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HIV/Aids in West Africa

pages 12 -16



IN THIS ISSUE

No. 44 September 2003

	NEWS	3
	Talks at the WTO ministerial conference in Cancun collapse • Praia+9 moves to Bamako • Africités 3 • Local agreements: A tool for managing natural resources	
	INTERVIEW	5
	Mr Saliou Sarr, ROPPA	
	RESEARCH AGENDAS	7
	Moving on with the land policy research agenda? • Land appropriation in the Algerian steppe • Pastoralist population dynamics: plus ça change...	
	FEATURE	12
	HIV/AIDS in West Africa	
	LAND MATTERS	17
	Land, wildlife, and pastoralists: new aspects to enduring conflicts in Tanzania • Trial of strength over the Dolly ranch in Senegal	
	ISSUES AND PROGRAMMES	20
	Pastoral development in Sudan • Women and conflict: A case from North Kordofan State, Sudan	
	BOOKS 23 • RESOURCES 25	

Editorial

The horizons of people living in drylands have been, customarily, as wide as their landscape. Mobility in response to opportunities and constraints has been their most powerful asset.

Transhumance and nomadism have traced a network of pathways on the maps of drylands. Along these, and along the routes created by marriages and migrations, by travel, flight, commerce and pilgrimage, resources have flowed and been exchanged to meet needs and make investments. Boundaries of language, ethnicity and occupation have been fluid, relative and interpenetrating.

This issue reports news from different fronts as the rules of the mobility game, and the cards dryland people have to play, are put under pressure and reformulated.

The warning to West Africa spelled out in the feature on HIV/AIDS is of an inescapable challenge: the need to arm people to protect themselves everywhere in this region, where high mobility is a fact of life. Elsewhere the struggle to develop societies and economies is demanding new assets and competencies. What is needed is political know-how in networking and advocacy, and education, information and knowledge, to claim an active role in legal reform processes.

The implications and questions are about who takes the leading parts in this new version of the mobility game. News from Sudan, hesitantly emerging from isolation, shows how much there is potentially to learn across dry Africa; and points to the new proactive role which will have to be occupied by women. Too often the story is still one of governments and donors failing to engage their policies with real everyday constraints. Shrinking horizons and new poverty traps are on offer to dryland people unless they are better equipped to present and defend their dynamism in the face of drought and the threat of poverty.

Duncan Fulton

Cover: World Aids Day march, Dakar, Senegal, 2001. The national AIDS Control Director led the march with community leaders.
Photo: Sara A. Holtz. Courtesy of Photoshare, a service of The Info Project.

Talks at the WTO ministerial conference in Cancun collapse



The 5th WTO Ministerial Conference dramatically collapsed after a failure to come to any agreement on rules to govern world trade. The Conference was held in Cancún, Mexico from 10 to 14 September 2003 with the main task of taking stock of progress in negotiations and other work under the Doha Development Agenda. These negotiations are about getting agreements between countries on the use of subsidies, tariffs and other rules that affect importing and exporting goods and services. Two years ago in Doha, in the Gulf state of Qatar, members of the WTO resolved to turn their attention to the needs of the organisation's poorer countries, and launched a so-called 'development round' of trade talks. But since the Qatar meeting, the chasm between the promises made in Doha and their delivery at the WTO's headquarters in Geneva has widened until it is almost unbridgeable.

Some of the most contentious areas of the draft text produced for Cancun related to how far developing countries would be allowed to protect their own markets. The governments of developing countries were demanding that the WTO guarantee their rights to help farmers facing impossible competition from cheap imports, while rich countries were demanding that developing countries throw open their borders in return for any reduction of agricultural subsidies.

Negotiations broke down when developing countries walked out after feeling that the whole process had been impossibly skewed against them. A powerful bloc of developing countries known as the G22 including India, China and Brazil, emerged as a force to be reckoned with. A special initiative had been developed by four West African countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali – asking for

cuts in subsidies to cotton farmers in the medium term and compensation for the collapse in world prices in the immediate term. Fully justified requests in the face of America's continued use of subsidies exceeding US\$3 billion a year to support its 25,000 cotton farmers. A practice that depresses prices and wrecks the global market. However, its subsequent dismissal was central to the collapse and in the end it was Botswana that led the walkout. Despite the Ministerial Meeting's abrupt ending, the outcome is not a negative one. Developing countries refused to be pushed into a corner and have proven they are a force to be reckoned with at the WTO negotiating table.

For more information visit: <http://www.wto.org/> This report is based on information from War on Want, Christian Aid and ActionAid.



Praia+9 moves to Bamako

Our readers will already be aware of the 'Praia+9' Forum on Land Tenure and Sustainable Development in West Africa, convened by the CILSS. The Forum will follow on the 1994 Praia Conference on Land Tenure and Decentralisation, and will develop new policy orientations for equitable and secure access to land and for sustainable natural resource management. These policy recommendations will be submitted to the next Summit of Heads of State and Government of the CILSS, scheduled for December 2003. Over the past few months, activities have taken place in a number of West African countries, particularly in the Sahel, in order to assess the extent to which the recommendations adopted in 1994 have been put into practice. Moreover, meetings involving a wide range of partners have taken place in Europe and in West Africa in order to prepare the Forum.



Originally scheduled for Nouakchott,

20-24 October 2003, the Forum has been moved to Bamako, Mali, and will take place from 17-21 November 2003. A good opportunity to enjoy the renowned hospitality of our Malian friends!

For more information on Praia+9, visit the official website of the Forum at <http://www.cilssnet.org/prai9>



Africités 3

The Africités 3 Summit will take place in Yaoundé, Cameroon from 2-6 December 2003. The objective of this summit is to discuss decentralisation in the provision of public services as a tool to improve standards of living and increase participation.

Africités 1, held in Abidjan in 1998, saw the emergence of the African municipal movement onto the international and regional institutional scene. This first summit sought to establish African dialogue on the challenges of decentralisation, local development, regional integration and cooperation.

Africités 2, held in Windhoek in 2000, marked the start of a more structured African municipal movement and pan-African dialogue on decentralisation and local development. United around the strategic challenge of funding local government structures, the 1,200 participants agreed to establish an African conference on decentralisation and local development (Conférence Africaine de la décentralisation et du développement local, CADDEL) in order to highlight decentralisation as a political priority for Africa. Participants also decided to institutionalise the Africités summits as a forum for dialogue between locally elected leaders and the State as well as among other important actors in the development and implementation of policy for decentralisation in Africa.

If you would like more information on this year's summit please contact: *Partenariat pour le Développement Municipal, Sommet*

Africités 2003, 01 BP 3445 – Cotonou, République du Bénin. Telephone: (229) 30 05 60 or (229) 30 42 42. Fax : (229) 30 19 76. Email: pdm@pdm-net.org or africités@pdm-net.org

Local agreements: A tool for managing natural resources

A Sub Regional Conference

From December 2 to 5, 2003 IIED will be convening in Bamako, Mali a sub regional conference on local agreements for natural resource management. The conference will bring together policy makers and practitioners from francophone West Africa to examine together the challenges faced by local communities which have established agreements to manage their resources and to look at ways that government policies can support these initiatives.

This will be a chance for people from across the region to look at case studies, exchange learning and experience and improve our knowledge and understanding of these local agreements for natural resource management. The conference will also provide a forum in which to evaluate the importance of these agreements within the context of decentralisation. The transfer of power from central government to local authorities provides an opportunity for local communities to gain recognition of their right to manage the resources they rely on but what are the implications for good governance? Does local control automatically mean that all people who need the resources have access to it? What is the role of government in supporting these local arrangements and making sure they are equitable? It is these questions and more that workshop participants will be considering during the conference.

For further information please contact Mansour Tall (smtall@sentoo.sn) or Su Fei Tan (sufei.tan@iied.org) at IIED.

Interview with Mr Saliou Sarr, Coordinator of ROPPA in Senegal

H *What is ROPPA?*

ROPPA is the *Réseau des organisations paysannes et des producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*, a West African network of rural organisations and agricultural producers, covering ten countries, eight from the UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union), plus Gambia and Guinea.

