"NGOs, Pastoralists and the Myth of Community: Three Case Studies of Pastoral Development from East Africa"

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In this paper, largely from the perspective of natural resource management, the record of NGO involvement in pastoral sector development in three projects in eastern Africa is examined—the CARE Borana Rangelands Project in Ethiopia, and the OXFAM/ITDG Lokitaung Pastoral Development and OXFAM Samburu Development Projects in Kenya. It is argued that the NGO approach to pastoral development in these three projects is seriously flawed because 1) it fails to define adequately what it means by community, 2) it fails to collect baseline information on the traditional pastoral system and monitor project progress in achieving project objectives (less so for the CARE project), 3) it lacks technical backup, 4) it fails to work with government, and, 5) its small scale and community focus prevent it from tackling the wider problem of rangeland areas with an increasing population and declining resource base.

Introduction

Increasing disillusion with the effectiveness of large donor rural development projects at alleviating rural poverty has seen a gradual shift of donor resources in recent years to non-governmental organisations (NGOs). NGOs are widely perceived by the public and donor community alike as more "effective" than larger donors at reaching the rural poor (see Farrington and Biggs, 1990). The actual record of NGOs in this field, however, is difficult to assess—particularly as the monitoring and evaluation component of NGO projects is often either non-existent or poorly developed. Typically, NGOs operate small-scale, community-based rural development projects with the emphasis on participation, appropriate technology and institution building. Whether such an "operational" approach is appropriate in tackling the longer-term environmental and resource management problems of areas where resources are scarce is, however, open to question; many such problems involve local and even regional political and economic factors *outside* the local community.

Background

Pastoralism

East African pastoralism has undergone profound changes in recent years. Pastoral groups are increasingly marginalised and impoverished as a result of national incorporation and market penetration, and many pastoral groups have been caught up in local and regional conflicts (see Markakis, 1987; Hogg, 1986). Loss of power to the centre has resulted in a diminishing resource base and increased vulnerability to drought. Yet a feature of pastoral societies and environments is their remarkable resilience in the face of these changes. As the overall context of pastoralism has changed so pastoralists have had to adapt their way of life and management practices to a new and changing environment. The fundamental task of development agencies working in pastoral areas is not only to understand the nature of these changes but also their implications for the kinds of technical and institutional interventions that are likely to improve the welfare of pastoralist populations in the long term.

Pastoral Environment

The variablity and marginality of pastoral environments imposes limitations on the dominant forms of economic exploitation. Generally agriculture is restricted to pockets of higher potential land or better rainfall years and "open" access pastoralism, combining a range of livestock species, is the norm. The precise economic and organisational forms that this pastoralism takes, however, vary a good deal, depending on local conditions and cultural systems.

Environmental and Socio-Economic Trends

The major environmental and socio-economic changes which have taken place in recent years are largely a result of national incorporation and market penetration. Some of these changes are:

(1) Population increase: A soaring population—the rate of increase in Kenya alone is 3.7%. In surrounding countries it is not far behind. While pastoralists tend to have lower rates of increase than neighbouring sedentary groups the long term trend in pastoral areas is still upwards (Henin, 1969). This trend is exacerbated by the influx into marginal areas of landless agriculturalists pushed out from surrounding higher potential areas. With no new rangeland areas for pastoralists to expand into, the result is increasing pressure on grazing resources.

(2) Expansion of cropping: Cropping appears to be increasing in nearly all rangeland areas both as a result of population increase and the influx of landless farmers as well as government policies, which favour the development of irrigation schemes and agricultural over pastoral production (see Hogg, 1983). The long term consequence is likely to be the loss of important dry season grazing areas to permanent settlements and agriculture.

(3) Livestock increase: In spite of short-term fluctuations in livestock numbers as a result of drought and disease, all the evidence points to a long-term increase in livestock populations—largely as a result of improved animal health care. The result is likely to be increased pressure on what is an already diminishing resource base.

(4) Insecurity: African governments which are themselves threatened by internal rebellion and civil war find it increasingly difficult to protect pastoralists living in remote border areas from widespread banditry. As a result, large parts of the rangelands are effectively "no-go" areas. This has further reduced available and safe grazing areas for pastoralists (see Hjort af Ornäs and Salih, 1989).

(5) Loss of power: Since incorporation pastoralists have lost power vis-a-vis the centre. They have little influence on government, which tends to be dominated by agricultural groups. As a result government policies, such as the encouragement of settlement and agriculture and the conversion of dry season grazing areas to national parks and game reserves, are frequently inimical to pastoralist interests.

(6) Market dependence: Associated with national incorporation is the gradual domination of economic life by the market place. Pastoralists are increasingly forced to sell their livestock or livestock products to buy food and other goods. This increasing dependence on the market increases their vulnerability to market forces and price fluctuations.

(7) Wealth differentiation: National incorporation and market penetration have brought new opportunities to invest in non-pastoral resources which are less vulnerable to drought and disease. This has allowed new opportunities for wealth differentiation and stabilisation.

Natural Resource Management

The focus of this paper is on pastoralist natural resource management strategies. These strategies refer a) to those explicitly "technical" strategies that pastoralists employ to exploit the natural environment,

such as dry season reserves, calf paddocks, the collection of Acacia tortilis pods and the cutting of grass in the dry season, and the digging of ponds and wells, b) to associated institutional arrangements, such as herding associations, well-management groups, grazing committees which organise and control access to natural resources, and c) to those culturally constructed rights, obligations and responsibilities which define access to natural resources.

Key issues are i) the effectiveness and efficiency of indigenous technology in exploiting the rangeland, ii) the cohesiveness and continuing efficacy of traditional resource management groups to control access to natural resources in a rapidly changing environment, and iii) the relationship between individual and common rights in property, the relation between usufruct and ownership, and "the connection between the nature of land rights on the one hand and issues of scarcity,responsibility,and land management on the other" (Peters, 1987:171).

Land Rights

Pastoral land rights in Africa are changing rapidly. Pastoralists find themselves marginal members of nation states. As they are increasingly squeezed by processes of sedentarisation, population increase, impoverishment and expropriation of higher potential land by government and marginal farmers, they are under increasing pressures both from within pastoral societies, as they become increasingly internally differentiated, and from without, by government and development agencies, to change the basis of traditional rights in land. Hitherto, the dominant paradigm in the debate about pastoral land tenure has been Hardin's model of the "Tragedy of the Commons", which poses an irreconcilable contradiction between individual and system interests in common property resources (see Hardin, 1977). According to the model, wherever resources are held in common, the individual is locked into a system that compels him to over-exploit the common resource. So the African herdsman is compelled to overstock the range, bringing eventual ruin to himself and long-term degradation to the environment.

The Hardin thesis has had a powerful constituency in government and donor circles. Whether its central thesis is right or wrong in practice depends, firstly, on the nature of the rights in question—pastoralist rights to graze their animals on the range are generally contingent on a variety of factors and are rarely entirely unrestricted, and, secondly, institutional arrangements to conserve resources. The danger is that because of rapid economic change brought about by national incorporation and market integration traditional controls and institutional arrangements will collapse, leading the way to a real "tragedy of the commons". It is in the prevention of this situation where the real challenge lies for both government and non-governmental agencies involved in pastoral development, and where the justification lies for community or institutional based programme interventions in the pastoral sector.

Case Studies

CARE Borana Rangelands Project

History

The ILCA/MoA Joint Ethiopian Pastoral Systems Study (JEPSS), 1981–1984, was intended to examine the Borana pastoral system and identify critical areas for intervention to increase livestock production in the southern rangelands. The study identified poor calf nutrition as a key constraint to improved livestock productivity. In 1985, after the 1984–85 drought, ILCA persuaded CARE to establish the Southern Sidamo Rangelands Development Project to continue ILCA research work into a new applied research and development phase. This phase consisted largely of the testing of ILCA research hypotheses, in particular the benefits of calf feed supplementation, provision of water through ponds made by animal-

drawn scoops and the establishment of exotic forage trials in representative Boran areas.

