

The Turmi Morning Herald, Wednesday 2 February 2005

The first day someone asked: how can we hear everything? The purpose of this newspaper is to help share some stories, events, and other information from the Global Pastoralist Gathering with all the participants, and to encourage more discussion.

Learning through examples

Turmi hosted the first international pastoralist information bazaar today. Many interesting conversations took place. Although we could not listen everywhere, here are some samples of the details and ideas exchanged.

Mali's Pastoral Code

Building on conversations throughout the gathering, we learned about the complex and overlapping history of land systems in Mali. Following independence from the French, pastoralists were pushed aside in favour of agriculturalists. This continued for many years, and some pastoralists lost animals and access to land as agricultural practices increased (especially rice cropping). This situation for pastoralists was made worse by the conflicts between different systems of land use. Currently there are customary land rights, private land rights, and international agreements on trans-boundary migration that all govern how pastoralists use land.

Responding to pressure from local communities, ethnic groups, and international organisations, the legislative assembly passed a pastoral code in 2001. The representatives of Mali explained that although the code does not solve all the problems of the pastoralists, it is a very important step towards helping the marginalisation of the pastoralists in Mali. The positive parts of the code include: rehabilitation of migration routes which had been blocked through agriculture, the clear definition and protection of pastoralist zones, the right of animals to graze on agricultural land after the harvest, and a justice system to help resolve disputes between pastoralists and agriculturalists. The code was written in part by intermediaries for the pastoralists, and pastoralists also gave their opinions of it before it was passed. Now there are many further challenges to be faced before the code can be fully implemented, but the importance of the pastoralists in Mali has been recognised.



Drawing by Munkhjargal from Mongolia



A coincidence?

In a tight cluster this afternoon, Hamar elders and Daniel Singadeda of the Barabaig in Tanzania spoke of their histories. Although the Barabaig and the Hamar are now many miles apart, they shared stories of their ancestors and lifestyles in search of common ground.

They shared names of their forefathers, spoken first by the Hamar and then by Daniel. On hearing the 8th generation of the Barabaig forefathers, the group became excited to find a common name. Perhaps he was one of the Hamar who were expelled many years ago? They then shared stories of cattle marking and cutting the dulag on the cows.

The group excitedly searched for common ground and similarities between their cultures. Perhaps they have found it.

Rapid response to drought in Kenya

Dr Adan Bika, District Drought Officer from Kenya, opened shop beneath Tree 1. He spoke of the Kenyan system that has been developing since the mid 1980s. Combining traditional coping strategies with new mechanisms, they have developed an early warning system that continually monitors the situation that enables a rapid early response. Information is critical and comes from a number of sources such as weather, health and satellite images. Each month this information is compiled by the District Steering Group. If the incoming information indicates that a drought is on its way they have the authority to respond rapidly with pre-emptive measures such as overhauling borehole pumps. He also described how they are trying to strengthen traditional institutions that have been weakened over time and saw government departments as being complementary to these traditional structures. The Hamar people who were present commented that they didn't have a problem with water but with conflict. In response Dr Bika explained that conflict, drought and veterinary departments are merged in Kenya, enabling integrated thinking and actions.

At the same time **Musa Ngitieng** of the Turkana offered the Mursi advice about interboundary relationships. The Mursi are frequently short of grass and cross into neighbours territory to make use of grazing in a wildlife park. They then are unjustly blamed for the killing of game and starting fires. The Turkana responded by suggesting that they negotiate with their neighbours prior to moving to the grazing land, recognizing that the park is an important economic base. The Mursi saw this as a useful suggestion and resolved to try and negotiate in future. The group also discussed an example of a transborder organisation, the local peace network, which may also be a model to help facilitate conflict resolution and friendly interboundary relations in the future.



'The meaning of llama'
Drawing by Munkhjargal from Mongolia

Uniting pastoralists in Canada

Chief Ron Evans told us about how the indigenous people in Canada were able to unite and confront threats to their rights. In 1969, the Canadian government was preparing to take away the autonomy of indigenous people by abolishing the laws that protect indigenous rights. At the time, the indigenous people knew very little about how government policy works. However, because of the danger to their rights and autonomy, the indigenous people from across Canada decided to organise themselves. They formed local organisations based on their tribes, which chose regional representatives, who in turn chose national representatives that could speak to the Canadian national government. In this way, they were able to unite as one voice and they called themselves the First Nation.

One of the most crucial strategies that helped them come together in this way was the importance that the elders and the chiefs gave to education. Education helped increase people's awareness about the situation. As a result of their organisation, they were able to add the agreement on indigenous rights into the Canadian national constitution. They then began to submit land claims through the court system to help strengthen their rights in practice. Chief Ron says that 'everyone is protective of what's theirs and resistant to change, and it can take a long time to build consensus. The key to this is education and building awareness.'

Mobile education services in Iran

The main services discussed at this information shop were mobile education and veterinary services. Following on from discussions on Monday, the Iranians shared details about the success of their programs.

For primary school, mobile schools are held in tents and move with the pastoralists. The schools are completely closed for the migration, which usually lasts for 3 months each year and can mean travelling up to 1000kms. Primary school is free, and the teachers' salaries are paid by the government with no contribution from the community. The curriculum is the same in the mobile schools as in fixed schools, so that pastoralist children may have the opportunity to continue on to a secondary boarding school. In response to a question about the quality of schooling raised by a Kenyan, the Iranians responded that in some cases, the mobile schools may actually be of higher quality than the fixed schools, particularly in the villages, because the teachers are pastoralists themselves. The teachers train for 2 years in the cities and then return back to their families. Some of the problems facing the mobile schools are the fact that some students have to travel up to 3 kms to attend school, and that different families move at different times in the migration. This means that even when the school starts again after the migration, not all of the students will be attending.