We provide an interface between West African rural producer organisations and West African state structures and development actors, and also with farmer organisations in other parts of the world – Europe, Asia, Latin America, and East and Central Africa. We supply a forum for communication and coordination, and for the defence of the interests of agriculture in its widest sense: forestry, livestock, and other rural activities included. We put particular emphasis on the importance of the family farm and argue for its central place in African agricultural policy.

ROPPA holds a convention every six months. The head office is in Ouagadougou. It is directed by an executive committee of 10 members, including two female members.



The logo for ROPPA, consisting of the word "ROPPA" in a bold, serif font, enclosed in a rectangular border.

H *Can you explain further ROPPA's thinking on the importance of the family farm ?*

The family has a central place in African society; in the rural areas it is the foundation of activity. The unit of agricultural production is built on the family base, and of course this family farm does not only carry out agricultural activities, but also trading and craft production for example, which bring income into the family business. It follows that the family enterprise is vital not only for food security and mobilising labour, but also for the long term management of the natural resource base. Insufficient income, perhaps because of a lack of productive land, can lead to out migration and the dissolution of the family unit, so there is a concern about the availability of credit for investment, about rural infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water supply etc.

H *What is the added value of the existence of a network?*

One can identify added value at different levels. Firstly at the national level, where the network creates opportunities for exchanges of experience and information and even of products between producers, for example in the case of markets for the different qualities of rice favoured by consumers in Senegal and Ivory Coast.

The existence of ROPPA has allowed organisations in different countries to learn from the experiences of others: for example the Senegal experience of holding regular meetings for consultation and feedback on all agricultural programmes between the National Council of Rural Solidarity (CNCA, a member organisation of ROPPA), and the Government (President, Prime Minister, Ministers

INTERVIEW

with responsibility for the rural sector). In this way the CNCA has been informed and involved in initiatives from the start and has even been invited to implement certain programmes, such as the PSSA (the Special Food Security Programme) of the FAO. Through ROPPA other members have got to know about this process and have had advice and support to start similar initiatives in involving and empowering producer organisations in their countries.

At the regional level ROPPA has been able to add value through engagement in the debate on adoption of a common agricultural policy by the UEMOA. UEMOA took into account farmer's points of view gathered through workshops which it financed and which were organised by ROPPA during the design process of the common agricultural policy. A meeting was also organised by ROPPA at UEMOA headquarters, and the network took part in discussions on the final policy document.

At the international level the value lies in links with other international networks such as the COPA (the coordinating body of professional agricultural organisations in the European Union), and the CPE (farmers coordination in Europe); in fact it was thanks to ROPPA that these two organisations met round a table for the first time! The occasion was an important meeting in Brussels about market access, where European and African producers met each other to discuss issues of subsidies to family farms and the marketing of agricultural produce. The importance was that for once these issues were not being debated by others without the presence of the farmers themselves.

For more information, contact: ROPPA, C/O CNCR, Boulevard de L'Est X Rue 2 - Point E, Dakar, Sénégal.

Tel: (00221) 8255665 / 8243851 Fax: (00221) 8245771 / 8244851

Email: info@roppa-ao.org Website: <http://www.roppa-ao.org>

ROPPA brings together national representatives of West African farmer organisations and agricultural producers. The legal structures of these organisations are based on democratic principles and at the national level they reflect the diversity characteristic of rural society and of the agricultural sector. They are able to effect real change at the grassroots level.



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Moving on with the land policy research agenda?

Where is the research agenda on land policy going? Many of the debates of the past decade are likely to continue. But with new land laws in place in many countries, it may be time to think less about what land legislation should look like, and more about how recently enacted laws are working in practice.

Enter the World Bank

Last June, the World Bank launched its Policy Research Report on land policy (PRR), the Bank's first comprehensive pronouncement on the issue since its 1975 Land Reform Policy Paper. The PRR draws on a remarkably vast body of evidence, and comes out of a worldwide consultation process¹. Knowledge and ideas, as well as their policy implications, have moved on considerably since 1975.

The Bank argues that land tenure security may be increased by a variety of tools, including legal recognition of customary rights. It goes beyond the one-size-fits-all titling programmes advocated by the 1975 paper. As in many other cases, the World Bank seems to have been able to capitalise on extensive research carried out by a variety of actors over the last decade, and to produce a document that simply cannot be ignored by future research, both because of the quality of the document and because of the financial might of the institution behind it. In some cases previously controversial ideas seem to have become generally accepted, and the research frontier may move on to new issues.

Recognising customary land rights: from whether to how?

The Bank and others argued for long that customary rights were

unable to provide adequate tenure security. Now the Bank advocates legal recognition of customary rights. "In customary systems," the PRR argues, "legal recognition of existing rights and institutions, subject to minimum conditions, is generally more effective than premature attempts at establishing formalised structures". Today, probably few would question this statement. But if customary land rights are to be recognised, *how* to go about it in practice? Customary systems are often complex, with overlapping rights over the same resource held by different users (herders and farmers, men and women, parents and children, etc.); some groups may be discriminated against under customary law (typically women), and formalising customary rights may advantage some groups and disadvantage others (e.g. migrants vs. autochthones).



Formalisation risks loss of flexibility, which is one of the strengths of customary systems. In all these areas, research will be needed to help devise mechanisms for recognising customary rights while ensuring both equity and tenure security.

Exploring new lands

A range of "new" land topics is starting to emerge around the world. An example is the relationship between land and conflict, which was discussed at a seminar organised by the OECD last June². Land is a major source of conflict in rural societies around the world. In armed conflicts, land relations are often both an important factor leading to conflict and a key issue to be addressed for post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction. Competition over land is indicated as an important factor in the escalation of violence in Rwanda and

¹ To read more on the World Bank PRR, see box.

² "Land, Conflict and Development: What Role for Donors?", OECD-USAID informal experts' seminar, Paris, 19th and 20th June 2003.

Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction: A World Bank Policy Research Report

Land is a key asset for poor people in rural and urban areas so it is important that the policies and laws that regulate land enable them to have fair access to and control over this important resource. But the research and understanding that exists on land policy is often not available to policy makers and other key stakeholders. To address this, the World Bank's new policy research report: *Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction* aims to support the development of better land policies by setting out the results of recent research in a way that is accessible to a wide audience of policymakers, nongovernmental organisations, academics, donor agencies and the development community in general.

The report builds on insights gained from regional workshops held in Uganda, Mexico, Cambodia and Hungary throughout 2002. Its main message rests on three principles:

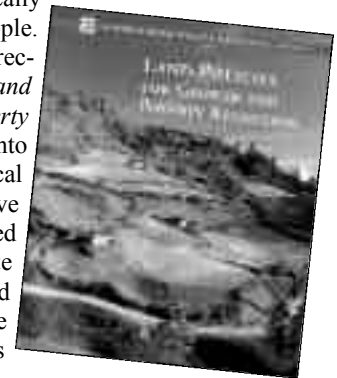
1. Providing secure tenure to land can improve the welfare of the poor, in particular by securing assets for those whose rights are often neglected, such as women.
2. Policies must facilitate the exchange and distribution of land at low cost, either through market channels or other mechanisms so that farmers who have skill and knowledge are not blocked by a lack of access to land to become productive.
3. Governments should promote and contribute to making land

accessible to poor people and making sure that land use in general contributes towards broader development goals.

The last public pronouncement by the World Bank on land issues was the *Land Reform Policy Paper* in 1975 which concentrated on formal title to land and the technical aspects of agricultural productivity with little mention of the importance of land rights. Since then it is widely recognised that the previous focus on formal land tenure was not appropriate and policies must take into account the various informal and customary ways in which people secure their access to land. Land reform can be an important investment in a country's future but careful consideration has to be made of the ways that policies affect different groups to ensure that reform really does provide benefits to poor people.

The general principles and recommendations contained in *Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction* need to be translated into the realities and contexts of local people and this will require active dialogue and debate. It is hoped that the report will contribute toward the development of land policies that will help increase growth in a way that benefits poor people.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the following page: http://econ.worldbank.org/prr/land_policy/



Côte d'Ivoire, and a better understanding of the dynamics of land relations may prove crucial for reconstruction efforts in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq.³ Such dynamics may include issues like administrative chaos and widespread tenure insecurity, conflicting land claims associated with refugees and returnees, landmines preventing productive land use, etc.