By 1987/88 the project had moved away from its scientific and research roots towards an increasingly extension-based project working with local communities to build up local capacities to articulate and solve locally perceived development needs. This transition was signalled in 1987 by the first systematic attempt by the project to assess and survey local needs. In spite of this shift, however, local people still refer to the CARE Project as ILCA, and most CARE technical interventions continue to be based on earlier ILCA research. In 1989 after administrative boundary changes the project was re-named the Borana Rangelands Project.

Project Objectives

The project's long term goal is to ensure greater food security for pastoralists in the project area. Intermediate objectives are:
(1) to facilitate the development of the pastoralists' abilities to identify problems, needs and solutions, and to implement and evaluate these solutions in relation to food security;
(2) to strengthen the link between the communities through their pastoralist associations and service cooperatives;and
(3) to assist the communities through the provision of technical advice and materials to implement their own solutions and to improve these in relation to food security.(CARE Borana Rangelands Development Proposal, 1990:4).

Project Target Population

The project covers approximately 7,500 sq. km. in Teltele/Yavello and Dirre Awrajas in Borana Region. The area is populated by up to 30,000 mainly Boran but also some Gabbra pastoralists.

The project does not single out only those who are poor and marginalised to work with. It is recognised that both rich and poor live and cooperate together,and that the community as a whole should benefit from project in-puts.

Project Management

Project management which has its administrative base in Yavello town consists of an expatriate project coordinator, administrative staff in Yavello, and extension staff based in the field. Management structure is essentially hierarchical, with assistant field workers, who are drawn from the community, reporting to field workers, who in turn are answerable to a field officer, who is responsible for one or more pastoral associations, covering often over 1,000 sq. km. The field officer is in turn responsible to the assistant coordinator and, finally, coordinator, based in Yavello. Excluding administrative and training staff based in Yavello there are currently 5 field officers, 12 field workers or extension agents, and 14 assistant field workers/extension agents. The Project budget for 3 years until March 1992 is nearly USD 800,000.

Project Components

CARE project interventions can be divided into technical and institutional. Technical interventions are based on their experience in the area, ILCA research and assessed local needs.

Water Development

Wells: Borana wells are fundamental to the pastoral system. There are no permanent rivers and few ponds large enough to hold water through the dry season. Boran must therefore depend on their wells.

In the Boran heartland there are nine great well complexes. Each well complex has several individual wells. The total number of wells in the area probably runs into hundreds.

Major constraints in the use of the wells are a) slow recharge b) high labour input to raise the water, c) damage to the wells during the rains, and d) shortage of giraffe or buffalo hide buckets with which to raise the water. In the dry season considerable labour needs to be mobilised to water the animals. In the wells labour is used to raise the water, maintain the reservoirs (*fetchana*), and

troughs (*nanigas*), remove dung and control the animals.

CARE interventions have been i) to try to find an effective substitute for the hide buckets; e.g. by experimenting with small plastic buckets, ii) to help improve the maintenance of the wells and associated structures, iii) to improve access tracks to the wells.

The project has used cement and stone to construct larger and more durable troughs and reservoirs. The materials and the labour of the mason have been paid for by the well users. The sustainability of this intervention depends on a) having a ready supply of cement, and b) the availability of masonry skills. To date the project has subsidised the sale of cement. Unfortunately, cement is not always available in Ethiopia, which has caused considerable delays to construction work.

To overcome the short supply of masons the project is training Boran masons from rural areas. These masons are selected by their communities. A major difficulty experienced by the project, however, is retaining them in the rural areas once they have been trained.

Ponds: Ponds make an important contribution to water availability in the dry season and help to extend the time for which animals can be kept in the wet season grazing areas. Borana have traditionally dug ponds by hand near to their villages or *ollas*. The government through the World Bank-funded Southern Rangelands Development Unit (SORDU) has also mechanically excavated much larger ponds in wet season grazing areas.

The major constraints to pond development are i)high rates of evaporation, ii)siltation, iii)seepage and iv)damage to the ponds through poor siting.

To help Boran maintain their ponds and reduce the related labour demand the project has experimented with the use of animal-drawn scoops to de-silt ponds. The basic assumption was that the scoops would be able to remove silt in larger quantities, and faster, than human labour alone. These experiments were largely unsuccessful in persuading people to adopt the new technology. In a 1986 survey CARE found that people were not prepared to use the scoops without food-for-work, nor did they want to train their oxen for animal draught work.

Water Tanks: Water tanks and holes are small cement-lined catchments for runoff water. They are sited close to the *ollas* which are sited far from the wells. The tanks hold between 50,000 and 100,000 litres and the holes between 1,000 and 2,000 litres. They are intended for domestic use and for calves and sick animals at the *olla*.

The rationale for the tanks came from ILCA research work, which showed that the reason for *ollas* moving closer to the wells in the dry season was lack of locally available water near to the *ollas* for calves and domestic use. Once the seasonal ponds dried up, villages were either forced to fall back on the wells or their women to transport water over long distances (up to 40km return trip in some cases). By having water tanks in the vicinity of the village, however, water could be conserved for much longer, reducing a)the need for women to make long trips to the wells and b)pressure on pasture near to the wells.

The water tanks (*birkas*) were lined with cement and covered to prevent fouling of the water and reduce evaporation. Initially, CARE passed on only a proportion of the costs of the tanks because they were demonstrations. Labour was also encouraged by food-for-work. This has since changed—money has now to be paid by the community before work starts. The costs vary but are around 3,000–5,000 Ethiopian Birr (USD 1 = 2.07 Eth.Birr). The major problems with construction are transport of materials and masons.

In the early days the tanks belonged to wealthy individuals. Nowadays the project will support only the construction of communally owned and managed tanks. A possible unintended consequence of large numbers of tanks in one vicinity which the project has failed closely to monitor is its

impact on village mobility and grazing movements.

Water holes are a smaller and cheaper version of water tanks. The shape is like a bottle sunk in the ground and lined with cement. They cost only about 100 Birr so can easily be afforded by most families.

Water Transportation: Traditionally women are responsible for carrying water on their backs in water containers. This takes time and energy. In order to reduce this burden on women the project has started to facilitate the purchase of camels to carry water. Boran own few camels and know very little about the best camel markets. CARE has tried to show them how to buy camels and where the best markets are to be found.

By using camels to transport water Boran will a)not only reduce the labour burden on women and the time they take to fetch water, but b)will enable a more even utilisation of grazing resources by allowing villages to stay further from permanent water.

Forage Development

Forage development is directed at improving the quality and quantity of forage available to livestock. Macro-level interventions are difficult to make because of the large number of variables involved. ILCA identified calf stunting as a critical constraint in the livestock system, due to shortages in milk, water and forage. The project has therefore emphasised forage interventions for calves; Boran identify forage as a major constraint in the dry season especially for those villages located near to wells.

Current project interventions are

(a) helping to achieve a better distribution of grazing pressure by encouraging the construction of water tanks near to villages which are of sufficient capacity to provide water to the village through the dry season (see above). In this way villages can be encouraged to stay more than 20km from the wells in the dry season so spreading grazing pressure.

(b) encouraging Boran to collect and store the pods of the Acacia tortilis tree. The idea is to store the pods until they are needed in the dry season to feed to calves, and ii) encouraging women to cut and store grass for the dry season. Traditionally forage is cut by the women for calves in the dry season when the nutritive value of the grass is at its poorest. The project has tried to encourage women instead to cut the grass in the wet season just after the rains when the nutritive value of the grass is high, and to stack the grass to prevent sun-bleaching and leaching by the rain. Women have more labour after the rains to do this than in the dry season.

