BULLETIN OF THE DRYLANDS: PEOPLE, POLICIES, PROGRAMMES

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Ensuring access to water resources

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Cover: Two women getting water at a well, Senegal. Photo: Danielle Baron, JHU/CCP.

Editorial

With all eyes focused on the war in Iraq it is easy to forget the many other major conflicts and problems affecting thousands of people's lives in Africa and elsewhere. Although the fighting appears to have stopped for the time being in Côte d'Ivoire, the underlying causes fuelling the troubles have still to be addressed. Zimbabwe, and the struggle by its people for democracy and decent living conditions, is another country that is waiting to explode if something is not done to curb the excesses of its rulers. The effects of the severe drought affecting much of eastern and southern Africa, though no longer in the international news despite some vigorous reporting earlier in the year, are multiplying further. None of these problems are new, none of them have gone away, and many have worsened while the world has been focused on events in Iraq.

Tackling conflict, social exclusion and poverty by getting ordinary people to participate in an informed manner in those decision-making processes which directly affect their lives is a theme which runs through this issue of Haramata*. In Senegal, Sonja Fagerberg-Diallo, in her interview, spells out how she and her team are designing tools in local languages so that local people, otherwise by-passed by the formal system, can assert their rights to access resources which are key to their survival. In Tanzania, we hear of a national NGO that has used innovative ways to ensure that the average citizen can understand and participate in the country's PRSP process. At a regional level, the CILSS have launched what has been billed the "Praia+9 process" to help national governments in West Africa design policies to ensure all people will have equitable access to the resources upon which they depend.*

These and other initiatives bring about incremental improvements to local peoples' lives. But the greater challenge is to harness them together to create a critical force for change that addresses the underlying root causes of injustice.

Famine looms over sub-Saharan Africa

While international attention focuses on the crisis in the Middle East, millions of Africans risk starvation as a result of a major drought that has hit several countries throughout the continent[1]. Ethiopia and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa, Mauritania in West Africa, and Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe in Southern Africa are the countries hit most badly. Appeals launched by the World Food Programme (WFP) have mobilised food aid, and relief programmes are being implemented across the continent by UN agencies, governments and NGOs. These efforts have managed to avert a humanitarian catastrophe, although response has been slow and well below the level required.

A prolonged drought is the immediate cause for the food crisis. The rainy seasons of 2001 and 2002 have failed, resulting in poor harvests of crucial staple foods like sorghum and maize. Scarce water has also affected herders through livestock loss, livestock distress sales and collapse in cattle prices.

However, the crisis cannot be blamed on natural hazards alone, and structural factors are at play. The countries affected are categorised among the poorest in the world by the Human Development Index. Many people straddle every day a thin line separating food security from hunger, without assets and reserves to fall back on in times of stress. In Southern African countries, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is claiming a shocking number of lives, especially among the more productive age groups, causing negative effects on food production and leaving children and the elderly without support[2].

Many man-made factors are also major causes for Africa's food insecurity. The list is sadly long, and includes: the lasting effects of war on agricultural production (due to landmines and mass displacement), as in the Horn of Africa; government mismanagement, corruption and appropriation of public resources including aid; peasants' lack of access to land, credit, training, extension and technology; cuts in state support to agricultural production; and inappropriate service provision to mobile groups like pastoralists. At the international level, trade barriers and subsidies for agricultural products in the West are a major constraint on agricultural production in developing countries, and foreign debt is sucking the resources of drought-prone countries. Last January, for instance, in the middle of the food crisis, a wave of public protest was necessary to prompt Nestlé to drop a six-million-dollar claim against the Ethiopian government based on the seizure of company assets by the military regime back in the 1970s[3]. All these and other factors affect both the production of food and the ability of vulnerable groups to buy it.

To solve the food crisis in a lasting manner, national and international efforts should not only meet urgent needs, but also address the deeper structural processes.

For updates on the food crisis, visit www.wfp.org/AfricaHungerAlert and http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf

1 See "Famine hits Horn and Southern Africa", *Haramata* No. 42.
2 The links between the food crisis and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have been rightly emphasised in the last few months. For instance, the two UN special envoys responsible for the two issues carried out a joint mission to Southern Africa, and WFPand UNAIDS recently signed an agreement to improve cooperation.
3 Charlotte Denny, "Nestlé u-turn on Ethiopia debt", The Guardian, 24th January 2003.

Praia+9

Nine years ago, a wide range of actors from Sahelian countries, including government, peasant associations, researchers and NGOs, met in Praia at a regional conference organised by the CILSS and the Club du Sahel. The conference produced policy recommendations on land tenure and decentralisation, calling for laws and policies based on equity and social justice. Specific recommendations included providing flexible legislative frameworks for local-level rules and institutions, promoting decentralised natural resource management, securing customary land rights and protecting the rights of marginalized groups.

Time has passed since the Praia conference, and it is now time to review what has been achieved and to identify new challenges concerning land tenure in the region. In order to do this, the CILSS has recently launched the "Praia+9" process[4]. While the first Praia conference focused on Sahelian countries, Praia+9 adopts a more regional approach, covering the whole of West Africa.

The new initiative involves two main components. The first one aims at reviewing progress made in the implementation of the recommendations adopted in Praia. This is to be done through national workshops in CILSS member states and through reviews of policy and legislation in other West African states. The second component aims at analysing key challenges for land policies in West Africa, and is organised in five thematic clusters (decentralisation, tenure security, equitable access to natural resources, regional integration and information/communication).

The process will culminate in a regional forum to be held in Nouakchott on 20-24 October 2003, bringing together governments, intergovernmental organisations, private sector, development agencies, research institutions, peasant associations and other civil society organisations. Besides working in plenary, the forum will include five thematic workshops, where the broad trends and the field-level experiences emerging from the thematic clusters will be presented and discussed. The forum will develop new policy orientations for equitable and secure access to natural resources and for sustainable natural resource management, which will be submitted to the next Summit of Heads of State and Government of the CILSS.

For more information on this initiative, contact praia+9@cilss.bf

4 See "Praia+9", *Haramata* No. 41.

The impact of the war in the Ivory Coast is felt in the landlocked Sahel

While the French-brokered ceasefire to halt the conflict in the Ivory Coast is starting to take effect, greater attention is being paid to the economic and other impacts that the war has had over the whole region, and particularly on landlocked Sahelian countries like Mali and Burkina Faso. Overall, this impact has been extremely negative, although with some differences in nature and degree.

A first type of impact flows from the disruption of a vital trade route linking landlocked countries to the coast. Goods to and from Mali and Burkina Faso used to transit mainly through the Ivory Coast, particularly the port of Abidjan. Goods are now mostly transported via Ghana, possibly benefiting the economy of this country but resulting in higher transport costs for all products imported and

exported by landlocked countries. Trade between landlocked countries and the Ivory Coast itself has also been damaged.

These effects on trade have direct implications for the economy of Sahelian countries. For instance, in Mali, a major increase in the cost of cement has put on halt many housing and other construction projects, resulting in unemployment. In agriculture, fertiliser supply has become less secure and more costly, and the costs of exporting cotton have increased. Import-led changes in prices have affected government revenues, as the Malian government has reduced certain taxes on imported products to contain the increase in consumer prices. Perverse effects on exports have also had in-country repercussions. For instance, farmers in Southern Mali have seen their incomes shrink as a result of the loss of Ivorian market outlets for vegetables, while consumers in now over-supplied alternative markets such as Bamako have benefited from lower prices for those products.

Another major type of effect concerns migration. For decades, thousands of migrants from landlocked Sahelian countries have moved to the Ivory Coast to work as farm labourers. This has benefited the Ivorian economy, by supplying cheap labour, and that of the countries of origin, mainly through remittances. Following the war, migration to the Ivory Coast is no longer an option. Moreover, large numbers of farm labourers have returned to their country of origin, especially Burkina Faso. Many of these these returnees no longer have any real links or contacts in their country of origin, as they may be second or even third generation migrants. The return of migrants has important economic effects. For a start, it means a major loss in remittances. Moreover, in Burkina Faso, depending on whether the returnees will decide to stay in the country, it may have important implications for access to land, as returnees will have to be accommodated on land resources that are already under pressure.

