not participate in the meetings regularly;
- ✓ We must practice more self-reliance;
- ✓ We lack in well thought-out planning and pro-activeness to deal with related government bodies;
- ✓ We still have questions to CENESTA about the project;
- ✓ We need more adequate government support;
- ✓ We need more documentation from CENESTA to be able to introduce it more adequately to people in the community;
- ✓ We need to know more about the human resources and capacities of CENESTA in order to help it serve us optimally;
- ✓ Councils of Elders need more proposal writing skills;
- ✓ We do not always enforce properly the regulations approved by Councils of Elders;
- ✓ We need more information leaflets about the wetland project that we have initiated;
- ✓ We need more advance preparation for participation in conferences.

Opportunities

- ✓ Availability of unused funds in the Nomadic Cooperatives collected from membership fees;
- ✓ There is a potential for creating federations of Councils of Elders;
- ✓ Support available in FRWO for "rangeland projects";
- ✓ Potential access to energy resources, such as the Petroleum Refinery in the summering grounds;
- ✓ Support of ONPI;

- ✓ Availability of sufficient water resources;
- ✓ Possibility of establishment and expansion of *sanduqs*;
- ✓ Legal registration and recognition of Councils of Elders;
- ✓ Approval of appropriate plans by government bodies, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development;
- ✓ Visit of the President and his cabinet of Ministers to Fars Province and nomadic areas;
- ✓ Accessible rich natural resources in the region, such as rangelands;
- ✓ Potential for handicraft and processing plants among mobile nomadic communities;
- ✓ Support of the project by FRWO at the provincial level;
- ✓ Recognition of the Migratory Nomadic Pastoralists of Iran by international agencies;
- ✓ Existence of wetlands in summering grounds;
- ✓ Potential for breeding camels and ostriches in the region;
- ✓ Abundant opportunities for eco-tourism in nomadic rangelands;
- ✓ Accessible hunting-grounds and wildlife;

Threats

- ✓ Weakness in proposal writing;
- ✓ Current bureaucracy of Natural Resource (provincial office of FRWO) and Land Affairs Organisation;
- ✓ Lack of funds needed to implement development projects;
- ✓ Lack of required collateral for loan applications;
- ✓ Present differences and mistrust among the Kuhi sanduq members;
- ✓ Lack of support of the young nomadic generation to migration;
- ✓ Lack of funds in sanduqs;
- ✓ Possibility of dissolution of ONPI and its integration in another government organization;
- ✓ Ever-increasing devastation of nomadic rangelands;
- ✓ Invasion of nomadic rangelands by villagers under the support of the officials.

Annex Four

Summary of Workshops for the Shahsevan Confederation (May 2005 to August 2006)

Moghanlu, Təklə, Talish Mikail, Hüseyn-Hajilu, and Milli-Seyidlər, Kələsh and Qurtlar

Description	Participants	Date	Main Focus
First orientation workshop	Təklə tribe	June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the problems ➤ Discussing Council of Elders
Participatory workshop	Təklə tribe	July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Elaborating the Principles ➤ Electing the representatives of sub-tribes ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i> ➤ Following up the registration process of <i>sandug</i>
Participatory workshop	Toqaman-loo sub-tribe; relevant government bodies	December 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ Involving other sub-tribes of Moghan-loo Tribe
Participatory workshop	Gik-loo tribe	December 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ Identifying the supporting role of CENESTA ➤ Holding “Question and answer” sessions for the sub-tribes
Participatory workshop	Reza Bayg-loo sub-tribe	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the problems ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of sub-tribes ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i>
Participatory workshop	Toqaman-loo sub-tribe	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ Identifying problems regarding livelihoods, migration and rangelands

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of sub-tribes ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i>
Participatory workshop	Moghanlu tribe	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project for the sub-tribes of Goyjelər, Mammad Alu, Ebadollahlu, Muzuklar, Jalillu, Hadj Rezaqoli ➤ “Question and answer” sessions for the sub-tribes ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the problems ➤ Resolving conflicts between sub-tribes ➤ Discussing the Council of Elders and their objectives ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders for 15 subtribes ➤ Electing the representatives of <i>göbək bashis</i> ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i>
Participatory workshop	Bagharoli-loo sub-tribe; Dali-lar sub-tribe	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Resolving conflicts between two subtribes ➤ Identifying problems regarding livelihoods, migration, livestock and rangelands
Participatory workshop	over 300 people from Hadji Khaje-loo tribe; provincial authorities	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing the “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ “Question and answer” sessions for the local communities ➤ Documenting the workshop by making a video film
Participatory workshop	Jelodar-loo tribe; Hadj Aligholi-loo tribe	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project ➤ Preparing the ground for the local communities to establish Council of Elders and <i>sandug</i> ➤ “Question and answer” sessions ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of <i>göbək bashis</i> ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i> at sub-tribe level
Participatory workshop	Hazi-lar sub-tribe of Moghanlu	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic

	tribe		<p>Pastoralists”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Resolving a minor conflict between <i>göbək bashis</i> ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the problems ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandüq</i>
First women’s participatory workshop	the elderly women of Hadj Reza-gholi sub-tribe	April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project ➤ Identifying problems in 31 areas and prioritizing them ➤ Promoting the project and the way it values women’s role ➤ Promoting the income generation component of the project , such as handicraft production and pastry making by women
Participatory workshop	Talish Mikail, Milli-Seyidlər, Hüseyn-Hajilu, and Damirchie tribes; provincial authorities	April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describing “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ Holding “Question and answer” sessions for the local communities ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandüqs</i> ➤ Appointing a general physician by the chief executive of Hussein Hadji-loo Tribe, in coordination with the Parsabad District Governor’s office, to go to the wintering grounds of the tribe and check all the nomads
Participatory workshop	Bayg-lar sub-tribe of Moghanlu tribe	May 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the project ➤ Registration of the first Council of Elders of the Taklə tribe in Ardabil Province
Participatory workshop	representatives of 15 different sub-tribes of Moghanlu tribe	June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussing the “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists” ➤ Evaluating all the activities carried out up to date ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the