Hay-making was initially encouraged by the project providing food-for-work for the women. This was soon phased out as more and more villages adopted the idea.

Grain Development

Grain plays an important part in the Boran economy. The problem for pastoralists is that when they need grain the most—in the dry season—the grain is generally at its most expensive and their animals at their cheapest. During 1987/88 the price of grain moved from 15 Birr per quintal at harvest time in September 1987 to 80–90 Birr per quintal at the end of the long dry season in March 1988.

The project has tried to improve Boran knowledge of the grain market so they can buy grain when it is cheap and store it until they need it.

The project "persuaded" 10 *ollas* to construct an underground store in 1987 and bought 200 quintals on credit to demonstrate how bulk buying could save money. Later the project has helped interested pastoral associations to buy from the Agricultural Marketing Corporation. Credit for grain purchases has now stopped.

The project has also demonstrated to individual Boran underground storage of grain, in the shape of a submerged jar. The walls are either burnt hard or lined with cement. This activity was at first financed by the project. Now individuals or communities have to pay for the costs themselves.

Tools Development

The project aims to improve the efficiency of labour through helping Boran buy necessary handtools.

In the Boran area there is a shortage of manufactured tools. Boran themselves express a wish to have tools—this came out of an evaluation of the unsuccessful scoop operation. At first the project provided credit and bought direct from the metal factory in Addis Ababa. Nowadays, villages have to raise the money themselves to buy tools. Distribution of tools in the area is undertaken by tool agents, who are responsible for passing orders to extension agents, collecting cash on delivery of tools and bookkeeping. Increasingly, the tools programme will be channelled through the service cooperatives, who can buy direct from the Ethiopian Domestic Distribution Corporation (EDDC).

Handicrafts

This component was started in 1985 to help destitute Boran women whose families had lost livestock during the drought. The objective was to encourage women to make mainly woven baskets for the tourist trade in order to generate local income. Major diffculties have been encountered in finding suitable markets, and the component has gradually been phased out. The recent midterm review suggested that the component should concentrate on the development of craft activities to improve the availability of local articles traditionally used by Boran.

Beekeeping

Like the handicraft component this activity was originally intended to help poorer pastoralists generate income. However, while Boran raid wild bee hives there is no tradition of beekeeping as such. The project has therefore gradually phased this component out of its programme.

Institutional Development

The CARE project is explicitly directed at heightening community awareness of development issues and organising communities to take responsibility for their own development. While it uses the names of pastoral associations to define the project area, however, the project has largely avoided working through either pastoral associations or service cooperatives. The main reason is that both these are regarded as too closely tied to government and insufficiently representative (see Hogg, 1990 for review of pastoralist organisation in Borana Region). Rather, the project has preferred to work with traditional villages (*olla*) and village clusters (*ardha*). It is these local level units which have been the building blocks of the CARE programme.

Recently, under government pressure through the SORDU project, CARE has agreed to work more closely with service cooperatives in the area, and in the case of one service cooperative, a memorandum of understanding has been signed between CARE and SORDU concerning CARE support to that service cooperative.

In spite of project emphasis on community development and a participative development approach, project management is top-down. There is little indication that local community structures, such as the villages involved in the project, have any actual role in project management nor, from project documents, is there a sense that the project has any extensive background information on the villages in the project. It appears to be a given that because villages are territorially discrete they are therefore the most appropriate traditional structures to work with. While this may be the case, the project should at least be able to justify its choice with supporting evidence. At present, in spite of years of ILCA research in the area, we have very little information from the project on village structure and composition, patterns of mobility, the relationship between villages and neighbourhoods and other more inclusive territorial and management units.

There is also an uncertainty within the project as to how to deal with pastoral associations and service cooperatives. Until recently the project line has been that these institutions are too closely tied to govern-

ment and are not truly representative. The project therefore preferred to deal with what it saw as more traditional lower level institutions, such as villages. While this attitude is changing—the recent project mid-term review strongly supported the project developing links with service cooperatives—there is still reluctance to support organisations which would embrace large numbers of villages.

Project Philosophy/Approach

The project approach is to enable local communities to help themselves by disseminating information on development possibilities and encouraging them to organise to achieve solutions to their problems. Project emphasis is therefore on extension, training and development education.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an important project component. Some effort is made to define annual targets and indicators. These targets, however, are largely physical targets, such as the percentage of villages with haystacks, the percentage of villages with water tanks, the percentage of villages with water holes etc. Little effort is made to collect the necessary baseline information to judge whether,because of these physical interventions, Boran are any better off than before, i.e. whether living standards and food security have improved, or, whether, because of project interventions, grazing and village movements are more restricted than before. In general, the amount of information collected on villages, movement patterns etc. is very poor, and it is unlikely, at the end of the project's lifetime, whether the necessary information will have been collected to say whether longer-term project objectives will have been achieved.

A major problem, of course, which not only CARE but other NGOs face (see below) is in designing a monitoring system which not only monitors against physical targets but can also tell us whether people's perceptions of development are changing. Certainly in the Borana project CARE have made some headway in getting villages motivated to make haystacks, water holes etc. In terms of money spent, however, the physical achievements have been very small—particularly when measured in terms of what these physical achievements are likely to mean in terms of productivity or food security increases for the population of the project area as a whole. In addition, these achievements have been made only as a result of a) an intensive extension and training programme, and b) subsidising transport and materials. What are the chances of these achievements being made without the presence of CARE? This question can only be answered in terms of CARE's relations with on-going government programmes in the area, because at the end of the day it is going to fall to government to pick up the CARE work.

Relations with Government

Historically, ILCA relations with the Ministry of Agriculture, Southern Rangelands Development Unit in Borana Region have been poor. After CARE took over the ILCA programme and a new ILCA coordinator was appointed, relations have improved. However, at least in its early days CARE has chosen largely to work on its own, and there is still a deep reluctance to involve government too closely in its programme. Any cooperation has generally come about as a result of government pressure. There are, however, remarkable similarities between the present SORDU and CARE programmes in the area. There is therefore now a real opportunity for CARE not only to continue to push ahead with its own specific project concerns but at the same time seek a place for its interventions and approach within a larger programme context.

Comment

CARE has a limited range of technical interventions. These interventions are largely aimed at making small-scale incremental changes to the Borana production system to improve dry season food security. The

project has neither the expertise nor the inclination to tackle aggregate range management and livestock production constraints. The focus is on making minor adjustments to and building on traditional resource management practices in a small area with interested village groups. Macro-level considerations concerning human and livestock population increase in the area and their long-term implications for "traditional" natural resource management are largely ignored.

In a recent mid-term review of the project, the project was criticised for a) its general lack of baseline socio-economic data; it is difficult, for instance, for the project to monitor the likely effects of project interventions on settlement patterns and livestock movements and living standards, and b) its lack of technical backup for local extension staff.

It is as if project concerns to tackle problems from the grass-roots level and to emphasize its extension base and community involvement exclude room for more straightforward technical considerations and a vision of longer-term trends in the rangelands and the best ways to increase livestock productivity on the aggregate level. There is, for instance, considerable evidence from aerial photography and Boran themselves that bush encroachment is a major and increasing problem in many Boran areas, but there is little or no recognition of this within the existing CARE programme. Project philosophy and design must be largely held to account for this, for there is no reason even with its limited budget that CARE should not be able to deal with or at least seek to influence the present policy debate within Ethiopia on the best ways to develop the pastoral sector and conserve natural resources at the same time: Should, for example, burning be allowed in the interest of sound range management? If so, how should burning be allowed? And what should be the place of cropping in rangeland areas? These issues need to be debated by all interested parties and not just left to government.