INTERVIEW

Sonja Fagerberg-Diallo is the director of Associates in Research & Education for Development (ARED), a Dakar-based training institution which develops and implements training modules for a variety of groups in West Africa. ARED works first in African languages – principally in the Pulaar language, and to a lesser extent in other African languages. Occasionally they translate from Pulaar to French so that a publication can be adapted by other local communities. In her interview with Haramata, Sonja shares her experience with ARED's latest challenge, the development of a training module on pastoralism for pastoralists.

How did the idea of developing a training module on pastoralism for pastoralists come about?

In West Africa, pastoralism is still surrounded by many negative and prejudicial attitudes. Although recent research has demonstrated the economic and environmental rationality of mobile pastoralist systems in "non-equilibrium" ecosystems such as the Sahel (with under 400 mm of rainfall per year), the conclusions of this research have not sufficiently reached policy-makers, development practitioners, nor civil society. And especially, it has not reached pastoralists themselves.

In order to disseminate this scientific knowledge, as well as integrating the viewpoint of pastoralists, Brigitte Thébaud, a leading expert on West African pastoralism, developed a very powerful training module with support from IIED and SOS Sahel. This module was initially for well-educated people working in development projects as well as in government agencies. Brigitte carried out roughly a dozen trainings across the Sahel from 1998-2000.

Starting in 2000, the challenge for ARED was to "institutionalise" this training, by developing, testing and publishing – in both French

and Pulaar– a written form of the training materials. This would allow the training to be replicated by community and NGO trainers who do not necessarily have a strong expertise in pastoralism. Furthermore, the contents of this training could then be accessed by a larger number of groups, including pastoralists themselves, whether literate or non-literate.

In 2000, "Making Decentralisation Work", an IIED project funded by DANIDAand SIDA, created the opportunity to carry out this work.

Why teach pastoralists about pastoralism? After all, they already have direct knowledge of how pastoral systems work…

They do indeed, and much of the content of this module is based on knowledge coming from pastoralists themselves. However, the objective of the training is to reinforce this "deep insider knowledge" which pastoralists already have about their own system, through internal analysis and additional information. With this, they should have a more solid and systematic understanding of their own lives and realities.

This understanding and knowledge should enable them better to articulate their own vision to others, and to participate on a more equal basis in the economic, social and governance decisions affecting their lives. We focus on education for empowerment, fighting against the current marginalisation that makes pastoralists ever more vulnerable to the risks they face daily.

What will be the structure of the training?

At the beginning of the process, we had no idea what form the trainings should take, how many books would be required, etc. What quickly became clear was that we have three distinct units within the total module.

The first unit is based on viewing pastoralism as a tightly structured, rational, and complex system made up of three interacting parts: the family, the herd, and the resource base (water and pasture specifically). Since the outside perception of pastoralism is often that it is irrational, the basis of this unit is to help herders themselves identify and articulate the principles which underlie their mode of operation. This is based on helping people analyse and put into order what they already know. But as they articulate and organise their own knowledge base, we also give them extensive scientific data which adds to their understanding of their own system – as well as to the arguments which they can use better to advocate for their positions.

The second unit places pastoralism in its larger institutional context. This includes questions about land tenure and forestry laws, decisions about land privatisation, projects to establish public sources of water, decisions to declassify formerly protected land for agricultural use, etc. These acts are part of the harsh larger realities of any individual herder. His or her individual decisions will be greatly modified by this broader context.

Finally, there is a third unit which allows a herder to put all of this knowledge to use in analysing the survival strategies of his or her individual family. The tool is known as a "family portrait", and uses PRA techniques to understand what makes the strategy of an individual family viable. While this type of research has long been used by outside experts, this is one of the first times that this tool has been developed in an African language, intended for use by the people involved.

What written materials will support the module?

Each of the three units will be accompanied by a training guide for community trainers. Each guide will be produced in both Pulaar and French. We are also producing several "accompanying" materials, such as a participants'book of the visual representations so that even non-literate participants have a visual record of what they discussed. We also are preparing a separate information book for trainers, providing background information on key technical issues addressed in the module (for example, how have researchers arrived at the concept of "carrying capacity" or "Tropical Livestock Unit").

What steps have been necessary to develop the training module?

Although the scientific content and various participatory tools had already been developed by the work of Brigitte with funding from IIED and SOS Sahel, we still had an enormous amount of work to do once these "raw materials" arrived at ARED.

Projects often underestimate the lengthy and complex process required to develop accurate, effective and locally appropriate training modules – especially in African languages for a newly literate audience. First, we had to develop a tool – the "family portrait" – which could help ARED trainers (and ultimately trainers anywhere) gain a better understanding of how pastoralist systems operate.

We then turned to developing the materials on pastoralism, based on the content of Brigitte's module, and to testing them with community groups directly in Senegal, Mali and Niger. Testing is a crucial element of the process. It may seem surprising that materials which had already been used by Brigitte Thébaud in over a dozen trainings would still require testing. In fact, adapting materials designed for "experts" on pastoralism for a broader civil society groups, including non-literate persons, requires adaptation in a large number of areas. This includes adapting the content, pedagogic approach, order of presentation, timing and duration, etc. It also entails resolving complex issues concerning the choice of words in a translation, introducing visuals and photos, preparing materials which were relevant and useable by both literate and non-literate participants, and testing the relevance of the materials in different Sahelian countries.

Based on the community-level testing, the original training was revised and corrected. It is the results of these numerous trainings and tests which will be finalised in written form this year and be published in 2004.

What next?

We have already started a process to adapt and test the materials in other local languages, particularly for Niger and for Mali. In so doing, we will work in partnership with pastoral associations such as the *Association pour la Redynamisation de l'Elevage au Niger* (AREN) in Niger, and with training institutions like the *Institut Rural pour l'Education Civique* (IREC) in Mali.

Thank you, and keep up with the good work!

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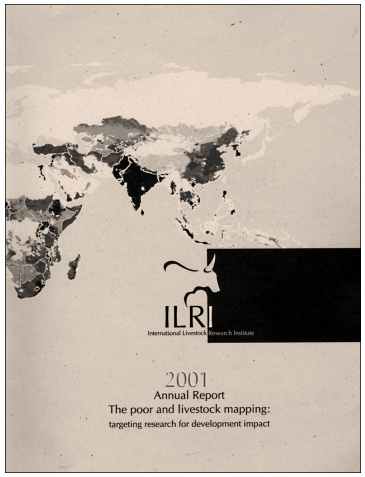
Mapping poverty and livestock in the developing world

ILRI have completed a global study to identify significant populations of poor livestock keepers in the world, and to make an assessment on how these groups are likely to change over the next 30–50 years. Using mapping techniques to integrate existing data on human and livestock population densities and their projected growth, and combining this with information on climatic variables and the likely effects of climate change, the study has produced a set of global maps that show where the major livestock related systems are found, and where the poorest populations are located in relation to these systems. In addition, these maps indicate how the situation is likely change over the next 30 to 50 years according to projected population growth and climate change.



The results of the study indicate that there are at least 550 million poor livestock keepers in the world, most of whom are concentrated in south Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Such absolute numbers, however, are not of great value for they mask great variations in poverty both within and between different systems. Furthermore the very concept of "poverty" is problematic given that it means different things for different peoples, and can vary quite considerably depending on what criteria are used to measure it.

Of potentially greater interest is the likely changes these people and their production systems are likely to face over the next 50 years. The analysis appears to indicate a number of major changes. First, the spatial distribution of human population growth, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, is quite startling. In terms of proportion of global population, East Asia is predicted to shrink, while levels will increase significantly in sub-Saharan Africa (20% of global population) and South Asia (about 33% of global population). Equally startling are the predicted changes in length of growing period for sub-Saharan Africa as a result of global average temperature rises in the 21st century. Major reductions in length of growing period (LGP) are predicted for areas of West Africa, southern Sudan, Uganda and some areas of Ethiopia, while some increases are anticipated in south-eastern Kenya, north-eastern Tanzania, southern Cameroon and other areas of Ethiopia. This is going to have severe impacts on local people's agricultural and livestock systems particularly in the face of rising population levels. Over the next half-century, West Africa is expected to shift from rangeland-based systems to mixed systems, while in East and Southern Africa mixed highland systems are likely to disappear.