			<p>problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sanduoqs</i>
Participatory workshop	Təklə tribe	July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluating the impact of the registration of <i>sanduoq</i> on the activities of Council of Elders ➤ Discussing future prospects ➤ Repairing 30 kilometers of the road to the summering grounds of the tribe funded by <i>sanduoq</i> of Taklə tribe ➤ Conducting a statistics survey on the population of the tribe by <i>sanduoq</i> ➤ Justifying the rationale of the rangeland project in the Council of Elders meeting
First workshop with the Shahsevan confederation	representatives of <i>sanduoqs</i> of five tribes	July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussing the methodologies for implementation of income generating projects through the <i>sanduoq</i> of the Shahsevan confederation ➤ Exchanging views on ways to elaborate the Statutes ➤ Brainstorming on the “bone shaped” customary system of rangeland management (the traditional territories consisting of summering and wintering grounds and everything in between)
Second workshop with the Shahsevan confederation	representatives of four tribes	August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exchanging views on ways to elaborate the Statutes ➤ Proposing to raise funds for purchasing livestock feed concentrate from the sugar refinery ➤ Identifying a specific location for the <i>sanduoq</i> of the Shahsevan confederation
Third workshop with the Shahsevan confederation		August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussing the methods for reviving the social organization of the Shahsevan confederation ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders after deep discussions on each article
Participatory workshop	Kəlash tribe; Damirchie-loo tribe	August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussing about the “Sustainable Livelihoods Project for Nomadic Pastoralists”

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifying and prioritizing the problems ➤ Elaborating the Statutes of Council of Elders ➤ Electing the representatives of Council of Elders ➤ Establishing <i>sandugs</i> and electing their Board of Directors
Fourth workshop with the Shahsevan Confederation	representatives of six tribes out of seven; official representative of ONPI	August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Justifying the project in every respect ➤ Holding “Question and answer” sessions ➤ Drafting the final version of the Statutes for the Council of Elders of the Confederation ➤ Electing the Board of Directors of <i>sandug</i>

Annex Five

Some Success Stories in conflict resolution

Case One

There was a long conflict going between two clans of Ələmdarlu and Ərəb over some rangelands. The project team considered this difference a major obstacle for initiating the project and getting the Council of Elders established. Actually, the first workshop that was held in the *yurt* of Ələmdarlu clan was left unfinished due to the opposition of Arab clan and their decision not to attend it. The Elders of Ərəb clan did not wish to come to the meeting that was held in its rival territory. The second workshop was organized nearby the *yurt* of the Ərəbs. This time the Ələmdarlu nomads did not show up. The dispute went on until the Elders of Kuhi sub-tribe that had newly established a Council of Elders interfered and tried to mediate between the hostile groups. They decided to resort to the traditional ways of negotiation and encourage both parties to attend a joint workshop. The members of the Kuhi Council of Elders suggested a mutually respected location to the disputing clans. It was decided to hold the workshop in the summering grounds close to the Shrine of Zubeida Khatun— the tomb of a highly revered female saint. .

On the day of the opening session, the people of both clans began to gather in the appointed place. They were meeting each other for the first time after seven years. Obviously, they were all feeling tense. At the beginning, some harsh conversation took place but a peaceful atmosphere gradually prevailed as the Kuhi Elders called for cooperation. They asked the attendees to respect the holiness of the location and try to put an end to their enmity. The workshop started with orientation sessions and continued with problem identification and prioritisation activities. By the end of the day, the members of both clans had discussed their own understanding of problems and exchanged views on the priorities. It is noteworthy to add that the meeting went on so well that they decided to ask the leaders of both clans to stand for the candidacy for the positions of head and chief executive of the sub-tribe *sanduuq*.

In the following months, the conflict over the rangelands was resolved equitably with face to face negotiations between competing members of the clans, some of whom were cousins. At present, the leaders of both clans are members of the Shish Bəyli Tribe's Council of Elders.

CASE TWO

Nomadic pastoralists belonging to one of the *Obas* of the Kuhi Sub-tribe faced a recurrent problem on their return to their wintering grounds. The inhabitants of nearby villages usually cultivate the lands that are left behind by the nomads during summer. In this case, the nomads protested strongly and decided to set up their tents in the cultivated land. The head of the *Oba* decided to resist, but was beaten up brutally. The villagers threatened him to death if he did not leave the place. When his son tried to help him, the villagers attacked his tent. The young nomad killed one of the villagers in self-defense and ran away to take refuge in the surrounding mountains. The furious villagers asked for compensation through the traditional “blood for blood” retaliation. The people of other villages came to support their friends and relatives. On the other hand, the nomadic communities were also disconcerted and a catastrophic clash seemed inevitable.

At this point, the Elders and other members of the Kuhi Council intervened and started negotiating with both the police and the victim's relatives, in an effort to calm down the situation. At the same time, they contacted the fugitive and his family.

Negotiations continued for more than two months before all the related parties got ready to meet to resolve the problem. The members of the Kuhi Council did their best to reconcile the villagers and the nomads. They were trying to settle the hostility in traditional ways. In the next step, they met with the police force and based on mutual agreements, they encouraged the young nomad murderer to present himself to the police. In the Iranian judicial system, if the family of the victim does not ask for punishment, the murderer will only spend a short time in jail. After a while, the young nomad was set free. The members of the Kuhi Council were able to manage the conflict once again and gained the trust of both the rural and nomadic communities.