CARE in particular and NGOs in general have to recognise that local pastoral communities do not exist in a vacuum, and that whether they like it or not they are part of a wider economic and political system, and that this system will increasingly determine the role that the pastoral sector will play in the national economy. While it is important to deal at the micro-level and in particular empower local communities to take responsibilities for their own development, it is equally important for NGOs to deal at the macro-level-to recognise longer-term trends and effects on the pastoral environment and ensure both that what they are doing at the community level recognises these longer term trends and that they are in a position to influence government policy both at district and national level.

OXFAM/ITDG Lokitaung Pastoral Development Project

History

In 1979/80 drought and disease killed large numbers of livestock in Turkana District. The Government of Kenya with support from the European Economic Commission (EEC) and United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) established the Turkana Rehabilitation Programme (TRP). By 1982 some 80,000 Turkana were in food relief camps. As conditions improved, donor emphasis shifted from emergency relief to rehabilitation of the pastoralist population through longer term food-for-work and development programmes (Hogg, 1983). In 1983 OXFAM financed a livestock consultant to prepare a Turkana District Livestock Plan (TDLP). The plan recognised the dangers of an indiscriminate use of food-for-work in the construction of water harvesting sites and micro-catchments in the district and recommended a) a more coordinated approach to water harvesting and b) OXFAM finance for a small-scale animal draught and spate irrigation demonstration project based on the pre-existing Salvation Army Lokitaung Water Harvesting Project (see TDLP, 1984).

A project proposal was written in early 1984 and a 2-year grant of over USD 85,000 agreed by OXFAM later in the year. The Turkana Rehabilitation Programme agreed to contribute a further USD 20,000. The objectives of the project were to demonstrate water management, crop production and range improvement methods applicable to Turkana, investigate the socio-economic aspects, particularly land tenure and management of water harvesting, and demonstrate animal draught and animal transport systems. During project implementation the project manager who was seconded to OXFAM from the Intermediate Technology Group (ITDG) became increasingly concerned that the project should take sufficient account of indigenous organisation and management capacities, and that the project should only move at the pace of the local population. As a result, after October 1985 project objectives were revised and emphasis shifted from a demonstration of foreign technologies, many of which were imported from Yemen, to working with local Turkana to strengthen and improve existing gardening skills and institutional arrangements (see Mid-Term Review, 1986). At the same time the project became concerned that water harvesting should be seen as a supplement rather than an alternative to pastoralism, and that the project target population should be poor rather than destitute pastoralists. This shift was supported in a review of the project carried out for OXFAM/ITDG in July 1987.

In mid-1988 management of the project was handed over to a local management board, and OXFAM/ITDG stepped back from the day to day project management. Although the project continued to establish improved gardens, and implement training in animal draught, other components were now added; local community food stores, hide and skin trading, and an animal health component. In 1989 the project was renamed as the Lokitaung Pastoral Development Project (LPDP).

Project Objectives

The long-term objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of traditional pastoral institutions to sustain and increase local food production, and reduce household vulnerability to seasonal food shortages. The intermediate objectives are:

(1) to strengthen the capacity of appropriate pastoral institutions to initiate, manage and develop responsive food security projects;

(2) to develop a range of sustainable technologies which increase food production at household level ; and

(3) to contribute information and experience gained to district policy makers and to encourage greater recognition of pastoral institutions as appropriate vehicles for development (LPDP, Annual Plan, 1990-91).

Project Target Population

The estimated pastoral population of Lokitaung Division is 40,000 with an additional 12,000 settled population (Martin, 1990:7). Project beneficiaries only comprise a tiny proportion of this number. According to project documents only about 152 families are actual registered project members. However, many non-members benefit from the project and have access to project stores. Nevertheless, the total number of direct project beneficiaries is relatively small, probably only a few thousand people scattered in four different locations.

The target population are marginal pastoralists with less than 100 small stock; the project recognised at an early stage that it was these marginal pastoralists who were most likely to directly benefit from the project, as crop production was never likely to be more than a supplement to a predominantly pastoral economy.

Project Management

The project has been managed for the last 2 years by a management board composed of representatives from the three (recently expanded to four) project locational committees and project staff. The locational committees consist of traditional area or *ere*

representatives and local project technical staff, e.g. stores leader and extension workers. Locational committees have considerable authority in their locations and can override decisions made by the management board. At the grassroots level are the *ere* groups, which consist of project members living within the *ere*. There are a total of 25 such *ere* groups in the project.

The 17 project staff are either employed directly by OXFAM or by the project. OXFAM/ITDG continue to finance and provide technical and training support to the project. The project budget for financial years 1988/89 to 1990/91 is approximately USD 80,000.

Project Components

The technical component of the project has evolved gradually as new components have been added to the project. In particular the project has increasingly tried to shift away from its origins as an exclusively "water harvesting and animal draught project" to become a more general pastoral development project covering a broader range of technical interventions and training programmes. Water harvesting for improved crop production has, however, remained at the core of the project, and has consumed the largest share of project resources.

Water Harvesting

The main technical intervention in this area has been technical training of farmers in a range of appropriate techniques, such as site survey methods, the design of water harvesting systems and especially of earthworks, and levelling and construction methods.

Work began on TRP sites at Kachoda and Loarenyak and at Manalongoria, the site of the Salvation Army water harvesting project near to Lokituang, and gradually expanded outwards to other areas. By September 1990, some 215 gardens had been improved(Martin, 1990:10). Garden sizes range from an average of .22 ha in Kaaling to .88 ha in Loarenyak (Martin, 1990:39).

While it is clear that some achievement has been made in the training of local people in "appropriate" water harvesting techniques, actual physical achievements in terms of numbers of improved gardens over the life of the project have been poor; some 215 gardens or no more than probably 100 ha of improved agricultural land. In the last 2 or 3 years the number of gardens being developed has actually been declining, from a peak of 73 in 1987 to 16 in 1990 (see figures presented in Cullis, 1990). The reason for this appears to be a declining food ration; the last delivery of TRP food to the project was in November 1988. Since then families have received no food ration while they improve their plots; down from a rate in 1987 of 7 bags per plot. According to the Tour Report to the Project in March 1990 "...it is clear that it is becoming increasingly difficult for households to develop improved gardens without external support" (Cullis, 1990:4).

This lack of physical achievements has been dismissed in the past as an inappropriate criterion to judge the project which is, after all, concerned with the sustainability of a particular approach, and building local institutional structures. Nevertheless, at the end of the day the approach has to be measured against some physical achievement—pastoral institutions have to serve some more tangible purpose than merely to exist. Certainly if they are going to prove sustainable in the future then they have to be able to deliver some positive benefits to their members. If the purpose is to strengthen food production and enhance food security then these have to be in some way physically measurable objectives or targets. In the same way donors have to be able to establish some physical criteria to judge the best allocation of resources between different projects.

Crop Yields

Water harvesting is a technology intended to improve garden yields. However, while considerable effort since 1986 has been put into monitoring improved garden yields, little information is available on the relative

performances of traditional unimproved as against improved gardens. We therefore cannot directly compare yields in the two types of plot. Certainly on first principles we can assume that plot yields of improved as against unimproved gardens are better, simply because they retain water for longer, but the variation in yields even within one location appears extremely large—to the point where talking about averages appears meaningless. In Kaleng, for example, in 1989 yields of improved gardens varied from 0–667kg per plot, and in Loarenyak from 390–1300kg per plot. Given this range of variation, and the likelihood that the best unimproved plots are likely to outperform the worst improved plots, the question of opportunity costs and labour invested in garden improvements becomes increasingly important (see Morgan, 1974 for an indication of yields from unimproved gardens).

Taking into account the high relative costs involved—both in terms of labour and time—in constructing improved plots, coupled with the uncertainties of actually getting any yield at the end of the day, it is hardly surprising that some external support is required. Without this support it may be expected that fewer garden plots will be constructed.