The purpose of the study has been to help governments prioritise where they should be targeting their research and development efforts in order to have a greater impact on addressing world poverty. This study is a fist step in looking at this issue on a global scale and much still needs to be done to refine and improve the quality of the data. Key areas requiring improvement include modelling population migration patterns over the next 50 years in order to obtain more accurate projections of population densities. The categorisation of production systems is another parameter requiring further refinement to take account of such variables as

land-use intensity and soil fertility. A better understanding of the relationships between poverty and natural resource management is needed as are more detailed studies to quantify levels of poverty within and between different production systems.

The study report as well as all the maps can be viewed and down - loaded from the ILRI website (www.cgiar.org/ilri).

Popularising Tanzania's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) orchestrated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will be around for a few years yet. Some people see them as an innovative way of coordinating the activities of a wide range of stakeholders within a coherent, multi-sectoral, pro-poor framework. Others see them as business-as-usual Structural Adjustment Programmes with a thin coat of participatory paint. But, whatever your view, they include the rhetoric of participation which opens a crack that can be widened.

Tanzania's PRSP was produced very quickly to meet Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) conditionalities. It involved less than ideal levels of popular participation. But the PRSP is part of an avowedly living process and the new-born infant is maturing quickly. Many key stakeholders now see the need to 'disseminate' ideas not only from the top-down but also from the bottom-up and horizontally at various levels so as to feed pro-poor social movements which can mobilise the grass roots, mass organisations and other popular elements in society.

Poverty reduction measures have been intimately linked to decentralisation and local government reform. Ongoing consultations have regularly highlighted corruption as a potential brake on any such plans. It is thus clear to many stakeholders that there is a priority need for systems to promote openness and transparency. This means that much work will be needed on the process of 'popularising policy'.

A local civil society organisation (Hakikazi Catalyst) was supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to produce attractive, illustrated, plain language versions (English and Kiswahili) of the PRSP. These stayed largely true to the tone and spirit of the original and were published as supplements in local newspapers – 250,000 copies were printed and distributed around the country. Two million posters (in sets of six) were also produced and widely circulated (mainly on the trucks of a national maize meal miller and distributor). Social activists encouraged people to use the materials and discuss the implications of their contents (this sometimes involved community theatre).

That first attempt at popularising policy was innovative and somewhat ad hoc but it proved itself and is now fashionable well beyond the PRSP process. Other documents have been popularised in a similar way by different groupings of stakeholders. Through many ongoing actions and discussions, and one major workshop, more systematic approaches to 'popularisation'are developing based on a 4D Cycle Model (design, demystify, distribute, discuss). This is founded on the idea that people cannot participate if they do not know.

Following a more or less comprehensive system of consultation and research an official policy is **designed** by bureaucrats for politicians. These documents are generally thick and contain a lot of jargon and statistics. They are therefore **demystified** into plain lan-

guage and presented attractively (as text, cartoons, theatre, etc.) so that ordinary people can understand them and thus discuss the key concepts in an informed and meaningful way. But they will not be *widely* used unless they are effectively **distributed** – this process has to be well planned and funded. **Discussion** groups are formed so that the local implications can be worked out and action plans can be designed, implemented and monitored. Where appropriate, monitoring reports are used as **feedback** to the readily identifiable policy makers at the most appropriate level. In this way ordinary people help to design and monitor local and national policy.

The PRSP process has been part responsible for much enthusiastic 'churn'in development circles in Tanzania. It is difficult in such a dynamic situation, when so much is happening simultaneously, to point to any particular 'agent' of the change. There is a synergy between various departments of government, a range of development partners and some key, local, civil society organisations. A multi-stakeholder *Working Group* for *Dissemination, Sensitisation and Advocacy* has been established as one of the four pillars of the country's Poverty Monitoring Master Plan. Needless to say there are some minor problems due to the ideological foibles of territorial humanity, but it seems clear that the drive to inform and involve a wide range of stakeholders will continue for some time to come - even if the PRSP process falls out of favour.

Original and popularised versions of several key policy documents are now online along with reports on the emerging methodology for producing them – for links please visit www.hakikazi.org .

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Irrigated lands in Mali

While land tenure and rights in dryland Africa have been analysed by a very large number of studies, much less research has focused on a key issue – the management of irrigated lands. In West Africa, irrigated lands are relatively scarce and yet of vital importance for rural livelihoods and for the production of major food and cash crops like rice and cotton. Their management institutions are often specific to each irrigation system, and may significantly differ from the general model prevailing in the country.

Recent research from the Land Tenure Center helps bridge this knowledge gap by analysing the institutional arrangements for the management of irrigated lands in Mali. These are extremely diverse, reflecting the wide diversity of types of irrigated lands, which encompass state-operated irrigation schemes, flood retreat irrigation, "*bas-fonds*" (irrigated lowland areas) and village irrigation schemes. A major irrigation scheme for rice cultivation on the River Niger is managed by the *Office du Niger*, established in the 1930s and restructured in the 1990s. Under this scheme, land is allocated to farmers under lease and other arrangements. Development programmes creating irrigation systems have established institutions for the allocation of irrigated lands, usually building on village-level institutions. Flood retreat cultivation of sorghum and rice, using fertile lands seasonally covered by waters, may involve shared use of the same resource by farmers, herders and fishers, and a variety of customary institutions claiming management responsibilities.

Recent developments have raised new challenges for these diverse institutions. In some cases, demographic pressures have reduced the size of irrigated plots and fuelled tensions, leading to tenure insecurity. Discussions on privatisation of irrigated lands have created fears of expropriation among small farmers.

Legislation on decentralisation provides for local governments to be transferred part of state-owned lands as well as significant responsibilities for natural resource management. Although implementation of these norms is proceeding slowly, decentralisation raises important issues, particularly in relation to the articulation between newly established local governments and existing structures for the management of irrigated lands. Moreover, irrigation schemes may cover several municipalities and require arrangements to enable cooperation between them.

The Working Paper "Etude sur la problématique foncière dans les périmètres irrigués au Mali", by Bloch et al., can be downloaded from http://www.wisc.edu/ltc/wp50f.html

Research and policy for sustainable fisheries livelihoods

What is the contribution of research to improving the livelihoods of artisanal fishing communities? Ideally, improved livelihoods, but in the real world the links between research, policies and small-scale fishing communities are often very weak because research usually focuses on scientific and technological issues, rather than the equally important socio-economic aspects of fishing. Partnerships between research institutions and fishing communities are rare, and policies are not always in line with recommendations flowing from scientific evidence.

These are the issues addressed by a research project undertaken by FAO, which involved six country studies (Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria and Senegal) and a synthesis report. The project was implemented within the context of a broader FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SLFP), funded by DFID, to improve the livelihoods of artisanal fishing communities in twenty-five West African countries.

The studies found that fisheries research, despite low resource allocation, contributes to the livelihoods of artisanal fishing communities by generating knowledge and technology, by building capacity (sometimes compensating for the failures of extension services) and by informing policy. Nonetheless, there is much room for improvement. For instance, although the studies documented some partnerships between research and fishing communities, these remain very rare. Moreover, the ability of research to contribute to improving fisheries livelihoods is constrained by a wide range of factors, including cuts in government spending following structural adjustment.

Credit : K. Kourkoulotis/SFLP

The entrance of Mopti port. Mopti is a beehive of commercial activity where people from different communities come to sell their products and buy fisheries inputs and basic items.

The key recommendations flowing from the studies include promoting partnerships between research and communities through the provision of funds for pilot activities, and building capacity of research institutions in the areas of participatory approaches and communication.

To download the case studies and the final report, visit http://www.sflp.org/eng/003/ongoingact1.htm

Ensuring access to water resources

In recent years, water has featured high in international policy agendas and debates. The UN Millennium Declaration and the World Summit on Sustainable Development pledged to halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015, and a number of donors committed to support water supply programmes in developing countries. Last November, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights declared that the right to water is a basic human right recognised under international law. Moreover, the UN has designated 2003 the International Year of Freshwater, and a series of international water conferences have taken place (The Hague, 2000; Bonn, 2001; Kyoto, 2003). Water related objectives and actions are included in the NEPAD Policy Document, and an African Ministerial Conference on Water was established by African leaders in 2002.