Other previously neglected areas receiving greater attention include the interface between land tenure and water rights, and the link between access to land and remittances from international migration. In the drylands where water resources are scarce, land and water rights are closely interrelated: in pastoral systems, control over water points is key for access to surrounding lands and pastures; in farming areas, irrigation may boost land values and foster conflict, and may result in the dispossession of the use rights of certain groups. Similarly, remittances from migrants constitute a major source of revenue for many countries, often comparable to their share of international development aid, and directly reach the pockets of African households; how is this money used, and what impact does it have on access to land? IIED, FAO and others are currently setting up research programmes to bridge the knowledge gap in these areas⁴.

The politics of land: anybody interested?

Finally, some key research areas seem to be still ignored. Land policy is an inherently political issue. It has important implications for distribution of wealth, and vital interests are at stake. Yet the political dynamics of land tenure and of land policy formulation

³ On Afghanistan, see for instance Liz Alden Wily, 2003, "Land Rights in Crisis: Restoring Tenure Security in Afghanistan", distributed at the OECD Workshop in June 2003.

⁴ For information on IIED's research work on these issues, contact Lorenzo Cotula at lorenzo.cotula@iied.org.

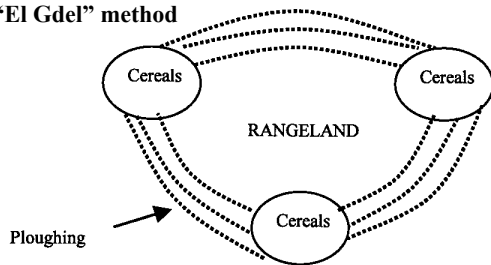
have been very little investigated so far. Research findings and ensuing recommendations are usually submitted to decision-makers with the naïve assumption that "benevolent" policy-makers will put them into practice. But this is not always the case. Even if there was perfect knowledge, and perfect dissemination of knowledge, reforms aimed at bringing about efficient, sustainable and equitable land tenure systems might still not happen due to resistance or to imbalances in the negotiating power of different stakeholders. Better understanding of how these dynamics operate will be crucial to bridge the gap between research results and policy decisions. Is anybody interested in taking up such a challenge?

Land appropriation in the Algerian steppe: a strategy called "El Gdel"

In the Algerian steppe, the traditional pastoral system involved a biannual transhumance according to climatic conditions which allowed herds to maintain themselves and pastures to regenerate. From the early 1970s, however, pastoral practice started undergoing some changes due mainly to population pressure in the area, causing an even more severe degradation of natural resources. The current levels of poverty, which differ depending on the social class, stem from a range of social, economic and natural changes.

The strategies developed by pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to deal with such recent changes have been the focus of a study conducted by Riad Bensouiah in 1996 (updated in 2000) in the Djebel Amour Mountains, in the Saharan Atlas (about 300 km south of Alger). The study listed all types of farms in the six communes of the study area, classifying them by various criteria (the commune they belong to, useable agricultural area, number of tractors, etc.) and

The “El Gdel” method



selecting a representative sample of farms.

Based on the joint analysis of the classification and the dynamics of changes in working conditions and in the steppe, the actual degradation of the natural environment has been linked to three major causes: natural resources are not used appropriately (pastoral nomadism has gradually been replaced by sedentarisation and increasing livestock, thus leading to overgrazing of rangelands that legally constitute common lands); pastoralists and farmers are not acquainted with new techniques; and resources (livestock, land) are not equitably shared between the different social classes.

Agriculture has been expanding as a result of increasing sedentarisation, providing the poor with a secondary source of income while being used by the rich as a land appropriation strategy. Such a strategy relies on a customary law that forbids crossing ploughed land and has given rise to “El Gdel”, a method consisting in setting the boundaries of a plot by linking at least three cereal plots by tillage (see figure). Similar methods are also used in other areas (with a different name), for example in Morocco where the tents of family members are used instead of cereal plots.

While it is normally illegal to plough rangelands, it has become common practice away from the main roads. Given their high social

status and their level of agricultural equipment enabling them to plough the land, richer farmers and pastoralists have therefore managed to get hold of the largest areas of rangelands to the detriment of those deprived of such equipment. Thus, the exclusion of the poorer has been further accentuated by “El Gdel”.

For more information, please contact: Riad Bensouiah, Consultant, 76 Rue Saint Priest, Bât. M., 34090 Montpellier, France, Tel: +33-(0)4 99 23 10 17 or +33-(0)6 82 63 53 30 (mobile), Email: bensouia@hotmail.com.

Pastoralist population dynamics: plus ça change...

In the African drylands population change is often seen as a key issue influencing changing land and resource use, and generating conflict. Demographic indices such as infant mortality rate are also frequently used as indicators of well-being. Given this, it is surprising how little is actually known about the demography of African pastoralists, especially nomadic pastoralists.

In the last two decades the principal source of data on African population has been the DHS (Demography and Health Surveys) which use standardised questionnaires and nationally representative samples to provide a huge wealth of data on fertility, mortality, contraception use and a range of health issues.

A closer look at the sampling strategies shows that the claims for nationally representative samples are very misleading when pastoral populations are being considered. In Mali, the 1987 and 1996 DHS only took small urban samples in the dry northern regions of Gao, Tombouctou and Kidal; and in 2001 all nomadic clusters were excluded from sampling. In Kenya, sparsely populated areas in the north – Garissa, Mandera, Wajir, Isiola, Marsabit, Turkana and

Samburu districts – were not sampled. In Mauritania the aim was to sample 6500 women, all living in the sedentary milieu, and in Ethiopia 2000 the national sample excluded some zones and all nomadic people in Afar and Somali regions. It is likely that other DHS also deliberately or inadvertently excluded mobile groups from the sampling frame.

A recent study of Tuareg in North-West Mali contributes to knowledge about the contemporary demography of a pastoralist population – some of whom remain mobile – and also allows us to examine demographic change over 20 years, through comparison with data collected for the same population as part of ILCA socio-economic studies in 1981-2¹. In the intervening two decades these Tuareg populations have undergone many crises: the 1984-5 drought, the 1991-5 rebellion, several years in Mauritanian refugee camps and the subsequent repatriation.

As a result of these crises one would expect major demographic changes. In terms of spatial distribution on the ground the changes are substantial – whereas in 1981 almost the entire population was nomadic and mobile, moving in small flexible camps, in 2001 well over half are totally or semi-sedentary living in both small and large sites across a landscape which previously had few permanent dwellings. Despite this sedentarisation, mobility remains a key survival strategy, and both households and individuals are moving in and out of sedentary and more mobile lifestyles.

¹ International Livestock Centre for Africa now known as ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute).



Refugee camp, Bassikounou, Mauritania, 1992

Credit : Sara Randall

Infant and child mortality have improved considerably since the early 1980s. These improvements started before the rebellion and then reversed in the early years of exile presumably as a result of epidemics in the refugee camps. Since 1994 there has been a steady decline in both infant and child mortality which is now lower than the national

rural level: this is probably a result of the immunisation campaigns in the refugee camps, the improvement in water supply since repatriation, and also a consequence of sedentarisation in the drier zones away from the malarial inner Niger delta.

Fertility and marriage on the other hand have barely changed since 1981. The Tuareg population always had lower fertility than many Malian cultivating populations because monogamy and high divorce rates meant that women spent many of their reproductive years unmarried. Changing lifestyle and economy do not seem to have changed this at all, and the total fertility of around 6 children is almost identical to that in 1981. With the substantial reductions in infant and child mortality this means that the population will experience unprecedented rapid growth in future decades, growth which is likely to put great strain on the limited pastoral resources in the zone and may only be able to be accommodated by substantial out-migration.

Further reading: Rapport sur l'Enquête Démographique en Milieu Tamasheq, 2001. Contact Sara Randall at UCL (s.randall@ucl.ac.uk) for copies of papers etc.