Already there are indications from project reports that project uptake is much stronger along the lake, where communities are more fixed, a gardening tradition much more apparent and the opportunity costs of investing in improved gardens much less. It may turn out in the future that improved gardening is more appropriate as a supplement to fishing and pastoralism than pastoralism alone.

At the end of the day the significant constraint on garden yields is not whether people have bunds, levelled plots, spillways etc. or not, but whether the rain falls at the right time and the crop pests stay away. Methods of containing the water when it does fall may improve the chances of getting at least some yield but at best it is likely to have only a marginal impact on crop yields at the aggregate or locational level, and at worst it may prove an "inappropriate" intervention in a pastoral environment where the accent is on mobility, opportunism (literally snatching a crop from a naturally inundated depression) and labour scarcity.

Animal Draught

Animal draught has been a significant technical intervention of the project. Traditionally Turkana did not (and most still do not) use animal power. The project objective has therefore been to show that animal draught can significantly reduce the need for manual labour, particularly in the construction of otherwise labour-intensive water harvesting sites. As FFW has declined so interest in animal draught has increased, particularly along the lakeshore. However, the majority of sites have been improved using project animals : Turkana are reluctant to use and train their own animals. According to one report written at the end of 1988 "it is estimated that less than 15% of the earth moved in garden construction is moved by animal power". Over 50 people have been trained in animal draught techniques. Each project site has an animal draught trainer, who has a training and extension role in cropping and animal draught.

In other pastoral societies, attempts at introducing animal draught to undertake construction tasks have proved unsuccessful (see the case of the scoops in the CARE Borana Project). Turkana are no exception. This reluctance to use their animals to undertake construction tasks may prove a temporary obstacle to the adoption of a new technology in the long term. However, there may be more deep-seated objections related to the already heavy nutritionally related stress levels on animals in a marginal environment such as Turkana District.

Hides and Skins

Hide and skin trading is a recent addition to the project, and is part of an attempt to shift the project focus from gardening to a broader based concern in mainstream pastoral activities. Concern had been voiced for some time by women in the area over the low

prices offered by Somali traders for hides and skins. Since skins are an important source of income for women in the area, the project wanted to influence the market by offering a higher price for skins. Advances of KSh 200 are given to women buyers from *ere* involved in project activities to buy skins (initial capital was provided by an OXFAM loan). They receive a KSh 3 per skin profit when they sell to project storekeepers. The project sells to traders in Lokituang.

Project involvement in hide and skin marketing raises two important issues:

(1) how sustainable is project involvement in the long term. Experience with rural businesses of this kind is that they often eventually go bankrupt because of a lack of business skills on the part of the managers.

(2) creating an artificial market for skins is expensive to maintain,and may call for continued subsidies from either the project or OXFAM.

What is unclear from the documents is that, although the project may feel it is responding to a common complaint of pastoralists that they are being exploited by shopkeepers and local traders how, carefully has the project assessed the economics of the skin trade in good as well as bad years. Once expectations of a certain price have been raised it is difficult to drop the price the next season.

Food Stores

Access to food, particularly grain, at reasonable prices is a constant demand of pastoralists living in remote areas. Partly in response to this demand and the need for storage for agricultural equipment and seeds, the project has constructed three stores at its three original project locations. Store construction was financed partly by the individual contributions of local members and partly by a project/OXFAM contribution. Each store is registered separately with the Ministry of Culture and Social Services as a self-help group. In 1989 OXFAM loaned the project trading capital of KSh 15,000 to finance purchase of grain and other goods for the three locational stores. The stores leader sells the goods from the revolving fund to the locational stores. Each locational committee sets its own prices for goods. According to a recent project review, "By the end of August [1990] the value of cash in hand and stock was enough to cover repayment and maintain purchasing capacity" (Martin, 1990:18).

Rural shops in remote locations are difficult to run at a profit. Overheads are high, especially transport costs which are often crippling. It is difficult to see what advantage the shops can offer customers and members when they charge the same prices for goods as other shops in the same locality, and probably offer a much more limited range of goods (this is the case of the locational shop at Loarenyak reported in Martin, 1990). Even when they manage to undercut the competition the difficulties in maintaining these kinds of prices without external loans and support are immense. Certainly experience from elsewhere suggests that community shops in such locations are difficult to sustain in the face of competition from private traders.

Animal Health

This is a recent addition to the project. The objective of the component is to improve animal health through improved access to non-scheduled drugs and animal health training of livestock owners. An animal health worker was recruited as livestock team leader in March 1990.

At present a baseline livestock survey is proposed and the project has established a KSh 2,000 (USD 80) revolving fund for the purchase of nonscheduled drugs, pending approval of the local Divisional Development Committee and Livestock officer.

The animal health programme is in its infancy. The model is the recently established Samburu Animal Health Programme run by ITDG (see below). However, until the baseline survey is completed it is difficult to anticipate how the programme should operate or what particular animal health problems should be targeted.

Institutional Development

Almost from its inception project management has stressed the need to work with Turkana. As the project has evolved this has been translated into working with traditional Turkana institutions, building up capacity to control and manage the project and project interventions, especially the water harvesting component. This approach culminated in mid-1988 with the handover of project management responsibility to a local management board. According to a recent project review "Community development is considered as a major part of the project's work" (Martin, 1990:23).

In spite of the rhetoric of "strengthening local institutions" and "community participation" which runs through the project, a major constraint is that we are given insufficient background information on traditional Turkana resource-owning groups in the project area to be able to evaluate project claims to be using or working through traditional groups. It is unclear, for instance, from project documents how project *ere* groups relate to traditional *ere* groups, how many people there are in each *ere*, what proportion of *ere* members are involved in project activities, and how these *ere* articulate with the locational committees and other resource management groups in the area. A knowledge of recent Turkana history would indicate that the project constituency is made up of a variety of groups, some much more homogeneous than others. To suggest that we are dealing with indigenous or traditional groups—in every case—is to suggest a view of the past unsupported by the reality.

Project Philosophy and Approach

Project philosophy is based on the view that development is essentially about developing people's capacities to solve their own problems through organisation, training and extension of appropriate and sustainable technologies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Considerable attention has been given since 1986 to monitoring of the results of the water harvesting project. A "Monitoring Turkana Water Harvesting Report" has been prepared by an external consultant to the project (Martin, 1986). Yet in spite of the detailed recommendations in the report the follow-up has been mixed. As a result it is difficult to tell from the information available what plot performance has been like, the details of labour input (compared to unimproved plots) and the overall costs of plots. Some information on costs is available (see Cullis, 1988) but these costs have not been calculated in the overall costs of the project. If they had been then the costs would be likely to be considerably higher than the KSh 2,715–3,175 cost per plot quoted. A very rough calculation would suggest that, if the project has cost a conservative USD 160,000 during the period 1985–90, then the cost of each completed improved plot is in the order of USD 745 per plot or over KSh 18,000 at current rates of exchange. If food-for-work expended on each plot were also taken into account then the cost per plot would be even higher.

While there are obvious drawbacks in such calculations, in particular that the project has done other things apart from water harvesting, it does give an idea of the high costs of water harvesting plots. When looked at in terms of the variable yields that can be expected from such plots the returns are pretty meagre indeed.

Relations with Government

In the first year of project operation, relations with the Turkana Rehabilitation Programme (TRP), under which the project was meant to be operating, were poor. While these improved over the months they remained strained. The project was seen from Lodwar as insufficiently accountable and "doing its own thing". The major problems arose over differences in approach and style. TRP was largely interested in a quick-fix, technological solution to the problem of food and forage production, while the project

pursued a more cautious, community-based approach where results were not always easy to see. Inevitably in such a small scale low-key approach, if government officials raised under a different tradition of development, are to fully understand project goals and to be supportive of them, then considerable effort needs to be made at "talking to government". There is little evidence, however, that this effort was ever spontaneously made by the project. When the project did try to bring government on board it was generally as a result of external pressure.