These facts suggest that water is increasingly seen as a priority issue by the international development community. And so it should be. Water is vital for all aspects of life. Effective, equitable and sustainable water management and use are key to sustainable development. At the same time, freshwater is a scarce resource throughout the world and, even more so, in dryland areas. While generalisations should be avoided and concepts like water "scarcity" are difficult to measure[1], people in drylands have limited water in terms of both availability (due to few and erratic rains) and accessibility (due to physical and economic factors). In this context, demographic growth has often led to greater competition for water resources, chronic scarcity and recurrent droughts threaten food security, and water-related diseases caused by inadequate water and sanitation systems are responsible for large numbers of deaths.

Combining efficiency and equity in water provision

Views on how to address these problems diverge widely. Take the case of urban water supply for domestic consumption. On the one hand, many economists, governments and donors argue that cost recovery (i.e. water abstraction charges) is necessary to ensure efficient and sustainable water use, and that water service privatisation enables investments to be raised for water supply and increased efficiency of service provision. Internationally, water sector liberalisation is pushed forward by institutions like the World Bank and by WTO trade negotiations[2]. As a result, a number of states have restructured their water sector by introducing or raising water charges and by privatising urban water supply, and many more are under pressure to do so.

On the other hand, many civil society groups argue that, because of its vital function for human life, water cannot be considered on the basis of economic efficiency alone. Policy measures must also ensure equitable access to water for all social groups, including the poorest and most vulnerable ones. Far from achieving this, these critics argue, privatisation and cost recovery further deteriorate access to water for the poor, who are unable to pay higher water charges. Moreover, as water consumption is essential for human life, standardised charges disproportionately affect poorer households. Therefore, rather than ensuring effective and equitable access to water, privatisation serves the interests of the handful of transnational corporations dominating the water utility sector, taking advantage of the forced retreat of debt-burdened countries from water provision.

These debates are often heated and polarised, as shown by the ongoing discussions on water sector privatisation in Ghana (see back page). In this animated exchange of arguments, a newcomer is the rights-based approach. This stresses that access to water is not just a desirable aim for government policy, but a basic human right

recognised under international treaties and under some constitutions (notably in South Africa). This legal entitlement to water does not necessarily mean that states must provide water services. However, states must refrain from arbitrarily interfering with existing access to water, and must adopt a variety of measures (from regulation to provision) to progressively realise the right to water of every person.

Finally, the debate over urban water supply cannot be reduced to a dichotomy between state and the private sector. With decentralisation processes under way in a great number of countries, municipalities are increasingly playing an important role in water supply. In Mali, for instance, responsibilities for the supply of potable water have been transferred to *communes*. Moreover, in many countries NGOs and community-based organisations play a key role in water supply and sanitation (see the box on East Africa).

All is well that ends in wells?

As for rural areas, a key water issue concerns wells and boreholes, which are crucial for drinking, agriculture and pastoralism. In many places, water points have witnessed tensions and even violent clashes between different users. These clashes are often portrayed as conflicts between "farmers" and "herders" for increasingly scarce water resources. While this interpretation holds in many cases, reality is much more complex. For instance, recent research from dryland Kenya (Witsenburg and Roba, 2002) found that clashes were more frequent in years of water abundance than in dry years, and that clashes at well sites may be motivated by cattle raiding – as these sites allow raiders easily to surround and attack large concentrations of people and cattle – rather than by competition for water.

Given the vital importance of water points for rural livelihoods in dryland areas, governments and development agencies have made considerable efforts to improve the water infrastructure. In most

Drawers of water II: thirty years of change in domestic water use in East Africa

Despite a vast amount of studies on water use, very little is known about long-term trends as most studies are limited to one season or one year, and as the few studies examining changes over time tend to be limited in their geographic scope.

Interesting insights on long-term trends come from "Drawers of Water II", a research project run by IIED and other partners. Baseline data for the project are provided by a 1972 authoritative study (the first "Drawers of Water") that provided the first large-scale assessment of domestic water use in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. "Drawers of Water II" replicates the original research methodology in these countries to analyse trends and changes over the past three decades.

The project found increasing privatisation of water service delivery, although not necessarily in ways that fit easily with World Bank or IMF prescriptions: NGOs and community-based organisations, rather than profit-making companies, play an increasing role in service provision. Moreover, the links between voluntary sector on the one hand and state and donor financing on the other are becoming more, not less, important for service provision.

For more information on this project, see www.iied.org/agri/proj_dwu.html or contact John Thompson (John.Thompson@iied.org).

cases, this involved building free-access cement wells and other modern structures, with decisions taken on the basis of "technical" issues concerning water supply. On the other hand, not much attention has been paid to the important socio-economic and institutional implications that creating water points entails. For instance, water points and irrigation tend to boost land values, and may therefore exacerbate competition between different users. Moreover, in many pastoral societies access to grassland is determined by a blend of common-property and individual rights over the wells located in it. These water rights are therefore crucial to manage pastures sustainably, and endow pastoral communities with assets that can be negotiated to access distant resources in times of crisis. In some cases, government provision of open-access water points has weakened traditional systems for pasture management, deprived pastoralists of a valuable asset in negotiations with incoming herders and fostered conflict and land degradation.

In addition, rural and urban areas may have competing needs and demands over water resources. The privatisation of urban supply makes water a profitable commodity and may result in the diversion of common-property waters in rural areas to provide drinking water to urban markets. For instance, in India, a private contractor is building a pipeline diverting waters from the River Ganges in order to supply drinking water to Delhi; this is being resisted by local farmers, who rely on those waters for irrigation.

To secure the water rights of the rural poor, recognition of customary water right systems may be an important tool. Yet, very few countries have done so, with the longstanding exception of Indonesia (in relation to the traditional irrigation right system in Bali). However, recent legislation granting greater recognition of customary rights, such as Bolivia's Irrigation Law of 1998 and Mali's Pastoral Charter of 2001, provides encouraging signs.

Claiming the waters of international rivers

Competition over water resources also takes place at the international level. Indeed, a large number of river basins and lakes worldwide are shared by two or more states, and in mainland sub-Saharan Africa all countries share at least one of these. While international conflicts caused by water are rare, competition for water is a major factor leading to international tensions, especially in dryland areas. For example, access to the waters of the Jordan River basin is for many a key issue underlying the instability in the Middle East.

International instruments like the 1997 UN Watercourse Convention and regional agreements (in Africa, the recently revised SADC Protocol) affirm that riparian states must use international watercourses in a manner that is equitable and does not cause harm to other states. These broad principles are often complemented by treaties concerning a specific watercourse, as in the case of the Danube, the Rhine and many others.

In the dryland areas of Africa and the Middle East, however, few watercourse-specific agreements have been signed (for instance, those concerning the rivers Niger and Senegal), and many of them do not include all riparian states (for instance, Gambia is not a party to the Senegal River Convention). Inter-state tensions for water use are the frequent, and are mainly caused by large-scale water diversion projects and by the implications of rivers for international borders. In the best-case scenarios, these tensions are solved by negotiation or by international institutions like the International Court of Justice (for instance, the Chobe River dispute between Namibia and Botswana, solved by the Court in 1999; and the Niger River dispute between Niger and Benin, brought before the Court last year). Recently, a Water Charter was adopted for the River Senegal by the relevant regional institution (*Organisation pour la*

Mise en Valeur du fleuve Sénégal, OMVS), following bitter tensions between Senegal and Mauritania over use of the waters of the river[3].

Complex problems requiring complex solutions

Since the stakes are high, debates on water are often heated and polarised. Yet the issues raised by water are extremely complex, involving a wide range of uses and users at local, national and international level. The solutions to these problems are unlikely to be obvious and straightforward. For instance, while some policies may be "good" or "bad" for all, others may affect different actors differently. These distributive effects may take place not only between poor water users and large private service providers, but also in trickier circumstances, such as between urban and rural poor households. In relation to water charging, for instance, where scarce resources do not allow extending supply networks to rural areas, the laudable goal of ensuring free water supply for all may in practice result in providing urban households with subsidised piped water, leaving rural areas with worse-off surrogates. Moreover, as "Drawers of Waters" shows, the range of possible institutional solutions goes well beyond the dichotomy "state vs private sector", encompassing a continuum of different institutional options involving state agencies, municipal authorities, private companies and customary or other community-based systems.