HIV/AIDS in West Africa¹

For some time there was hope that West Africa might escape the worst of the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is devastating other parts of Africa. It was thought that West Africa would probably suffer less because of low prevalence rates and the predominance of the HIV-2 virus type, which has a longer incubation period between infection and the development of AIDS (see Box 1). Recent figures on average adult HIV infection rates (2001) however show that this is no longer the case. Rates are rising in West Africa: Ivory Coast (9.7%), Sierra Leone (7.0%), Burkina Faso (6.5%), Nigeria (5.8%), Ghana (3.0%), Mali (1.7%), (UNAIDS, 2003). Moreover, the more virulent HIV-1 form of the virus is now spreading quickly throughout the region.



Box 1

What are HIV and AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome. *Acquired* indicates that it is not congenital or inherited. The virus attacks the *immune system*, making it less capable to fight infections. *Syndrome* implies that it is not one disease but presents itself as a number of diseases that come about when the immune system fails. TB is for example becoming more frequent as a result of HIV infection.

HIV (*Human Immunodeficiency Virus*) causes AIDS. HIV infection does not spread through casual contact, such as shaking hands or hugging, sharing a space. For infection to occur, the virus has to enter the body and attach itself to host cells important for

the immune system. Modes of infection are unsafe sex, mother to child transmission, and contact with infected blood such as transfusions, intravenous drug use with contaminated needles and other modes involving blood contact.

Broken skin that allows contact with infected blood, or genital sores as a result of sexually transmitted diseases can increase the risk of infection. Once the virus is inside, it cannot be destroyed by the body's defense mechanisms. There is a long incubation period in which the virus builds up strength and gradually destroys the body's immune system. At a certain point in time, opportunistic infections occur which cause the syndrome AIDS.

The length of the incubation period depends on a person's health status and is estimated to be on average between six and ten years. When AIDS develops, good food and care can not only improve quality of life but also prolong it, but in the end most HIV-infected people will die unless an effective anti-retroviral therapy is taken. These drugs have to be taken with much care, following a precise schedule, and often have nasty side effects. While benefits to the relative few in Africa who have access to anti-retroviral treatments are considerable, the development of drug resistance remains a serious problem.

The earlier an infected person receives medical attention, the better the prospects for the infected person. Unfortunately, the vast majority of those in Africa infected with HIV do not know they are infected. Hence, the importance of developing widespread voluntary, anonymous testing and counselling services.

To date, AIDS can not be cured. Access to treatment and care in the developing world is severely limited – an issue that requires the attention of the world community.

(Barnett and Whiteside, 2002)

HIV/AIDS first became visible in East Africa in the 1980s and early nineties. Then, in the mid-nineties, HIV prevalence rose dramatically in Southern Africa. Today some countries have HIV prevalence rates ranging from 20 to 40% (South Africa, 20%; Zimbabwe 34%, Botswana 39%). UNAIDS estimates that 29.4 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa were living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2002. Studies are now appearing documenting the devastating economic and social impact of AIDS at all levels of society: rural and urban livelihoods, public sector and thus service delivery (education, health, extension), private companies and the national economy as a whole. (see Box 2 and Box 3).

Box 2

The long-run economic costs of AIDS in South Africa

It used to be argued by economists that the impact of AIDS on GDP in Africa would be limited to max 1.5% because increased mortality would relieve the pressure on land and physical capital and as a result average production per capita would not change much. This study argues that the loss of so many young people will lead to the loss of much capacity and affects the ability to transfer knowledge to the next generations. 'Children of AIDS victims will be left without one or both of their parents to love, raise and educate them'. A modeling exercise showed that if nothing is done to respond to the epidemic in South Africa, the economy could collapse within three generations. If the extended family breaks down in the process the results will be worse. It was concluded that the long-run economic costs of AIDS are likely to be far greater than previously thought.

The long run economic costs of AIDS: theory and application to South Africa. Belle, C., Devarajan, S., Gersbach, H. 2003 (www.worldbank.org)

Box 3

Change in attitude and policy in Kenya

Stephen Lewis, the UN envoy on HIV/AIDS in Africa, recently returned from a trip to Kenya in an optimistic mood. He sensed a crucial change from the previous administration and real commitment from the new president to really get to grips with HIV/AIDS. "Where before, senior official's attention to AIDS was perfunctory, on this occasion every conversation, without exception, demonstrated a new leadership that is intense, committed to confronting the pandemic. Determined to put policies and programmes in place, and consumed by the recognition that every single family in Kenya is affected in some way by the ravages of AIDS". One of the programmes which has done much for children orphaned by AIDS as well as children from other poor households is the decision of the government to abolish school fees and no longer require school uniforms. One million two hundred thousands children who had not been in school, are now enrolled.

(<http://archives.healthdev.net/af-aids>)

Why is HIV/AIDS now spreading in West Africa as well? Why haven't the West Africans learned from the examples of East and Southern Africa?

The spread of the virus may have gone unnoticed

One explanation is that the spread of HIV infection rates went partly undetected in West Africa. Nigeria, for example, only acknowledged that HIV/AIDS was spreading after the military dictatorship had collapsed. The insecurity Liberia and Sierra Leone have recently endured may also have influenced the fact that the spread of the virus went unnoticed (Barnett and Whiteside, 2002).

Another possibility is that data on cases of HIV infection are generally collected through hospitals and government medical services, based on the anonymous testing of the blood of pregnant women. For many rural people and the urban poor these services are inaccessible.

Mobility and migration

The widespread practice of internal and international mobility and migration in West Africa in order to sustain livelihoods greatly increases the vulnerability of the region to the spread of HIV. High HIV prevalence rates in Ivory Coast for many years provided a West African epicenter for the spread of the virus in the region. The recent political crisis, accompanied by violence, insecurity, the break down of social cohesion and mass movements of refugees and people returning to their countries of origin (Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Senegal) is currently fuelling wider and more rapid spread of the virus in the Sahel.

Sexuality, male identity and the status of women in a context of poverty

How susceptible people are to catching the virus depends in particular on the frequency of unsafe sexual practices, issues that are not easily discussed. Concepts of male identity and gender relations promote a culture of virility and make it difficult for women to insist on safe sex. There are also frequent reports of sexual harassment and the abuse of power relations, such as those between teachers and girl students. Poverty also drives people to undertake risky behaviour.

Negative perceptions and stigmatisation

AIDS is linked to immoral behaviour in the minds of many and people living with HIV are often stigmatised and subjected to vari-

ous forms of discrimination. People living with AIDS and those providing them with care suffer stress and despair. The burden only becomes heavier when stigma is an issue and others withhold support as a result.

A missed opportunity

What is particularly sad is that the example of Senegal did not inspire a large number of other countries in West Africa to follow their example. When Senegal's first case of HIV infection was reported in 1986, the risk of the spread of AIDS was taken seriously. A national AIDS programme was established benefiting from crucial political support, and the participation of religious leaders. The programme in Senegal focussed on information, promotion of condom use, and special attention to commercial sex workers in the context of an already existing and effective sexually transmitted disease (STD) control programme. There is also evidence that male circumcision, widely practised in Senegal, reduces male HIV infection (UNAIDS, 1999). All these measures and circumstances seem to have been successful in keeping infection rates relatively low and stable (estimated at between 0.5% and 1.4% in 2001).

Despite Senegal's proactive example, for a long time, in surrounding countries, there was little real commitment by government, policy makers and other opinion leaders. Most provided only lip service and denied the real risks of widespread HIV infection. As a consequence, public awareness of the threat posed by the epidemic was often low. When watching all the publicity on AIDS and how to prevent it, people would mutter that far too much attention was paid to that disease. Few imagined that that it would ever touch them or their loved ones. As late as 1996, many were still denying that AIDS really existed in this world, and that it was all a Western conspiracy

to keep them from having children thus preventing them from becoming more numerous and powerful.

Even those not infected are affected

Closely knit family and kinship networks mean that the human impact of the epidemic is not limited to those infected. Others who also participate in support networks will be afflicted. Younger people in particular may move from one household to another in search of care and support. There is also an urban-rural link as very ill people may return to their village to die.

Giving care and dealing with the consequences of HIV infection such as medical costs and funerals will affect household livelihoods, but the wider effects of loss of labour, time, income, remittances and experience will also impact on the prosperity of whole communities.