Comment

Given the small scale of the project, both in terms of project cost and number of beneficiaries, and physical output in terms of numbers of gardens improved, stockowners animals trained, and community stores built, the project has received considerable publicity within ITDG and OXFAM. The reasons for this probably owe much to a) the contrast it presents with other development projects in Turkana in the last 10 years or so, and b) the particular approach adopted. The difficulty for any reviewer, however, is in assessing i) whether the project is likely to have any larger impact on the problems of pastoral development in Turkana, ii) whether it has succeeded in its own terms in establishing sustainable pastoralist-based development institutions, and iii) whether the development and management approach is likely to be replicable elsewhere.

(i) *Problems of Pastoral Development in Turkana*

The project is explicitly aimed at marginal pastoralists. A question which the project fails to address is whether as a "pastoral development project" it is addressing the right problems or constituency. In the long term, whatever the project does, is it appropriate for the project to encourage marginal pastoralists to survive in the pastoral sector? Would it not be more cost-effective for the project to direct its resources at the mainstram pastoral sector? Only by expanding the capacity of this sector to absorb more people—through aggregate increases in livestock and forage production—is the long term future of marginal pastoralists in Turkana likely to be assured.

If the project wants to be a pastoral development project then it at least needs a) to start to debate some of these strategic issues, and b) to get a better idea of how the pastoral system in Lokituang Division actually operates—there is no indication from project documents that the project has any detailed information on livestock movements, relationship between movements, water points, and settlement patterns, ownership and access to resources etc. It is on building blocks like these, however, that the project is likely to build a pastoral as opposed to water harvesting development project.

(ii) *Sustainable Pastoralist Development Institutions*

Much has been made of the traditional institutions through which the project operates. However, project documents are far from clear as to what these institutions are, and how they are constituted. There is certainly no indication that all water harvesting groups are either "traditional" or "sustainable". Buried in the rhetoric of community-based programmes there is a dearth of real information as to the nature, form and functions of these communities.

To date it is clear that in spite of the handover of project management to a local board, OXFAM and ITDG continue to contribute a sizeable financial and technical input, and that this is likely to continue for some time to come.

(iii) *Replicability of the Approach*

Whether the approach is replicable will have to await a larger project. Face to face projects such as the Lokitaung project have different management possibilities from much larger projects. Once projects get beyond a certain size they are inevitably restricted in what they can do, and the degree of participation they can allow.

Ultimately, the sustainability of the approach will depend on the scale of the benefits it brings to project beneficiaries and whether government adopts it. A good start has been made in the establishment of the Kakuma project at the request of the District Ministry of Agriculture. However, much more needs to be done in persuading government officials of the merits of the approach. To do this the project will have to surmount a legacy of mutual suspicion between government and NGOs in the district.

The OXFAM Samburu Pastoral Development Project

History

In 1984 large numbers of Samburu were made destitute by drought. It is estimated that in some areas of the district 75% of the cattle and some 30–50% of the small stock died as a result of the drought.(Simpkin, 1987:2) OXFAM responded to the emergency by funding a destocking programme exchanging dying livestock for maizemeal. The animals were slaughtered locally, the meat dried for local consumption and the hides and skins sold in Nairobi. At the end of the drought OXFAM continued to support families with food-for-work and at the same time launched a restocking programme among some of the destitute families. The local committees which had been established at different centres in the district to facilitate the destocking operation continued to select families for restocking and supervise food-for-work. An OXFAM monitor was attached to each of the centres and the whole operation was supervised by a Project Manager and his assistant.

In 1987 food-for-work was phased out and increasing emphasis placed on building up the capacity of the local committees to establish viable and sustainable pastoralist institutions to take responsibility for development activities in the project area.

Project Objectives

The ultimate goals of the project are to improve food security, facilitate community progress towards self-reliance by using locally available resources to improve, strengthen and diversify the pastoral economy, and to increase the participation of women in the development process. The intermediate project objectives are:

(1) to improve food security through a) a sustainable restocking system in Baragoi Division, b) improved access to veterinary drugs and the establishment of an animal health training programme for livestock owners, and c) the development of an effective early warning system.

(2) to facilitate community progress towards self-reliance through a) an improved understanding of traditional social organisation, b) leadership training and community awareness of development issues.

(3) to increase the participation of women in the development process through leadership skills training for women, and support for womens' groups.

Project Target Population

The project is located in Baragoi division of Samburu District. The division has a population of approximately 30,000 covering an area of nearly 5,500 sq.km. The majority of the population are Samburu pastoralists but there is a significant minority of Turkana, who have steadily been moving into the area since early in the colonial period. Samburu are mainly cattle and small stock pastoralists, but in recent years have begun buying camels.

The OXFAM project in Baragoi is focused on communities around nine centres. These centres, which range in size from 200 to over 800 people, have developed around trade and market stores, missions and schools. A significant number of those nearest to the centres are poor pastoralists. There are considerable differences in livestock holdings both within and between centres (see Isles, 1990).

Project Management

Project management is intended to work through and build up the capacity of local groups to be responsible for their own development. At present these local groups are supported by centralised project management based in Baragoi. The five project staff, who include a women's programme coordinator, are employed on OXFAM salaries and are responsible in the first instance to the Project Manager/Team Leader. The project budget over 3 years, 1989–1992, is over USD 190,000.

Project Components

The project components have evolved and changed over the life of the project. Destocking ended in 1984 and food-for-work to establish tree nurseries and plant reserves of drought-resistant trees and shrubs ended in 1987. Since the end of the relief phase increasing emphasis has been placed by OXFAM on "institution building" and developing community awareness of development issues. The present project components are outlined below:

Restocking

Restocking began in 1984. The intention was to provide destitute families, who wished to return to pastoralism, with a viable package of animals and equipment to enable them to leave food-for-work and return to the pastoral sector (Fry, 1988). The package ranged from 40 to 70 small stock depending on the decision of the local committees, who were elected by local community leaders to select families for restocking. The animals were given as a loan and were expected to be repaid after 2.5 years. The repayments were intended to restock further families. By the end of 1987 some 186 families had been restocked of which approximately 20% were female-headed households. According to a recent review of the project "only 20% of originally restocked families in 1984 have completely returned their loaned animals, and only one-third of the number of the animals have been returned over a 6 year period" (Kerven et al., 1990). In general, it appears that the second round of re-stocking is going much more slowly than expected, as families struggle to repay their original loans.

Animal Health

Animal health is a recent addition to the project. In a baseline survey of animal health needs undertaken by ITDG in 1989 disease was the major problem pin-pointed by stockowners in looking after their animals, followed by drought and lack of water. On the basis of the survey ITDG is supporting an animal health component to the Baragoi OXFAM project. The component empasises the importance of training pastoralists in the recognition, prevention and treatment of disease using simple nonscheduled drugs. Pastoralists are trained in small groups through practical demonstration and through the treatment of their own animals. Training sessions began in May 1990 and by October of that year some 180 individuals had been trained. In addition, the component is intended to improve access to common drugs through the establishment of small local drug shops. At present the project supports a small mission-established drug shop in Baragoi town.

Camel Upgrading

Six Somali stud camels were purchased under the original project in 1985/86 to cross with local camels in order to upgrade Samburu camel stock. The long-term aim was to improve local camel productivity.

Institution Building

The present main project focus is on enabling local communities of pastoralists to take over responsibility for their own development. However, in spite of the rhetoric of community participation, words like "community" and "group" lack any precise definition or reference. While the project works with groups there is little evidence to show that these groups are either sustainable or have any basis in traditional organisation. Since its inception the project has worked largely with marginalised and very

often sedentarised groups outside the pastoralist mainstream. The original restocking committees were merely collections of individuals, often appointed by the local government chief, from around fixed trade centres. They hardly represented the leadership of functioning traditional institutions or resource management units.