These different institutional arrangements should be assessed on the basis of their capacity to ensure effective and equitable access to water, and to manage shared water resources equitably and sustainably at both local and international levels. This may require partnerships between public institutions, private sector and civil society that enable to build on the comparative advantage of each sector, with a view to fully realising the right to water of every person. Whether or not these partnerships will be established is ultimately a matter of political will.

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Witsenburg, Karen, and Roba, Adano Wario, 2002, *The Use and Management of Water Sources in Kenya's Drylands: Is There a Link between Scarcity and Violent Conflicts?*, paper presented at the seminar "Conflicts over land and water management in Africa", Copenhagen, 28-29 November.

Some useful links

Center for Economic and Social Rights:
http://www.cesr.org/PROGRAMS/water.htm
International Year of Freshwater 2003:
http://www.wateryear2003.org/
The Water Page: http://www.thewaterpage.com/
Wateraid: http://www.wateraid.org/
World Water Council: http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/
World Water Forum: http://www.worldwaterforum.org/

1 Although the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology has developed a "Water Poverty Index" (WPI) on the basis of five key components – resources, access, capacity, use and environment. For more information on this, see http://www.nwl.ac.uk/research/WPI/.

2 For instance, confidential documents recently leaked in the press revealed that water service liberalisation features high in the demands presented by the European Union for the new round of GATS negotiations; see http://www.gatswatch.org/requests-offers.html#outgoing.

3 In 2000, a Senegalese plan for an irrigation scheme caused an angry reaction from Mauritania, which threatened the expulsion of Senegalese nationals; the crisis was defused when Senegal abandoned the scheme.

Are there too many animals and people in Ngorongoro?

Yes, according to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA), the parastatal body set up to manage this Natural World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve, which is also home to some 50,000 Maasai pastoralists and hunter-gatherer groups. For many years the NCAA have been trying to evict the Maasai and hunter gatherer peoples who live in Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) on the grounds that their livestock herds destroy the environment, and their family farms are a blot on the landscape. Past efforts to ban cultivation, first imposed in 1975 but later over-turned in 1991, to limit livestock numbers and to relocate residents to areas adjacent to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area have taken on a new urgency in last two years.

The first signs of trouble came when the Prime Minister F.Sumaye, on a visit to Ngorongoro in September 2001, pronounced that subsistence cultivation would not be tolerated for much longer. Worried local people sent a delegation to the see the President, who reassured them that such a ban would only concern immigrants and not resident Maasai. However, over 2002 the situation deteriorated further, and culminated in October-November 2002 with the NCAA sending letters to councillors and village chairmen of NCAstating that all cultivation is illegal, and that all residents will have to relocate.

Why is this happening?

Although the reasons are probably the combination of a number of events, it does appear that the NCAA are also using recently acquired research results to justify actions they have wanted to take for a long time.

From 1997 to 2000, the GL-CRSP[1] research programme developed a model to assess interactions between livestock and wildlife in terms of their competition for forage and disease transmission between the species over time and space. Central to their work was the design of a computer modelling system called *Integrated Management and Assessment Systems* (IMAS), which combines different data sets from various sources (geographic information systems, remote sensing, field studies) to allow alternative policy and management strategies to be explored. In 2000, the NCAA asked researchers working on the GL-CRSP programme to answer a number of questions with respect to human and livestock carrying capacities of NCA, and the likely effects of cultivation and improved veterinary care on wildlife, livestock and people in the NCA. On the basis of their work using IMAS, the GL-CRSP programme in collaboration with Colorado State University and ILRI established a new project, funded by USAID, to answer these questions. The project was called POLEYC,[2] and it published its results in June 2002.

The results

The POLEYC project answered four key questions put to them by the NCAAto help the latter decide which policy options they should choose in order to balance the livelihood needs of the resident Maasai and their livestock, and wildlife conservation and tourism, without damaging the environment. The questions were:

How many animals may be supported in NCA? The research found that there is no fixed or absolute number, and that it all depends on the ratio between the number of livestock to the number of wildlife, the method used to measure carrying capacity and such variables as seasonal production of forage. The research did, however, show that

livestock populations have been relatively stable over the last 30 years, and that their actual levels do not pose a significant problem. The issue is more to do with the fact that while livestock numbers have remained relatively stable, human population levels have not, with the effect that there are now less animals per person than was the case 30 or 40 years ago. And, if livestock numbers per person were to rise to a level that would improve Maasai livelihoods and/or allow them to lead a pastoral lifestyle, the carrying capacity of the NCA would be exceeded. The implications of these findings are that pastoralism is not a viable long-term option for poverty reduction in the NCA, and that the Maasai residents should be encouraged to emigrate or to earn their living from other activities.

Credit: Gridyorg

Ngorongoro Crater

How much land is cultivated in the NCA, and what is its effect on wildlife, livestock and people? Interestingly, the project found that subsistence cultivation by resident Maasai is insignificant in the NCA covering just 3,967 ha (0.47%) of the NCA's total area of 828,800 ha. In recognition of the critical importance of cultivation to local livelihoods, it even suggested a five-fold increase in cultivable area to 50,000 ha would not have any significant impact on wildlife or livestock numbers. Why then is the NCAA so intent on banning cultivation, particularly as this would to some extent reduce local dependence on livestock and contribute to poverty alleviation?

What are the effects likely to be from improved veterinary care? The results of the modelling suggest that improved veterinary care, particularly in reducing mortality of young animals, would result in a significant increase in livestock numbers, which would eventually exceed carrying capacity unless marketing conditions enabled pastoralists to offload excess animals.

What is the magnitude of effects of human population growth? The results indicated that at current growth rates (3.5%) the population of Ngorongoro will double in 20 years. Since increasing the cultivated area or by building up livestock holding are precluded, the study suggests increased wage labour from outside, a greater share of the proceeds from tourism, more intensive livestock production or more food aid are the only possible options left to resident Maasai to improve their livelihoods.

But can modelling provide the answers?

The overall tone of the study suggests that in order to preserve wildlife and the ecosystem, and by extension the tourist industry that the wildlife supports, the Maasai have to give up their pastoral way of life. And this, at least in part, is being used by the NCAAto justify

their proposals for the ban on cultivation and the mass evictions of residents.

But are these scenarios necessarily true? Has all relevant data been fed into the computer modelling exercises? There are technical and conceptual limitations, clearly acknowledged by the study, in trying to model the complexities of opportunistic management strategies used by local communities in response to environmental incertitude. Did the composition of the research team, which consisted almost exclusively of natural scientists, limit in any way the ability of the research to capture the social and political dynamics of multiple resource use, characteristic of the NCA?

A major problem, acknowledged by the study, was the fact that the research agenda was exclusively set by the NCAA with no involvement of the local community. The role played by local people was limited to acting as translators, and passive providers and recipients of information. Given this situation, were the questions used in the simulation process purely of a "technical nature" or were they in any way politically motivated and biased in favour of conservation? These are legitimate questions now being asked by the residents of Ngorongoro.

If the Maasai had been consulted, what questions would they have asked? [3]

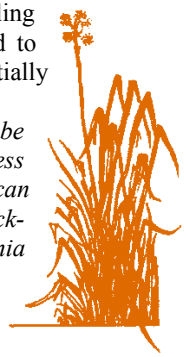
Difficult to know, although PINGOs Forum in Tanzania have identified a number of key questions, which they believe the Maasai would have asked:

- What are the effects of uncontrolled wildlife populations, and especially the wildebeest, on livestock and people living in NCA?
- What are the possible effects of restricting wildlife access in the Pastoral Development Zone?
- What are the effects of eliminating malignant catarrhal fever so as to give livestock more secure access to the short plains where the wildebeest calve?
- What would be the impact on local livelihoods if resident Maasai benefited from greater levels of the profits made by the tourist sector?

Computer generated modelling is potentially of great value, and has a legitimate role to play in helping policy makers weigh up their options with respect to resource management in the NCA. But it is no more than a tool, and like all tools it can be used properly for the common good, or it can be abused for private gain.