HIV/AIDS will affect rural livelihoods even for those who are better-off.

The head of a relatively better-off household in Nigeria told how his divorced sister, who was living in Abuja, returned ill to the community and stayed in his house. He took her to hospital while another sister came to care for her. When it was clear to them that their sister was not going to survive, they brought her to their father's place where she died soon after. In the process, the brother had spent all his savings on medical expenses and funeral costs. There was no money left to hire labour for his farm and his wives therefore had to do much more work in the fields, for which he felt sorry. He was so cash strapped that when the roof blew off, he even had to ask for a loan for the repair. He also withdrew from social functions because he lacked money. (Source: Hilhorst *et al.*, 2003)

This person was still able to cultivate his fields but has become more vulnerable to risk. The workload has increased for his wives, who will have less time for their own activities and may also be

more vulnerable to illness as a result. It also means that this household is less able to support others.

When members of a less well-off household fall ill and die, the effects are even more severe. Fields are no longer well maintained, or are left fallow thus reducing harvest. More labour and capital intensive crops, such as yam or rice, can no longer be cultivated. In Nigeria, farmers may have an alternative, in the form of cassava; but when HIV/AIDS affects dryland farming systems, what crop can replace cotton as a source of income? In Nigeria, some households became so food insecure and cash strapped that they had to seek work as casual labour on other peoples fields, further undermining their own farming activities and well-being.

HIV/AIDS is often associated with affecting labour availability. What should not be forgotten that it can also be very costly. In Nigeria, many people infected with HIV spent all their savings, sold livestock and other property, and ended up in debt. As a result, plans they had to invest in farming, in trade or in other enterprises had to be put on hold. There was no more money to pay for secondary education of the children or to improve the house. This means development foregone.

HIV/AIDS and poverty

HIV/AIDS will inevitably increase poverty. The poor are also more at risk of becoming sick and dying faster than the non-poor, since they are likely to be less well nourished, in poorer health and have less access to health services. And when it is all over, there are the bereaved. Groups of people who may become poorer and more vulnerable are elderly people, widows and orphans.

A widow in Nigeria told how she has lost her husband a few months ago, most likely due to AIDS. She has 6 children, from ages 1 to 18, but the eldest three now stay with her brother. Her husband

was only seriously sick for a few months. He was in and out of hospital for four months while also having herbal treatment in between. Whenever his resources were finished he came home, until he or his wife managed to find some new cash. They raised money by selling stored harvest as well as a piece of land. A brother also gave money. In the fifth month of his illness the doctor proposed an HIV test. Her husband must have concluded that there was no more hope and refused the test, preferring not to spend more money on his health at the expense of his household. He died only a few weeks later. The funeral was paid for with the help of his brothers while the women's association provided chairs for the ceremony and moral support. His widow had cared for him and, as a result, she could not attend to her fields. The yield was very low. She was not disinherited and is still farming her husband's fields, but her father-in-law is controlling her expenditures. The household has become food insecure and she was not able to pay her children's school fee and feels hopeless. Only a year ago this family was regarded as of 'average wealth'. (Source: Hilhorst *et al.*, 2003)

In conclusion

HIV/AIDS has crossed West Africa's doorstep and is here to stay for many decades to come. The epidemic in this part of the continent will be even more serious if urgent and committed action is not undertaken to halt its spread. West Africa should not make the mistake of thinking that low HIV infection rates imply that nothing needs to be done, on the contrary. Moreover, how sure can one be that these figures are accurate and showing the true scale of the problem as the virus spreads silently from community to community?

There is so much experience all over Africa on how best to spread information, change behaviour and make condoms as widely available as possible. Prevention is crucial but so are care, treatment and

support. People living with AIDS need support and so do their caregivers. Many West Africans are HIV-infected without even knowing it, while others already suffer from the effects of AIDS.

Projections based on HIV infection rates give an indication of the number of people that are likely to die of AIDS within 6 to 10 years. These are grim figures but governments and others cannot deny them and should face the possible consequences. They have to analyse the implications and plan for this, and so should communities. AIDS is no longer just a health issue but affects all sectors in the economy.

Finally, people, organisations, NGOs, private enterprise and governments in Southern and Eastern Africa have learned many sad lessons but have also developed ways of providing care and lessening the impact of the epidemic. West Africa has only just started to benefit from these experiences, which need to be more widely disseminated, adapted and implemented.

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1 Many thanks to Gary Engelberg, Co-Director of Africa Consultants International (ACI) for commenting on this text. For more information on ACI's cutting-edge work on HIV/AIDS in West Africa contact: aciannex@enda.sn (www.acibaobab.org).

Land, wildlife, and pastoralists: new aspects to enduring conflicts in Tanzania

The complex relationship between pastoralist communities and the most extraordinary remaining populations of wild mammals left on the earth has dominated the northern Tanzanian landscape for much of the past century. This co-existence is complex because the impacts that pastoralists and wildlife have on each other are dynamic and multi-faceted. Pastoral land use practices, such as the establishment of dry season grazing reserves, and ethical beliefs, such as the Maasai taboos against eating game meat, have benefited wildlife populations in the region's savannahs and grasslands. Increasingly, it is the marginalization of pastoralists through land loss and declining stock holdings that has led to increasing cultivation in these areas, negatively affecting wildlife. On the other hand, pastoral livelihoods have generally suffered as a result of their co-existence with wildlife. East Africa's most famous national parks – Serengeti, Tarangire, Amboseli – have all been carved out of former pastoral lands, sometimes forcibly.

Today these conflicts between conservation interests and pastoral livelihoods endure, embodied by the recent controversy over the proposed eviction of roughly 2500 people from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. However, new features of the modern conflict between pastoralists and wildlife have also developed in Tanzania.

In northern Tanzania today, wildlife management activities have become the overwhelming threat to pastoral land tenure in most areas. Almost all pastoral lands – in places like Monduli, Simanjiro, and Loliondo – are contained within the boundaries of Game Controlled Areas (GCAs). These GCAs are conservation areas



formed under the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974 and defined as 'reserved lands' under Tanzania's Land Act of 1999. However, despite this ostensible protected area status, the wildlife legislation places no restrictions on human activities (settlement, grazing, cultivation, etc.) other than wildlife consumption in GCAs. These lands are entirely contained within village lands which have been demarcated according to land tenure laws. This overlapping jurisdiction has emerged as a major source of conflict and insecurity.

Pastoralist communities in northern Tanzania have recently begun to benefit from wildlife through tourism ventures, such as camping, cultural tourism, and walking safaris. Some villages have earned in excess of \$40,000 annually from these enterprises, which diversify marginalized pastoral livelihoods and provide incentives for conservation. But in these dual village lands and Game Controlled Areas, tourism ventures developed by rural communities have come into conflict with tourist hunting activities controlled and regulated by the central government. There have been increasing central attempts to control pastoral lands and ensure they are used for tourist hunting concessions. Pastoral have countered these attempts by struggling to maintain their tourist ventures on the same lands.

Nowhere have these tensions been more intense than in the Loliondo area, an expanse of land including about half a dozen villages lying along the eastern border of Serengeti National Park. In 1992, Loliondo erupted into national and international controversy – the so-called 'Loliondogate' scandal – when a tourist hunting concession was granted to a member of the royal family of the United Arab Emirates. Local community members have spent much of the past decade protesting this central government allocation of resource

use and access rights, with little success. The UAE hunting concession has operated under legally cloudy circumstances throughout this period, building a large house and camp in the concession area, as well as water supply systems and an airstrip. All of the area within the Loliondo hunting concession falls within the boundaries of registered village lands which received title deeds around 1990-titles rendered of little legal import when the concession was granted in these same areas.

Like many in northern Tanzania, Loliondo's communities, living in one of the world's most wildlife-rich areas, have increasingly exploited tourism activities over the past ten years as a way of generating alternative sources of income. Ololosokwan village in northwestern Loliondo is Tanzania's foremost case of ecotourism, earning over \$50,000 annually from several concessions and campsites on the village's lands. These operations have come into repeated conflict with the hunting concession, but thus far the village has been able to maintain the tourism income as well, despite the many outside pressures.