Women's Programme

The women's programme is a sub-component of the general project focus on institution building. It is intended to heighten awareness among women that through organisation they can achieve concrete economic objectives, such as the raising of the price of milk in Baragoi market, and participate on an equal basis with men in community decisions. The main activities of the component are liaison and indirect support to local women's groups in the project area. Group activities include trading in hides and skins, running small shops, and trading in livestock. Not all these activities are successful and many small shops go bankrupt.

OXFAM has encouraged the various women's groups near Baragoi town to come together under the umbrella of a women's council. The majority of members of the council are urban or peri-urban women.

Early Warning System

This part of the project is intended to contribute to the overall project objective of improving food security. There is however no clear "system" in place. What normally occurs is that the Project Manager asks the opinions of traditional Samburu and Turkana elders concerning rainfall, livestock movements, vegetation changes and water availability. These opinions are collected together and presented to OXFAM.

Project Philosophy and Approach

The long term OXFAM strategy in Kenya is to empower local community structures, and encourage the development of pastoral NGOs in Kenya. The present project approach emphasises development education, working through local pastoralist groups—the original restocking committees—and women's groups.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Other than the on-going monitoring of the restocking component which is largely done by the restocking committees themselves—a project staff member collects the records from the committees—there is no in-built monitoring component nor set of evaluative indicators for the other components of the project such as institution building, the women's programme etc. How project success can be measured is therefore difficult to know.

At the end of project lifetime it will be extremely difficult for OXFAM to know exactly what it has achieved because in the first place, the project objectives are far too vague; only in the field of animal health has there been any attempt to establish clear project objectives. If institution building is an objective, does this mean just any institution or viable and sustainable pastoralist development institutions? If so, what are the indicators to monitor the achievement of this objective? A major problem is that many of the objectives are not objectives at all but vague undertakings to perform a particular activity, such as leadership training, raising women's issues and working with traditionally organised groups.

What is required is a much more rigorous attempt to define exactly what the project is trying to achieve and to design and implement a monitoring system around agreed indicators. At present the project is just a hotch-potch of different things with no clear thread tying the components together. A concern to improve the position of women is one thing, but within the framework of a pastoral development project this should be in the context of improving the position of pastoralist women, not urban or peri-urban women traders.

Relations with Government

While the project is approved by the district development committee, which is the minimum required by Kenyan law, there appears

to be little effort to involve the project in ongoing government programmes in the area. The one exception appears to be in the field of animal health where genuine effort has been made in recent months to involve the government district veterinary staff.

A potential conflict between government and the project lies in the project emphasis in maintaining some form of open-access pastoralism in Baragoi. Present government policy is intended to push for the development of group ranches in Samburu District. While at present there is little pressure in Baragoi to sub-divide, it is important that when these pressures do develop OXFAM is in a position to influence government policy in the district–this is only likely to be achieved if OXFAM develops channels of communication with district officials.

Comment

The OXFAM Samburu Project has evolved in the course of 5–6 years from a relief to a development project. This journey has been marked by changes of emphasis and project components. Yet the project is still largely embedded in its relief and rehabilitation mode, e.g. top-down management, and a largely marginalised/sedentarised/impoverished constituency, without any clear idea of what communities and resource units it should be dealing with in the pastoral sector or what should be the components of a longer-term pastoral development as opposed to rehabilitation programme. Two major problems are 1) reading through the project literature there is little to indicate an understanding or any concerted attempt at an understanding on the part of project management of the Samburu pastoral system and the historical forces which have shaped it and 2) project management lacks any technical expertise in water, livestock, marketing and range management, the four basic components which should make up a pastoral development project. A focus on institutional development is all very well, but these institutions require a raison d'être. If they are to be development institutions then what are the development interventions around which their membership can coalesce? Animal health needs are an obvious one, and the project with ITDG help is making an important contribution here, but what are the other possibilities? Certainly the project needs to start looking at the major constraints of the Samburu pastoral system and identify some of the opportunities for longer-term interventions. A start has been made with the ITDG baseline but much more needs to be done, e.g. relationship between livestock movements, settlement patterns and distribution of water points; and possibilities of forage interventions in the traditional calf enclosures near to the villages.

At the same time, the project needs to decide exactly which institution(s) it is going to work with and through. Are these going to be traditional Samburu resource management units, such as villages, neighbourhood grazing areas, satellite livestock camps etc., or traditional social organisational units, such as sub-clans and clans, or are they to be entirely new or amalgams of old and new institutions? Until this decision has been made, which will require much more information than we at present have on the way Samburu are organised, then it will be difficult to talk of a participatory pastoral development in Samburu District.

NGOs and the Future of Pastoral Development

Large donor funded pastoral development projects in Africa have generally failed to increase livestock productivity or to improve the standard of living or food security of pastoral peoples (see Sandford, 1983). In an attempt to develop a new approach to pastoral development based on the active participation of pastoralists, NGOs have experimented in recent years with the organisation of pastoral associations based on indigenous institutions. The key words of this new approach are institution building/strengthening and community participation. Largely because of the implications of grassroots development, people participation, and the emphasis on pastoralists with

few resources—the new shibboleths of development—little thought has been given a) to the effectiveness of the new approach in practice , i.e. what does institutional strengthening mean in a project context, and b) whether such an approach can ever be very effective without government support. In the three case studies under review I have attempted to examine the major constraints of the new approach in the context of NGO-supported pastoral development programmes in eastern Africa. While it is recognised that the three case studies do not necessarily cover the full range of NGO approaches to pastoral sector development, it is assumed that they nevertheless identify at least one "typical" NGO approach.
The major constraints identified are the following:

(1) The Lack of Attention to Baseline Data

Whether because of their origins as emergency responses to drought and famine or merely because of a lack of money research and the collection of basic data on the pastoral sector, in particular natural resource management, appears to be given a low priority in at least two of the three projects. The CARE Borana project is exceptional—it was launched on the back of a pre-existing ILCA pastoral systems research project. Since the end of the ILCA project, however, CARE has made little effort to continue to collect baseline data on population, livestock movements, resource management in the new areas in which it operates; several of which were never covered by the ILCA project. It is as if, in CARE's eyes, ILCA exhausted the possibilities of data collection, and there is nothing more to be done. In practice, however, ILCA collected very little data on topics of direct relevance to the CARE institutional programme, e.g. organisation and composition of resource management units. In the two OXFAM projects data on such subjects is hard find. In the Samburu project the assumption is that any relevant data can be gleaned from the various anthropological texts on the Samburu without realising that these texts do not deal in any detail with Samburu resource management. In the Turkana project there has been some data collection, but this has largely concerned garden ownership and the position of women rather than collection of mainstream data on livestock movement patterns, and resource ownership and management.

Without the collection of basic data on the pastoral system and the management of pastoral resources it is difficult to see how any effective pastoral project interventions can be designed nor how project impact can be monitored and evaluated.

(2) The Lack of Definition of Community

In spite of the rhetorical references in all three projects to "community participation" and building on traditional institutions it is difficult to know exactly what is meant by "community" or "traditional institution". It seems as if it is sufficient to mention these words in project documents for everyone to know what is being referred to or meant by the word. However, this is far from the case. There is little point in mentioning the *ere* in Turkana District without explaining in detail how the concept is being used and the extent to which project *ere* are similar to or different from traditional *ere*. Likewise with the use of the word *olla* in the Borana project. In none of the CARE Boran project documents is there a clear and detailed justification for using the *olla* as the main project vehicle. In the Samburu project there is hardly any reference to any traditional institution as such—in this project it is almost as if it is sufficient just to be working with Samburu people to be involved in community strengthening.