Any second phase work by the POLEYC project has to consider how best to involve local people in setting the research agenda so that a more balanced approach to the future management of the NCA can be established. Failing to do this runs the risk of research being used to justify, in the name of science, what are essentially political objectives.

A copy of the POLEYC project report can be downloaded from the internet at this address http://glcrsp.ucdavis.edu. Alternatively you can write to them at this address: Global Livestock-CRSP, University of California, Davis, California 95616, USA.



1 Global Livestock Collaborative Research Support programme, University of California. Go to http://glcrsp.ucdavis.edu for a detailed presentation of the programme.
2 Policy Options for Livestock-based Livelihoods and Ecosystems Conservation.
3 As identified by PINGOs Forum.

Managing conflict in rural drylands

In much of rural drylands, local-level conflict is a major problem affecting the livelihoods of the rural poor. Defined very broadly, "conflict" includes a wide range of situations – from disagreement to armed confrontation – where competing interests and claims have caused or threatened a breakdown in ordinary or even peaceful coexistence. Competition for scarce natural resources, cattle theft and crop damage caused by the passage of herds are among the most common causes. Where livelihoods crucially depend on these resources, disputes may escalate into violent clashes, and reports of deaths in these cases are not unusual. Effective institutions to prevent and solve disputes are therefore essential for peaceful coexistence and development.

But how to go about it? Under a strictly legal approach, disputes are to be brought before courts and settled by them. However, in many developing countries judges are largely inaccessible to the rural poor, both geographically (as courts are usually located in towns) and economically (due to fees for courts and/or lawyers). Language barriers may also exist, as the rural poor often do not speak the official language used in courts. Finally, limited resources may constrain the ability of the judiciary to respond to demands for conflict management. For all these reasons, some legal systems require that an attempt is made to conciliate a dispute through local conflict management institutions before submitting it to courts.

More generally, a wide range of informal local institutions are *de facto* involved in conflict management, including customary chiefs, administrative authorities, mayors and religious leaders. These diverse institutions apply different rules, such as customary and statutory law (a phenomenon referred to as "legal pluralism"). In some cases, community-based institutions are hybrids of tradition and modernity. An example is provided in the district of Nioro du Sahel, in Mali, where local communities established "peace committees" after tensions between different groups escalated into violent clashes; the committees include customary authorities like village chiefs as well as statutory institutions such as mayors.

The problem with these informal institutions is that their decisions have no legal value and hence are not binding. Moreover, some groups (typically women and pastoralists) may be under-represented in them. Problems may also arise where there is no effective coordination between different authorities. Indeed, several institutions may intervene in the same dispute, sometimes competing for patronage, cash or prestige, and even solve it in inconsistent ways. Similarly, litigants may submit the same dispute to different authorities in the hope of obtaining a more favourable solution (with an eloquent metaphor, some have tagged this practice as "institutional shopping").

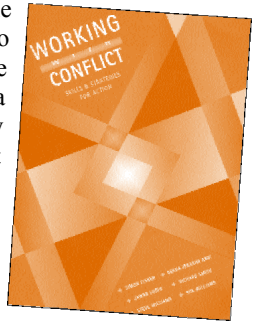
However, on balance, the existence of such a wealth of community-based conflict management institutions is an invaluable resource. Indeed, these institutions may compensate for the shortcomings of the formal justice system. While judges apply a legal system which is often unresponsive to local needs and tradition, customary institutions may be perceived as more legitimate by the community and may be more easily accessed by community members, especially in rural areas. Moreover, judgements tend to allocate rights and duties, identifying a "winner" (the right-holder) and a "loser" (the duty-bearer). Traditional institutions, on the other hand, are more likely to work for "win-win" solutions through mediation and conciliation.

Achieving these "win-win" solutions takes considerable skills to

analyse conflict and develop effective ways to tackle it. Indeed, it requires a solid understanding not only of the stated causes and positions of the litigants, but also of the deeper interests and needs that are at stake. It implies the ability to identify and meaningfully involve all the parties affected by the dispute. It also entails an understanding of some basic legal or para-legal concepts. Finally, it requires the capacity to devise arrangements that may be acceptable to parties with sometimes radically conflicting interests.

The challenge is therefore to clarify roles and responsibilities and to build local capacity to manage conflict effectively and equitably. In this regard, a variety of interesting initiatives have recently taken place. Here are but a few examples:

- ARED (Associates in Research and Education for Development), based in Senegal, developed a training module in alternative dispute resolution, both in French and in a local language, Pulaar. The training includes a variety of participatory tools to enable effective and equitable conflict management. It has been implemented in a variety of contexts in West Africa, and is currently being adapted in other local languages[1].
- A regional seminar organised by the Life & Peace Institute was held in Addis Ababa in October 2002 to discuss the role of religions and of religious institutions in conflict management. The seminar had a particular focus on the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region. It discussed issues like building on common spiritual grounds to overcome the difficulties of cooperating among religious leaders of different denominations and faiths[2].
- A set of tools and processes for the participatory diagnostic and management of conflict in relation to natural resources was tested in some villages of Northern Benin. The process involves carrying out a participatory problem analysis and establishing a forum to bring together all parties concerned, with a view to enabling dialogue and negotiation. The tools and processes are now available to the public through a recent publication by the *Institut National des Recherches Agricoles du Benin*[3].
- "Working with Conflict", a valuable source book published by Responding to Conflict three years ago, is now available in French. Responding to Conflict is a leading international non-profit agency providing advice, training and support for conflict management. The book provides a range of practical tools, techniques and ideas for analysing and tackling conflict, drawing on the work of practitioners and facilitators from all over the world[4].



Paying for decentralisation

Possibly the biggest challenge facing the decentralisation process in many parts of Africa is of a financial nature. How in practice are local government bodies to meet the expectations of their constituents and pay for all the services that they are now expected to deliver?

This is an issue that the Club du Sahel is addressing within the context of their work on local economies in West Africa, the

1 For more information, e-mail ared@enda.sn
2 The report of the seminar is available in New Routes, Vol. 7, No. 4, 2002 (www.life-peace.org).
3 Valérien Agossou and Bertus Wennink, "Approches de prevention des conflits entre agriculteurs et éleveurs", January 2003. For more information, contact: Inrabg4@bow.intnet.bj
4 Simon Fisher et al, "Cheminer avec le conflit: compétences et stratégies pour l'action". For more information, e-mail enquiries@respond.org or to purchase a copy e-mail orders@earthprint.com

ECOLOC programme. Over the last three years, this programme has developed methods for producing a relatively accurate analysis of local economies in West Africa. The next step in the process is to examine how in practice local economies can finance local development within the context of decentralisation, and in particular whether or not local economies are capable of financing investment opportunities at the local level.

The problem is that every ECOLOC study has shown that there is a huge gap between the "fiscal potential" of the regions'mid-sized cities (e.g. Sikasso in Mali) and the amount of money that is actually raised through local taxation. Part of the problem is that most citizens distrust the public authorities and have got used to expecting everything from them, and so are extremely unwilling to pay their taxes. But this isn't the only problem highlighted by the studies. Even if all the potential taxes were raised they would still fall short of what is needed to stimulate new local investment while also financing the maintenance of existing investments and infrastructure. So where is the balance of funds to come from? Public expenditure could play a determining role in stimulating local investment, but this is unlikely in the current context of limited State resources and their withdrawal from the public sector. Donors could contribute but their restricted, and diminishing, resources fall well short of the scale of these needs.

There is a need for a new way of addressing the problem, and the Club de Sahel think they have got it. Their ***Financing Decentralisation and Local Development*** programme in West Africa is designing a series of tools to raise local resources (through taxes and other means) that is appropriate for African local authorities and their populations in the current context of rapidly growing urban centres, a large informal business sector, strong and mutually beneficial urban-rural links, and a population that is highly distrustful of public authority.

The work builds on the results of the ECOLOC studies and in collaboration with local development partners the programme is defining new ways of raising resources that go beyond the narrow and artificial framework of "modern" taxation and budget management systems. The Club recognises that the new system must be easy to apply, present a clear connection between income and expenditure, identify levels and frameworks of management that are closer to the stakeholders or better suited to the services to be provided, develop subsidiarity, and allow other forms of contribution to urban growth than taxation or money.