Loliondo has not been the only area affected by the land-tourism-hunting conflicts. In northern Monduli District, in Sinya village, conflicts between the locally granted tourism concession and the centrally managed tourist hunting concession erupted into a near-violent conflict that caught the visiting American Ambassador in the middle (see *The East African*, September 29-October 5, 2002 for details on this incident). Similar, albeit less volatile conflicts have occurred throughout northern Tanzania

These conflicts have mushroomed into fundamental contests for control of land tenure, use, and access throughout northern Tanzania, once again revealing the complexities and potential negative consequences of the pastoralists' age-old co-existence with wildlife in the region.

Trial of strength over the Dolly ranch in Senegal

Dolly ranch is located in the sylvo-pastoral area of north-eastern Senegal and extends over 87,000 hectares. Designed to accommodate animals destined for the meat market in Dakar during the rainy season, the ranch was opened up in 1993 to herders wishing to keep their livestock there against payment of a monthly fee. Although the hydraulic infrastructure is somewhat dilapidated, Dolly ranch has continued to receive thousands of animals every year, mainly from the Ferlo region and the Senegal River Valley.

In March 2003, the herders were surprised to learn that the ranch was to lose an area of some 51,000 hectares, as President Wade had decided to transfer almost two thirds of the land to the Grand Caliph of the Mouride Brotherhood.

The government media tried to give credence to the idea that the bad state of repair of the ranch was related to herders' inability to manage the property. Describing the new prospects for making the ranch profitable, the government daily *Le Soleil* insisted that a programme of modernization of the hydraulic infrastructure would be undertaken in order to "improve herders' living conditions".

By announcing the programme of rehabilitation, the public authorities were trying to defuse the discontent stirred up by the decision to hand over part of the ranch. As soon as the President made known his intention "to give the ranch to the Grand Caliph", all elements of the pastoralist movement mobilized to oppose the decision and establish a united front to defend themselves. The protest movement received support from human rights organizations and the majority of the press.

In an article entitled "Transferring the Dolly ranch: has Mr. Wade given Serigne Saliou Mbacké a poisoned gift?", the *Walfadjri* news-

paper wrote in its 24th April 2003 issue: *“The Dolly ranch is a dodgy deal. By not looking into the history of this land scarred by battles and bad blood between the herders and all the marabouts who have tried to settle there, Mr. Wade runs the risk of seeing a repetition of some very sorry episodes with their usual share of victims”*.

In March 2003, the monthly regional magazine *Nord-Ouest* published an article entitled “The Dolly ranch affair: look out!”, stressing that *“we must fear the worst in view of the determination displayed by the movement’s leaders who are outraged by a decision [taken] without consulting those most concerned”*.

Reporting on a meeting organized by the herders in Dolly on 26th April 2003, *Le Soleil* stressed the open-mindedness advocated by government representatives. According to the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock: *“Whatever the final decision, herders will be the focus of operations at Dolly ranch”*. The Minister added that *“our methods of animal husbandry are archaic and need to be modernized, moving towards keeping livestock indoors. Allowing animals to range free limits the sector’s potential”*.

The herders see the handover of part of the Dolly ranch for cropping as “an attack on pastoralism”. There are at least two reasons why the herders are so determined not to give in:

- Transferring the ranch to the marabout was the last straw, when many thousands of hectares of rangeland have already been annexed for farming.
- The ranch is one of the last fallback areas for animals from the northern part of the country that are currently squeezed between the hydro-agricultural schemes in the Senegal River Valley and the encroachment of pioneer farming in Linguère département.

The herders’ association drew up a plan of action whose initial aim was to halt meat distribution throughout national territory for a

period of three days, immediately following the Maouloud Festival. To increase the strike’s impact, the herders made contact with producers in Mali and Mauritania to invite them to refrain from supplying the Senegalese market with animal produce. This warning strike was to be followed by an information campaign mainly directed at the country’s religious leaders.

Seeing the scale of herder mobilization at the protest meetings organized in Dahra Djolof (22nd March 2003) and Dolly (26th April 2003), government, political party and civil society leaders realized the urgent need to *“defuse the bomb”*. In particular, they advised the various stakeholders to avoid giving an ethnic dimension to the conflict by presenting it as a clash between Wolof and Fulani.

The Grand Caliph of the Mourides took a decisive step towards resolving the conflict by agreeing to receive a delegation from the herders’ association. The marabout reassured the delegates about his intentions and promised to support their claims. This move towards a solution was backed up by the commitment of the herders to mobilize the necessary financial resources to buy the ranch (or, failing that, to rent it).

During an audience granted in June 2003 to leaders of the herders’ association, the Prime Minister was astonished to discover their agitation about the Dolly affair. He invited the herders to go *“calmly back to work”*. According to him, the allocation of the Dolly ranch was “a non-event” since the national authorities had not published any decrees allocating all or part of the estate to a third party. On the strength of this announcement from the Prime Minister, the herders decided not to implement their action plan, but said they were ready to take up the cudgels again if necessary.

Many thanks to Oussouby Touré for compiling this article from the Senegalese media.



Peace is not enough: Pastoral development in Sudan

A great deal of hope is being placed in the peace process in Sudan, but how does the possibility of peace affect pastoralist communities? An end to civil war is only one step toward addressing their difficulties. A new study by the UNDP¹ outlines a framework for pastoral development.

Drought, and the insecurity caused by civil war, have contributed to the disruption of long established patterns of pastoral movement. But the main factor remains the steady expansion in irrigated and rainfed farming, which has reduced grazing areas, disrupted pastoral routes and blocked access to watering points.

The law – does it help or hinder?

What is conspicuous in Sudan's federal natural resource legislation is the absence of laws which focus on grazing areas. The Civil Transactions Act, 1984, treats as "pasture" all fallow land in the country and stipulates the right of government to allocate this land for other purposes. Attempts by the Range and Pasture Administration to promote legislation for the regulation and protection of pasture have repeatedly been aborted. The need for legal reform which incorporates pastoral interests is clear, and this

¹ This article is based on a study carried out by the UNDP's "Reduction of Resource Based Conflict Between Pastoralists and Farmers" project financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Norwegian Government and UNDPSCO. The study entitled "Pastoral Land Tenure Systems at Federal and Local Levels in the Sudan" was compiled by Salah Shazali of the University of Khartoum. The opinions presented in this article and the background paper do not necessarily represent the views of the UNDP. For further information please contact the UNDP Peace Building Unit, P.O. Box 913, Code 11111, Khartoum, Sudan

must be accompanied by other policies which support pastoral development.

What is the future of agriculture?

The development and enactment of a pastoral code of law does not need to happen at the expense of existing or future agricultural schemes. Sudan has good potential for crop production but economic sense and environmental logic dictate that agriculture should not be developed in areas where the soil is fragile and easily degraded.

Turning back time?

It is not realistic to expect that all the traditional pastoral routes and corridors could be used again; perhaps only the most important routes should be re-opened. But re-opening pastoral routes without also providing access to temporary grazing areas within easy reach of these routes would be pointless. A holistic view of pastoral life and economy needs to be adopted in initiatives to re-open these corridors.

Finding new ground

Even with access to routes, the livestock system needs tracts of pasture where animals can graze away from farming areas until after harvest. Creating these areas could be achieved through the development of rangeland in more remote areas, particularly through the development of water resources.

A stronger voice in government

The body responsible for pastoralist issues, the Range and Pasture Administration, needs to be strengthened before it can effectively pursue the development of pastoralism in Sudan. Its status should be raised to that of a full fledged Ministry or a General Directorate within the Ministry of Animal Wealth and Natural Resources.

Effective systems for local administration to regulate pastoral activities also have to be devised.

Gaining support

To defend their interests pastoralists have possibilities to forge new alliances with each other and with certain groups of officials who are their “natural allies”, particularly the administrative officers, Range and Pasture staff and staff at the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources. There are also allies in Sudanese civil society made up of local NGOs and research institutes. The environmental rehabilitation implied by pastoral development, particularly the reclamation of the vast rangelands in marginal areas, may win support from international donors.

Livestock is vital to the economy of Sudan as it is a leading foreign exchange earner, second only to the recently established oil sector. What peace will mean for pastoralist communities depends on an integrated and holistic approach to supporting and developing this way of life and of production.