These criticisms are not just the grumblings of an anthroplogist concerned about esoteric definitions but go to the heart of the new "community" approach to development, for we have to know what we mean when we talk of community; otherwise the word becomes entirely meaningless. You might just as well talk of local people in general. By using the terms

community or traditional institution, projects are telling us something about themselves—as distinct from other kinds of projects—which they should be prepared to define and explain.

(3) The Lack of Monitoring System

Objectives are so vague and diffuse as to be virtually meaningless. What do we mean when we talk of empowerment, enhancing food security, developing women's leadership skills. If ultimate project goals are vague then intermediate objectives have to be sufficiently clear—at least at the level of project outputs—so that they can be monitored. This is however rarely the case. The two OXFAM projects have virtually no in-built monitoring systems which allow analysis of whether project objectives have been achieved. The CARE project is evaluated against physical targets but this can tell us very little about its impact on food security, livestock productivity, and calf mortality—let alone local "standards of living".

In the past larger donor projects have been heavily criticised by NGOs for being both costly and ineffective. NGOs run a similar danger. By being much smaller they are not necessarily any more cost-effective. Indeed, it is one of the myths of NGOs that smallness has anything to do with cost-effectiveness. The trouble is that the paucity of physical achievements is obscured by a) the rhetoric and ideology of institution building and/or community participation, and b) by the lack of any monitoring system which can even start to measure costs and benefits.

Effective monitoring, however, is crucial if we are to be able to judge the success of the NGO approach. Unfortunately, to date it is an area which has received relatively little attention in NGO projects. Until it does we just do not have the data to tell us that the new approach is any more successful than the old one.

(4) Poor Relations with Government

It appears almost to be as a *sine qua non* that NGO relations with government have to be poor. This is unfortunate because it must affect the ultimate sustainablity of the NGO approach. It is one of the weaknesses of many NGO programmes that they fail to lock into mainstream government programmes. There is little point in developing a community-based approach to pastoral development only to see it collapse because government does not recognise the approach. There are signs in all three projects under review that the NGOs concerned recognise this and are trying to develop their relations with government. However, much remains to be done in view of the long legacy of distrust between the two.

In pastoral areas, where the problems faced by pastoralists often stem from external government interventions, it is particularly important that NGOs act as a bridge between the two sides. Development education is as much a matter of educating government officals as local pastoralists. Much greater emphasis than hitherto needs to be given therefore to the NGO acting as interlocuter. This can only realistically happen if institutionalised channels of communication are opened up with government.

To perform this role at all effectively, NGOs will have to put much greater accent on research—on knowing exactly what is happening in the pastoral area or sector, stimulating debate on key issues which are likely to effect the welfare of pastoral communities in the future, such as land tenure, land adjudication, and implementing with government and larger donors experimental or pilot projects based on community participation, and monitoring and disseminating the results and lessons of such projects.

(5) The Inappropriateness of the Small-Scale Project Approach

A focus on small-scale development projects is all very well if the problems facing people are resolvable at local level. However, many of the problems facing pastoral peoples and areas are regional and national, and cannot be resolved by local community interven-

tions. A criticism of the NGO approach is that it is so small-scale as to be irrelevant given the larger context of pastoralism. If empowerment as a process is to stand any realistic chance of helping local communities it has to be pitched at a level which provides real voice to local demands. In the CARE Borana Project, for example, this is not going to be at the village level. If the Boran voice is to be heard by government then it is only going to be through effective organisation on an area-wide basis incorporating many villages. But it is precisely at this level that CARE is reluctant to work.

NGOs have to be prepared to work at both the micro and macro levels and to trace the linkages between the two. A community focus should not preclude wider regional considerations. OXFAM in Kenya has made a start in this by establishing a pastoralist steering committee at national level to discuss wider national issues affecting the position of pastoralists in the country such as land tenure. This represents an important development, but needs to be expanded by establishing institutional contacts with a) the main Kenyan government ministry concerned with the development of arid and semi-arid lands and b) other large bilateral/multilateral organisations operating in the pastoral sector. An opportunity to do this has recently occurred with the establishment of a pastoral unit in UNICEF/UNSO based in Kenya.

(6) Lack of Technical Backup

It is noticeable how the shift towards a more sociologically aware approach to pastoral development has been combined with a de-emphasis of the role of technology in development. Yet, in spite of the general NGO reaction against quick technical fixes, technology has an important role to play in pastoral development. Western veterinary drugs are regarded by most pastoralists as far superior to their own indigenous preparations. In the same way, while animal draught may be more "appropriate", Boran pastoralists would rather hire heavy machinery to improve their wells than depend on hand labour or their animals to do the job for them. They would also rather use cement than clay to line their cattle troughs.

Appropriate technology may not always be the best or most cost-effective technology. Too often the labour and opportunity costs of "appropriate" interventions are ignored.

If NGOs are to respond to the needs of pastoralists in a cost-effective way then they need to support their programme interventions with appropriate technical advice. The shift towards a more sociological approach to pastoral development should not be at the expense of technical support for programmes. This support may have to do with the best crop combinations and pesticides in Turkana district, the best methods to cure hides and skins in Samburu or the best way to build water tanks in Borana Region. Whatever the identified need NGOs should not down-grade their technical support capacity to such an extent that they can no longer offer timely technical advice—at the present time neither OXFAM in Kenya nor CARE in Borana Region appear to have such a support capability. This is an area where closer relations with government departments, who might have this expertise, would be useful.

Conclusions

In recent years NGOs involved in rural development in Least Developed Countries (LDC's) have ridden on a crest of a public and academic reaction against older, top-down, development approaches. They are considered sensitive to local people, relatively cheap and good at community development. However, in spite of the widespread praise in development circles for the NGO approach to development, the actual record of NGO projects is rarely critically examined. This almost across-the-board willingness to suspend critical judgement cannot help either the NGOs in re-defining their programmes to improve their impact nor the intended beneficiaries of their projects to reap maximum benefit from

them. In this paper I have examined the record of three NGO pastoral development projects in Ethiopia and Kenya. In spite of the differences between them the conclusions are the same for all three projects:

(a) a need for NGOs to more clearly define their objectives and role in pastoral development. If they are to empower local communities then a more adequate definition is needed than hitherto of what these communities are, what the process of empowerment is, and exactly how the communites are to be empowered without government support.

(b) a need for NGOs to open up a dialogue with government and larger bilateral and multilateral donors on the future of pastoral areas. If NGO project interventions and approaches are to be sustainable then they must become part of mainstream government programmes. Without this they run the danger of only further marginalising pastoralists.

(c) a need for NGOs to redirect attention away from small-scale operational projects towards a more explicit advocacy and experimental role. If NGOs are to have a wider impact than simply on the local community then they need to more clearly define their roles as i) a catalyst, experimenting with a particular approach which can then be adopted by larger donors, and ii) an advocate, speaking out for pastoralists in national and international forums. If they are to take on these roles they need to improve their knowledge of pastoral systems, and build up their research capability and capacity.

(d) a need for NGOs to more closely monitor project objectives and achievements. If NGOs are to pioneer new approaches then it is important that the necessary information is available to tell us how successful the approach has been in achieving project objectives. To date there is a dearth of information available on just how successful NGO projects are.

Ultimately, the plight of Africa's pastoral populations can only be addressed by the joint actions of governments, international donors, NGOs and pastoralists alike. If this joint action is to be achieved it will only be on the basis of a common agenda in which all agree that pastoralism is an economically viable, sustainable and worthwhile way of life. If NGOs have a contribution to make to setting the terms of this agenda rather than just responding to periodic crises in the pastoral sector it will mainly be through i) informing policy makers of the local, national and international economic and political processes which are at work helping to increase the vulnerabiliy of pastoralists to drought, and ii) on the basis of the above, the design and implementation in collaboration with other donors and government of effective experimental interventions to reduce this vulnerability in the future.

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