For more information contact: Sahel and West Africa Club, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France. Tel: (33) 1 45 24 89 87. Email: sahel.contact@oecd.org

Pathways for Environmental Action in Kenya (PEAK)

DFID-Kenya is to fund a new programme – *Pathways for Environmental Action in Kenya (PEAK)* – on improving environmental governance in Kenya. PEAK will help to strengthen community understanding of their rights and responsibilities under new environment legislation, and increase the macro-economic benefits and livelihood opportunities resulting from sustainable management of environmental resources. It will seek to enable state institutions and processes to respond more effectively to the needs of the poor through dialogue. The programme will work primarily through the civil society organisations and the private sector to help local communities and economic operators realise the economic gains to be made from sound environmental management. For more information on PEAK contact Martin Leach at m-leach@dfid.gov.uk

***Partners in Africa – What Sort of Aid for What Sort of Development?*, Berne, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, May 2002**

Since the 1990s, a considerable amount of research and debate has been devoted to assessing and rethinking development aid. With shrinking development aid budgets, much thought has been devoted to the effectiveness of aid, and research from the World Bank has spurred a lively debate on this issue. Old certainties – like the so-called "Washington consensus" – have been questioned, and new "themes" – such as good governance and decentralisation – have appeared in development programmes and policies. Greater emphasis has been placed on the development of a vibrant private sector and on the attraction of foreign investment. Issues like aid fundibility, aid conditionality and selectivity, and the changing role of NGOs have also constituted the object of research and discussion.

This book contributes to this debate through a collection of papers addressing the key issues outlined above. The book itself is structured as a debate, as each paper is followed by a short note by a commentator, and as the last chapter is a panel discussion on the World Bank study "Aid and Reform in Africa". The diversity of the contributors, encompassing development researchers and practitioners, as well as policy-makers and researchers from the South, offers a wealth of views and perspectives on the issues discussed.

Written in a clear and accessible style, and raising interesting and thought-provoking issues, this book constitutes a good reading for researchers and practitioners, and more generally for all those interested in the debate on aid and development.

To obtain copies, contact: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Eigerstrasse 73, CH – 3003 Bern, Switzerland. Email: info@deza.admin.ch

***Securing Land Rights in Africa*, Tor A. Benjaminsen and Christian Lund (Eds), London, Frank Cass, 2003**

What type of rules and institutions should African countries put in place to provide security for land rights? This is the common theme underlying the studies from East, West and Southern Africa that this book brings together. Overall, the picture emerging from the studies is complex and fluid. The effectiveness of state policies and laws in increasing tenure security is often constrained by inadequate capacity and resources to implement them. On the other hand, a variety of processes are under way at local level, which secure access to land by other means. For instance, a study from Tanzania shows how peasants draw on different norms and arrangements, both statutory and customary, to shape complex institutional blends suited to their needs. A study from West Africa analyses processes of "informal formalisation", whereby farmers record land transactions on documents, often with the assistance of witnesses and with the validation of the authorities. Other studies included in the collection show that, in areas with increasing land scarcity, customary land tenure systems are undergoing spontaneous individualisation processes, and that land markets may develop in spite of legal prohibitions.

Where does this leave practitioners and policy-makers? For a start, it is too simplistic

to resort to a single, universal approach (like the land titling panacea), and local-level processes and practices for tenure security need to be taken into greater account by policies and laws. How to do so in practice is still open for debate. The challenge ahead is avoid falling in the pitfall of complete relativism ("it all depends") and trying to identify systematic processes and trends underlying different phenomena. The materials collected in this book provide important elements for this reflection.

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Innovation in Natural Resource Management: The Role of Property Rights and Collective Action in Developing Countries. **Ruth Meinzen-Dick, Anna Knox, Frank Place and Brent Swallow (eds), Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2002**

This book brings together papers by experts in social science and natural resource management to investigate the relations between institutional arrangements, particularly property rights and collective action, and the adoption of agricultural technology. The first part of the book provides useful methodological insights, including a conceptual framework considering both "direct" and "indirect" relations between institutions and technology adoption, and a discussion of some key issues arising in empirical work on this topic (such as defining concepts, collecting data and interpreting findings). The second part of the volume presents original empirical evidence exploring the issue in a variety of contexts in the developing world. Overall, rather than a clear-cut causal relationship between formal land titles and technology adoption, these case studies show complex and bi-directional interactions between institutions and technology adoption.

The main lesson emerging from the book is that while strengthening and securing appropriate institutional arrangements is likely to increase the probability of technology adoption, the tools and approaches to do so are much more complex than often estimated. Merely focusing on legislation, on a single form of property and on land titling is likely to be simplistic and insufficient. Other issues need to be considered, particularly the involvement of resource users in the process of institutional change, the strengthening of local organisational capacity, and the transfer of clearer resource rights from states to communities.

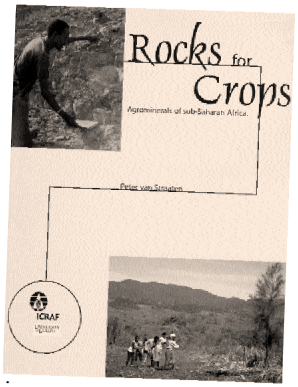
Available from The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218-4363, USA. Fax: (410) 516-6998 (Book Orders) Website: www.press.jhu.edu Email: mdonatelli@mail.press.jhu.edu

US$60.00 (hardcover) ISBN: 0-8018-7142-5. US $29.95 (paperback) ISBN: 0-8018-7143-3

Rocks for Crops: Agrominerals of Sub-Saharan Africa**, Peter van Straaten, ICRAF, Nairobi, 2002**

In most of Africa, rural communities depend on natural resources for their living, and protecting these resources from degradation is key to sustaining their livelihoods. Given the physical and economic inaccessi-

bility of chemical fertilisers, farmers usually replenish soil fertility using local organic resources (like manure and plant materials), which generally have low nutrient contents. "Rocks for Crops" explores the contribution of minerals as low-cost, locally available inputs to maintain soil fertility. Indeed, some minerals occur naturally in concentrations and forms that can be directly used as fertilisers, while others may constitute effective nutrient sources for soils and crops after some process of physical, chemical or bioogical transformation.



The book is structured in two parts. The first part lays the theoretical foundations for agrogeology, the emerging transdisciplinary science broadly defined as "geology in the service of agriculture". The second part is an inventory of agromineral resources in sub-Saharan Africa, organised in alphabetically ordered country profiles.

For ordering information, contact World Agroforestry Centre, (ICRAF), United Nations Avenue, Gigiri, PO Box 30677, 00100 GPO, Nairobi, Kenya. Email: icraf@cgiar.org or pvanstra@lrs.uoguelph.ca

***Gender and Law: Women's Rights in Agriculture*, Lorenzo Cotula, FAO, Rome, Legislative Study No. 76, 2002**

Throughout the world, women constitute a large portion of the agricultural labour force, and play a crucial role in ensuring household food security. However, they often face obstacles in access to land, employment, credit, training and extension services. These obstacles may stem from discriminatory norms or from socio-cultural practices, and negatively affect not only women themselves, but also their family members, especially in female-headed households.

This study analyses women's rights relating to agriculture, including natural resource rights, labour rights, status in rural cooperatives and access to credit. It briefly reviews relevant international instruments and major trends at national level, and focuses on the legislation and case law of ten countries chosen from different geographical, socio-economic and legal environments. Attention is also paid to customary norms and socio-cultural practices, and to the interaction between these and national and international norms.

The study documents a variety of examples of gender discrimination in both law and practice, and suggests two levels of action: legal reform and implementation. The first one may be necessary to eliminate discrimination from the legal system and ensure gender equality. The second one is also crucial, as in many countries women's rights stated in legislation are not applied due to entrenched cultural practices, lack of legal awareness, inadequate resources and limited access to enforcement institutions. Moreover, while legal change often follows and reflects social change, women's rights legislation attempts to promote social change, which makes implementation more difficult and slow. The two levels of action are strictly interlinked, as implementation partly depends on the extent to which legal reforms take into account the existing social structure rather than "importing" legislative models from abroad.