The mobile veterinary services described were also interesting, as there is a system in place of creating 'para-vets' in Iran. This means that some pastoralists from each community are selected by the government to learn how to administer the drugs for the animals. They spend 6 months training in the cities and then return to their communities. The drugs are subsidized by the government, and the para-vets buy them to then sell in their communities, but do not sell them for a profit. Veterinary doctors then go to these areas to get the reports about the drug administration. The key issue to the success of both of these programmes is the involvement of pastoralists in the delivery of services.



Resolving conflict in India

A great deal of interest emerged from other groups on how India manages its forests and handles related conflicts. In their shop yesterday the Indians were offering more information:

In the state of Rajasthan different natural forest areas are managed through Khadu village and family systems that allocate to the different Gujjar villages access to pastoral land for grazing. On an informal basis, the pastoralists establish different agreements on reciprocal pastoral land usage. But as in other places, things go wrong and conflict emerges when there are no agreements set and when there is illegal land trespassing. As a response, the pastoralists have developed two mechanisms for resolving disputes in forest areas. The first is a formal intervention where the government, which owns the land, intervenes in case of a major escalation of a conflict. Local officials are sent and sit with the elders of the villages in dispute until the conflict is resolved.

The second mechanism is an informal one which is applied to local and smaller cases of disputes such as the illegal trespassing of animals from one village to another without a prior agreement. In such cases the animals can be taken by the village whose lands were entered to a kahnjihad (jail) which is a common designated area. When Gabriel Palmili from Argentina asked how the owner of the 'criminal' sheep can be sure that his/her animals are being well fed, **Dolat Ram Gujjar** explained that fees collected are used for the welfare of the animals. The confiscating village charges 3 rupees for every sheep taken and provides good feeding for the animals. **Dolat** explained: "after all it is not the animals' fault but their owners and they should not be the ones that suffer." He also clarified that there are a lot of other examples where the pastoralists themselves decide to use local conflict resolution management before asking the government to intervene. They have shown that internal decisions are faster and more efficient and if applied on time can prevent a conflict from escalating.

News In Brief

Summary of Day Four

Tuesday began with statements from representatives from government and international organisations. **Ato Abdul Khadir Risqe** from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke of how we all need to work together to move beyond the identification of problems, and affirmed the Government's commitment to mobilising resources to resolve problems. **Modibo Toure**, Head of the United Nations Country Team greeted participants in the many languages represented here. He said "you are most knowledgeable about your problems; solutions you put forward yesterday make a great deal of sense and we are going to work on these with, and for, you." Saying he was humbled by what he heard, he assured us that pastoralist concerns would be included in the 5 year Working Plan which is currently being drawn up. **Dr Belay Durza**, from Regional Government, commented on the complexities of development and called for investment and partnership. **John Graham** from USAID said that "those of us who have worked with pastoralists are committed to moving them from the margins to the centre of our thinking and our work." **Paul Ackroyd**, head of DfID Ethiopia, spoke of how they are working to incorporate traditional society into a modern state, where everyone can achieve their economic, social and human rights. Finally **Maryam Niamir-Fuller** from the World Initiative on Sustainable Pastoralism commented on the widely held misunderstandings of pastoralism by governments and agencies, and how they need to understand the value of pastoralism. Following these statements pastoralists raised important questions. Iran asked how we could be sure that these promises would be kept, given that they have not been kept in the past. The Kenyans asked why their livestock market disappeared when the British colonial administration ended, and asked that it be returned.

Women's meeting continues

The women met again yesterday to continue sharing stories about their lives and ideas for the future. Some of the **Mursi** women spoke about their culture and their experiences as women, and expressed gratitude to the organisers and participants of the global gathering for respecting their culture. In a moving exchange, **Angelica Tomasa Reales** shared stories of her women's cooperative in Argentina and showed examples of her artisan work. The group saw examples of clay pots, llama ornaments and wool products. The meeting concluded with photos and friendship, and **Bona Belenta** will speak on behalf of the group in today's plenary.

Processing camel milk

In a fascinating cross-cultural dialogue between **Canada, Iran, India, Mongolia and Somali from Kenya and Ethiopia**, ideas about milk processing were exchanged. Building on the Canadians use of cows' milk to make yoghurt, cheese, cream and butter, the Iranians described how they process their milk. They described how they make yoghurt, and then how they use that yoghurt to then make butter, butter milk, and other cooking ingredients. One of the by-products is dry, and can be kept for many years. Responding to a question about using this process with other milk as well as goats' and sheeps' milk, the Indians responded by saying that they use a similar process with both cow and buffalo milk. The Ethiopian Somalis then asked about the possibility of using a similar process with camel's milk.

This sparked an engaging conversation about the possibility of keeping the milk. Everyone listened to the description of the process used in India, where camel milk is boiled in a mud pot, cooled in a mud glass, and then drunk fresh. **Abdi Haji Yussuf** from Kenya then shared details of how he has seen camel milk preserved for up to 3 months. He described a process of adding sugar to the milk (at a ration of a cup of sugar for every 2 cups of milk), stirring the mixture while boiling it until it becomes thick, and then storing it in tins (with a lid). We also heard that the Mongolians also process camel milk as well as the hair from young camels to make wool. Everyone came away from the dialogue with some practical ideas to try for milk processing as well as an inspiring recognition of similarities between people and practices across the world.

This newsletter was prepared by Jane, Joanna, Lucy and Keren from IDS, UK.