Women and conflict: A case from North Kordofan State, Sudan

Women are often seen as merely passive victims of conflict situations; but they could play a key role in mediation and in finding peaceful solutions, if their many difficulties, exacerbated by conflicts, are overcome.

In North Kordofan State in Sudan, land degradation and the increase in the area under cultivation are causing intensified competition for resources. During the rainy season, “*Makhruf*”, cattle owning tribes who have their home base in South Kordofan move northwards following well-established routes, to avoid the biting

flies and mud of their home areas. These areas have been affected by Sudan’s civil war, and as a result many of the herders now carry automatic weapons.

Much of the conflict is a result of crop damage by livestock entering cultivated fields during the growing season. Conflicts can also occur over access to water points, and their resolution is more complex as it can involve several groups, and overlapping areas of jurisdiction between traditional and statutory authorities.

Women in North Kordofan

In pastoral groups women are responsible for all aspects of running the household from building houses to collecting fuel wood and water; and they carry out activities to earn money such as the production of dairy products and handicrafts. Men’s main responsibilities are herding and marketing cattle and sheep. A study of hours spent carrying out their daily duties showed that women had on average only about 7 hours in 24 to rest and sleep.

In spite of their important role in maintaining family life, and the major economic contribution women make, they face many challenges; their illiteracy levels are as high as 90% among some groups.

The effects of conflicts on women

Pastoral life depends on movement along agreed routes. These routes “*El Masar*” are not simply demarcated areas for movement, but are the context for all aspects of pastoral life. Within *El Masar*, pastoralists herd their animals, build their homes, raise their families, pray, trade, have wedding parties, and funeral ceremonies.

Because women carry out such a wide variety of duties in a day, they are affected most when difficulties occur. When there is conflict the group may have to travel further than usual to reach a suitable site to set up temporary homes. During conflict men are usually

required to attend mediation committees, to meet among themselves, or to go to courts to agree a resolution or pay fines. This increases women's workload, as they take over the male responsibilities of herding and milking the animals. A family's income and resources fall during times of conflict as travel expenses, penalties and court fines have to be paid. Money to meet these expenses are met by increasing production and the sale of handicrafts and dairy products: traditionally women's activities.

As a result conflict affects women's well being, as their levels of work increase and with it their levels of stress and anxiety.

The positive role women can play

Women's central role in the welfare of the family offers an opportunity for them to affect how conflicts are dealt with, and it is possible for them to use their position to reduce conflict and build peace. For example, women poets "*El Hakkamat*" have traditionally played an important role in motivating the community towards defense of the honour of the tribe. This role can be used to build peace through new songs and poems that call for the peaceful and speedy resolution of conflicts.

However, for women to have a meaningful role in conflict resolution many of the challenges they face need to be addressed. The amount of work that women do in a day is a serious constraint to their ability to participate in activities such as attending conflict mediation meetings. The depth of tradition which excludes women



Pastoralist with camels, Sudan

Credit : SOS Sahel

from participating in decision making at this level also means that concerted effort has to be made to raise awareness of the importance of including women's interests and perspectives as important stakeholders in conflict management processes.

Aida Ahmed Abdella and Mohammed Abdel Mahmoud

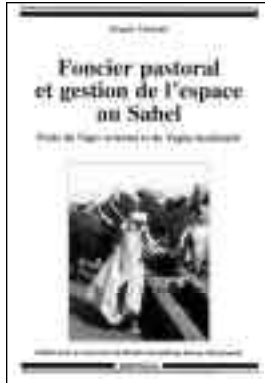
For further information please contact: Mohammed Abdel Mahmoud, Programme Director, SOS Sahel International UK, PO Box 1387, Khartoum, Sudan. Email: mohammedmam@netscape.net



***Foncier pastoral et gestion de l'espace au Sahel*, Brigitte Thébaud, Paris, Karthala (Eds), 2002. Website: www.karthala.com**

What future for Sahelian pastoralists? Hit by the droughts of the 1970s and 80s, the effects of which are still felt, encroached upon by agriculture, weakened by ill-suited sedentarisation and privatisation policies, and fingered by stereotypes and prejudice, pastoral systems in the Sahel have been better understood over the past decade, thanks to innovative research that has demonstrated their economic and environmental rationality. This book constitutes another important contribution in this direction. By analysing pastoral dynamics in two very different Sahelian settings – arid and predominantly pastoral Diffa in Eastern Niger and wetter and agro-pastoral Yagha in Northern Burkina Faso – the author documents the very diverse and dynamic nature of pastoral livelihood systems in the West African Sahel.

The book draws on an impressive amount of research and development work among pastoralists, based on a wide range of disciplines and methods. Two “portraits” of



herders provide insights into their everyday life and set the scene for the subsequent analysis of pastoral livelihood systems. Finally, pastoral land tenure and natural resource management arrangements by herders – among themselves or with others – are analysed, and the legislative framework in Niger and Burkina Faso for pastoral resources are critically examined.

Mobility emerges as the key livelihood strategy used by pastoralists to cope with the difficult Sahelian environment, characterised by scarce and erratic rainfalls. This has profound implications for natural resource management, as strategic resources like water points and pastures are held in common by pastoral communities and as flexible and negotiable rules govern access to these resources by outsiders. However, these specificities have long been ignored by policy makers, both because of “technical” problems (such as the difficulty of reflecting extremely diverse common property systems into Western-inspired legislation) and because of the long-lasting influence of misplaced “tragedy of the commons” arguments. As a result, in pastoral areas like

the Ferlo in Northern Senegal, pastures have been enclosed for individual families, excluding other herders and creating problems for the dynamic of the vegetation. New legislation enacted in the 1990s, such as Niger’s Rural Code, has raised new hopes by attempting to grant pastoralists greater tenure security without privatising the commons, although legislators are struggling to cope with the complexity associated with pastoral systems, and much remains to be done to effectively secure pastoral resource rights.

Written in clear and accessible language, rich in insights into pastoralists’ way of living, this book is a key reading for all those working on rural livelihood systems in the Sahel, whether as researchers or practitioners, and for all those working on pastoralism around the world.

Report of the 88th Dahlem Workshop on *Global Desertification: Do Humans Cause Deserts?* Berlin, June 10-15, 2001. Edited by J F Reynolds and D M Strafford Smith. 2002 Das Präsidium der Freien Universität Berlin. Dahlem University Press.

In June 2001, an international group of researchers participated in a workshop entitled *An Integrated Assessment of the*



Ecological, Meteorological, and Human Dimensions of Global Desertification. The goal of the workshop was to identify a way to analyse and assess desertification that incorporated

- all the various causes of change on different levels;
- the capacities to detect and respond to these changes;
- the interactions and linkages between different stakeholders and decision makers.

The goal was to develop a framework that would support the development of policy and research agendas but consolidating what is known and identifying gaps in our knowledge.

Desertification – the “creation” of desert, perhaps by humans – is a highly contentious issue. Arguments surrounding this topic create confusion in policy and management programmes intended to help many of the world’s poorest people. While climate is obviously a controlling influence on deserts, which occur naturally in dry areas, it is equally certain that humans and their agricultural and livestock practices have “caused” desertification in some places. However, there remains a great deal of dis-



agreement about the causes and extent of desertification and, consequently, about what part of its impact on human well-being is manageable and how. In answer to the question do humans cause deserts? The response is both yes and no depending on the context of the question, the type of land involved, its use history, consideration of the views of various stakeholders. To make progress beyond this “it just depends” answer there is an urgent need for new, interdisciplinary approaches for addressing this global problem. The editors of the workshop proceedings suggest that a new framework must be developed based on the unique and simultaneous roles of the meteorological and ecological dimensions of desertification (the *bio-physical* factors) and the human dimensions of desertification (the *socio-economic* factors). Previous failures to recognize and include the interdependencies of these dimensions in decision-making have slowed progress toward the synthetic approaches needed to tackle the enormous

problem of dryland degradation.