Available in English only at US$22.00 from FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy. Fax: +39 06 5705 3360. Email: publications-sales@fao.org. Website http://www.fao.org/icatalog/inter-e.htm

RESOURCES

AU-IBAR Policy Briefing Papers

The Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR) is a specialist technical body of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) with the mandate to promote livestock development in Africa. They have recently launched a **Policy Briefing Paper** series which provide short and easy-to-read introductions to some of the key policy issues affecting the livestock sector in Africa. Each briefing paper provides an overview of an issue and where further information and more detailed analysis can be found.

To receive the series contact: The Director, OAU/IBAR, PO Box 30786, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: +254 2 334550, Fax: +254 2 332046

Austrian Journal of Development Studies

The Austrian Journal of Development Studies (AJDS) is a leading Austrian journal in development studies. Its main objective is to offer a forum for a broad critical discussion of development theory and policy to an Austrian and international readership. This includes debating current concepts such as civil society or the role of institutions in development co-operation. Contents of the journal range from micro-social studies of gender relations or local empowerment strategies to macro-social research on issues such as migration or regional integration as well as focus analyses of certain countries or regions. Recent themes include land reform in Africa (January 2003) and water – public good or mechandise (April 2003). Contributions are published in the German and English language.

To subscribe and/or contribute to future issues visit http://www.univie.ac.at/int-entwicklung/jep/e-index.htm or write to Austrian Journal for Development Studies, Währingerstrasse 17/104, A-1090 Vienna, Austria.Subscriptions: 1 issue: Euro 8.80; 4 issues: Euro 24.80

Land tenure collection

The University of Wisconsin Library System's Land Tenure Collection includes documents on land tenure, agrarian reform and agrarian structure in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Former Soviet Republics, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Oceania. In addition, the collection includes extensive information on the subjects of agricultural economics and rural development for these regions. All of the documents are listed in the campus on-line catalogue at http://www.wisc.edu/ltc/library.html

The Land Tenure Center maintains an extensive programme of exchanges of publications with research institutions and other organizations around the world. Publications are supplied free of charge in exchange for relevant documents for the LTC library collection.

Bibliographies of new books and recent articles which have been added to the collection are distributed automatically via email to subscribers to the TENURE electronic discussion list which provides a forum for the dissemination and discussion of information on rights in, access to, and use of land and other natural resources; sustainable development, poverty, and income distribution; related laws and institutions.

For more information visit http://www.wisc.edu/ltc/acq-list.html or contact Beverly R. Phillips, Coordinator, 1357 University Avenue, Room 210, Madison, WI 53715, USA. Phone: +1 608 262-1240 Fax: +1 608 262-2141

Africa Environment Outlook: past, present and future perspectives

The **Africa Environment Outlook** report provides a wide-ranging analysis of the current state of the environment on the continent, the major trends underway and the effects of environmental change on the ability of local people to meet their basic requirements. The report also outlines a set of scenarios likely to have major impacts on Africa's peoples and their environment, and presents an agenda of action to respond to these challenges in order to improve the quality of life of ordinary African people while also ensuring the good management of the environment.

Copies of the report may be download at http://www.unep.org/aeo/ or purchased (English and French versions) at www.earthprint.com

In support of rural decentralisation in Mali

Rural decentralisation has become a reality in Mali following the 1999 elections and over 700 communes are now in place. The appointment of the mayor and councillors has been the start of a complex and long term process of institutional transformation, which is not free of conflict and which has led to a reworking of relations between citizens, local government and the administration. This process towards more democratic, accountable and transparent governance is new for all actors involved, who are mostly learning by doing. The Malian government has set up technical support structures for the rural communes, such as the *Centre de Conseil Communal* (CCC) that assist rural councils with planning and finding their way through legislation and procedures. Rural councils can also call upon decentralised government agencies, NGOs and private sector firms for assistance.

Equally important is the need to enhance the capacity of the mayors and councillors to consult with the local population before taking decisions, to report back on what has been decided and to delegate management as necessary. The CCC is expected to strengthen such capacities at commune level. To support the CCC, as well as other key actors, the Centre Djoliba (Mali) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT, Netherlands) have developed a guide and toolbox on decentralisation. Centre Djoliba has also organised a meeting between all mayors from the Sikasso region in Mali-sud and two citizens for each commune where the population was given the opportunity to question the mayor who had to reply in public. This so-called *espace d'interpellation democra - tique* was broadcasted on rural radios.

For more information, please contact Augustin Cissé, Centre Djoliba, BP 298, Bamako, Mali; Tel.: +223-222 83 32; Fax.: +223- 222 4650; E-mail: djoliba@malinet.ml or thea.hilhorst@iied.org

Dialogue on Democratic Decentralisation

Ddialogue is an electronic discussion forum and network of people committed to:

- Increasing the exchange of information on decentralization between local and central level peers, within and across sectors,

within participating countries, and across regions of Africa.

- Strengthening local government effectiveness, particularly in the area of public finance, local revenue generation, and public-private partnerships.
- Increasing local engagement in decentralization policy development.

Dialogue on Democratic Decentralization

For more information visit http://www.ddialogueen.org/

Call for articles

Access to and control over resources

Around the world, many different systems and arrangements determine who has access to and control over land and other natural resources, and under what conditions. The way these systems work, in law and in practice, is one of the main determining factors in the livelihood security of small farmers.

Systems of access and control range from formal to informal, from traditional to very new, from collective to private. Arrangements change and evolve over time, in most cases moving towards increasing privatisation and formalisation. Resources regulated by these systems include not only land but also resources such as trees, water, grazing and manure. Water users associations, joint forest management, tree pattas, pastoralists using agricultural land for grazing, private land deeds, communal use of land, share cropping etc., are just some examples of mechanisms that communities and societies develop to regulate their resource use. How do these systems work, and why? The next issue of LEISA will try to bring into focus some of the practical aspects of different systems for access and control. We invite you to share your experiences. ***Deadline for contributions is 1st June, 2003.***

You are invited to contribute to this issue with articles (about 800, 1600 or 2400 words + 2-3 illustrations and references), suggest possible authors, and send us information about publications, training courses, meetings and websites. Editorial support is provided by ILEIA. Authors of published articles are entitled to a standard fee of USD $75.

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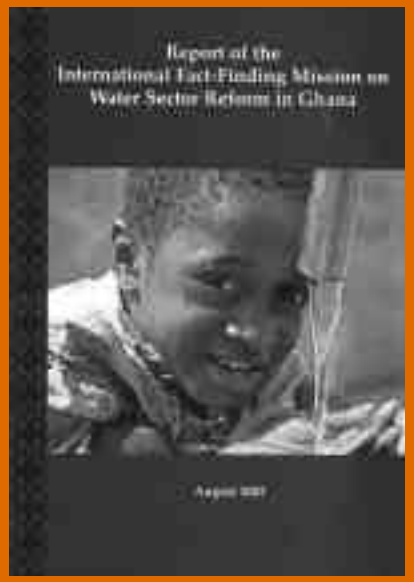
The privatisation of urban water supply in Ghana

In Ghana, the government and the World Bank are pushing forward a reform to privatise urban water supply. The proposed scheme is centred on the lease of urban water systems, currently run by a public body, to private companies, which would be required to invest in them. Moreover, as a result of conditions attached to IMF and World Bank loans, water tariffs have been dramatically increased. A wide range of civil society actors, organised in the National Coalition Against the Privatisation of Water, oppose the privatisation plan on grounds of equity and social justice.



In this context, Ghanaian civil society organisations invited an international delegation of experts – the "International Fact-Finding Mission on Water Sector Reform in Ghana" – to study the proposed privatisation scheme. The report issued by the Mission is extremely critical of the scheme on several grounds, including: cost recovery, without any specific plan to protect low-income water users, would reduce the affordability of access to piped water; proposed investment priorities make the expansion of the water supply system to the 78% of the urban poor without access to piped water very unlikely; private companies would be responsible for water supply but not for sanitation; although private operators would be required to make an investment contribution, a substantial portion of the financing burden would remain with the government; the large majority of citizens and civil society organisations have not been involved in the decision-making process and are unaware of the proposed reform; and possible alternatives to privatisation (such as restructuring the public body) were never considered by policy makers.

A final decision on the proposed privatisation is due soon.