The workshop report provides a series of contributions to the development of this framework which the authors refer to as the Dahlem Desertification Paradigm (DPP). This paradigm is presented as a conceptual tool that can be used to address the labyrinth of issues on this topic in a more structured way. It is used to identify fundamental gaps in our knowledge of land degradation in the world’s drylands, to find new ways of approaching some of the more controversial issues, and to identify priorities for further research collaborations. The strength of the DDP is its recognition of the joint roles of socio-economic and biophysical causal factors, focuses on their key interactions, and recognizes that the complex of socio-economic and biophysical causal factors involved in land degradation have differing levels of influence in different regions of the world and at different times. It does not shy away from the real complexity of the problem, but provides a pathway through the complexity to analysing and responding to the main syndromes and critical variables involved in desertification. As such, this paradigm provides important recommendations that are aimed at achieving better implementation of the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification.

World Bank publishes evaluation of the Comprehensive Development Framework

The Operations Evaluation Department of the World Bank has completed and launched its evaluation of the CDF (Comprehensive Development Framework), based on intensive studies in six countries including 5 which piloted the CDF approach.

The CDF was proposed in January 1999 by the Bank's President Wolfensohn as "a new way for the Bank to do business" in response to criticism and frustration after 15 years of structural adjustment programmes. The CDF aimed to base all development assistance on 4 fundamental principles, and has been a key influence on the Millennium Development Goals, the "Monterrey Consensus" (which included commitments by developing countries to good governance, by developed countries to increased aid and by all to poverty reduction and mutual

accountability and responsibility); and on the Poverty Reduction Strategy process which is required to access debt relief.

The four principles of the CDF were: long-term holistic development (favouring social and structural change issues over short term macroeconomic stabilisation); results orientation (measurement of performance by impacts and not by inputs and outputs); country ownership including broad "citizen participation"; and country-led partnership (active management of aid relationships by recipient countries). The report acknowledges that these are not new and also that they are still quite far



from being demonstrated in practice.

Both the report and the CDF itself are susceptible to attacks from the Bank's critics, arguing that the approach fails to acknowledge and address inequalities in power and information both between and within countries, and that wrapping up these essentially political flaws in technocratic language of "participation" and "partnership" can lead to pernicious effects of disempowerment and creating power brokers such as well placed professional NGOs.

The report and case studies do contain

much material for conducting this debate, with findings and recommendations showing that donors and the World Bank itself have as many if not more difficult things to do and to change in their behaviours as recipient countries, in pushing these principles closer to the reality of the aid relationship.

The report is available at <http://www.worldbank.org/evaluation/cdf/> A précis in English or French is available from the OED Help Desk; eline@worldbank.org or calling 1-202/458-4497.

Regional Courses



The **International Institute of Rural Reconstruction** offers training courses that focus on field experiences and participatory approaches. These courses are designed for managers and leaders of development organizations. In the past, participants have been drawn from indigenous and international NGOs, community-based organizations, bi-lateral and multilateral programs.

These courses target development practitioners from mainly Eastern Africa, but have

attracted participants from as far as Sierra Leone, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana and Cameroon.

Year 2003 schedule of regular courses

Participatory monitoring and evaluation

24th November 5th – December 2003 (Kenya)

Farmer led extension course

3rd –18th November 2003 (Kenya)

Short courses

In addition to the regular IIRR courses, short five-day courses are offered on demand (where there are more than 10 people interested) or as customized courses. These course include:

- Project design and management
- Public awareness
- Resource mobilisation
- Leadership and governance for NGOs and CBOs

General information on regular courses

Duration, field trips and agency visits

Each course takes two weeks and

includes one agency and one field trip. During the agency visits, participants learn how leading development agencies are managed. Specific emphasis is placed on the course theme. During the day-long field visits, participants interact with other development practitioners at work in communities.

Course fee

The courses cost \$1,100 for residents of the host country and \$1,300 for other nationalities. It covers tuition, full-board accommodation and course materials. Participants are expected to pay for their own travel to the training venue, medical and insurance coverage. Participants are also expected to cover out of pocket expenses. A 10% fellowship will be given to female candidates. The fees for Farmer Led Extension Course is US\$1500.

NB: All these courses could also be tailor-made to suit the requirements of an organization.

For further information or application forms, please contact:

*The Training Officer IIRR-Africa
Regional Office P.O. Box 66873 Nairobi,
Kenya. Tel: 254-2-442610/440991;
Fax: 254-2448148 E-mail: training
@iirr-africa.org or mail to:%20admin
@iirr-africa.org*

West Africa Borders and Integration



The Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat and Enda Prospectives Dialogues Politiques have launched a new initiative dedicated to cross-border cooperation in West Africa:

West Africa Borders and Integration (WABI)

This initiative aims to build on synergies among actors and institutions engaged at all levels (local as well as international) in the promotion of cross-border activities. It proposes to gather those who are convinced that local cooperation (between local elected officials, private sector, civil society...) can be the main driver of regional integration, development and peace.

Visit www.afriquefrontieres.org for more information (English and French language).

Courses in Wageningen, Netherlands

The International Agricultural Centre (IAC) builds capacity for sustainable development in the agriculture, food, rural development

and natural resources management sectors. Through its support to organisations and professionals in business, government and civil society, IAC aims to improve the livelihoods of rural people, enhance farming systems, develop sound agri-business opportunities, ensure access to safe and healthy food and establish forms of land and water management that support the maintenance of healthy ecosystems.

IAC is part of Wageningen University and Research Centre (<http://www.wur.nl/uk/index.html>) and links education and training to fundamental, strategic and applied research in the fields of plant and animal production, agro-technology and food processing, rural development and environmental management.



Address : IAC, P.O. Box 88, NL 6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)317 495495. Fax +31 (0)317 495395 E-mail info.iac@wur.nl

For information on training courses visit: <http://www.iac.wageningen-ur.nl/services/training/index.htm>

Thank you!

Thank you to all readers who responded to our readership survey. We had an excellent response and the first 100 replies received a free book. Focus groups were held this month in Dakar and Nairobi.

We look forward to presenting the findings of the evaluation in a future issue of *Haramata*.

We would also like to encourage our readers to submit articles to be considered as Issue Papers, or for inclusion in *Haramata*.

For more information and guidelines to authors, please contact drylands@iied.org



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The right to food – putting meat on the bones?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights bind their signatories to realising the “right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food”.

Today, the right to food is lamentably far from being a reality. But it has begun to receive new attention. In 1996, the World Food Summit called for a clarification of the content of such a right; and of the obligations it entails.

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), which issues guidance on the implementation of the covenant, stated: “the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement”. Realising the right to food requires that food in sufficient quantity and quality is *accessible* to people, by producing it or by purchasing it. This acknowledges the reality that famines occur even in countries and regions where food is abundant.

Because ensuring access for all requires resources that many countries simply do not have, states are to “take steps” to “progressively” realise the right. Such steps must be taken to meet four different types of obligations:

- to “**respect**” – not to hinder individuals’ efforts to gain access to food;
- to “**protect**” – to ensure that enterprises, groups and individuals do not deprive others of their access to food;
- to “**facilitate**” – to create an enabling institutional and policy environment that promotes food security;
- to “**provide**” – to provide food whenever individuals or groups are unable, for reasons beyond their control, to gain access to adequate food.

Making the right a reality?

Despite these efforts, the debate has remained quite distant from people’s everyday life. So the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, in June 2002, called for the establishment of an Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) to elaborate guidelines on how to make the right to food a reality.



The IGWG has been set up, held its first session in March 2003, and will operate for two years. The Working Group includes delegates from 87 members of the FAO and of the UN, and a variety of non-governmental institutions as observers. The IGWG will hold its second session in October 2003, when it will seek consensus on the first draft of the Voluntary Guidelines.

What does this mean for people living in the drylands?

Having rights is quite different from having needs, so a rights-based approach to food security should restructure the relationship between government and civil society. For instance, the right to food has impacts on land rights; where land is a major means for food security, depriving people of access to land would violate the obligation to respect. The obligation to protect entails that states must regulate the activities of national and international private companies when these may affect the food security of individuals and groups. The right to food also has implications for international issues like the equity of the trade system and the repayment of foreign debt. Whether the IGWG will be able to foster momentum in these directions remains to be seen.

For more information on the IGWG, visit its official website at <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/en/index.html>.