

PENHA

PASTORAL & ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

ISSUE NUMBER 12 | August | 2014

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Supporting Women's Groups and Co-operatives in Somaliland

PENHA has formed a partnership with the US based Arsenault Family Foundation. This Foundation learnt about PENHA's work in Somaliland from its website. It is now funding a project with the following aims:

- to strengthen farmer cooperatives and boost commercial fodder production.
- to set up new enterprises that produce and market honey.
- to provide capital for women's groups engaged in small business, so that they can upgrade and expand their enterprises.

With an initial focus on honey production, the Foundation has provided funds for bee-keeping equipment - most of which has been produced in Somaliland and is providing two months of work for about 40 people. 200 bee hives were distributed in March to women's groups and cooperatives in four villages in Odweine District. Start-up capital was also provided for women's groups engaged in livestock trading and a variety of business activities in three agro-pastoral villages in Togdheer District. PENHA-Somaliland is

providing technical and management training to the groups and cooperatives involved. 80 members of these groups and co-operatives have been given a refresher course in beekeeping and in basic business skills, particularly loan management and organisational management.

A major concern has been getting groups to agree to repay their loans in a context



Honey Production Training

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This issue of the PENHA Newsletter comes with our greetings. We hope you enjoy it and find it of interest. We have appreciated the comments that you have made on previous ones. Please keep them coming. The newsletter is also on our website:

www.penhanetwork.org

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Using Prosopis as animal feed in Sudan and Somaliland

Prosopis Juliflora has spread over many parts of the Horn of Africa - including Sudan - where it has become a serious problem to the local vegetation. Prosopis originated in the Americas where there is a long history of using all parts of the tree - for its wood, for food and for fodder. Thus, for example, the crude protein content of the pods is 16% - a potentially good source of protein for livestock. An added advantage is that Prosopis is available during the dry season when there is an urgent need for animal feed. PENHA in cooperation with the Sudan government's Animal Production and Research Centre (APRC) has developed a feed from Prosopis seed pods for use locally.

With financial support from IFAD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a programme of training to promote the use of this feed has been developed and it is being used in the Kassala region of Sudan as well as in Somaliland.

A detailed training manual in English has been prepared for use in Sudan and is being translated into Arabic and Somali. This manual has focused on use by women. Four types of training have taken place - with a total of 295 people

attending the sessions of which just over 40% were women. The training packages are carefully focused on different groups.

The training workshops are taking place in the villages and communities around Kassala. The 265 prosopis choppers, specially designed by PENHA with the APRC, have been made locally.

An important stage is a survey of Prosopis in the area of the project. The study focuses mainly on the pastoralist



Trainees bagging up the feed

and agro-pastoralist communities of the countries where Prosopis has spread. There will be a comprehensive review of any relevant reports and literature, with particular attention to any previous assessments of Prosopis control or alternative use; interviews with the personnel of agencies with relevant programmes, gathering experience and knowledge, as well as meetings with the key staff of the local authorities and ministries; and collation and presentation of existing data, from reports produced by other agencies, including IFAD, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia (FSNAU), universities, research centres and Government ministries in Sudan and Somaliland.

The project will culminate in a conference in Addis Ababa on "Exploring Prosopis Management and Policy Options". This will have contributions from experts from Ethiopia and from Sudan and Somaliland. The aim is to develop a practical approach to the use of Prosopis as an unexploited natural product in the region and not just as a weed which is very difficult and expensive to remove.

Pastoralism and PENHA in Ethiopia

Ethiopia lies at the centre of the region and has the largest pastoralist population in the region. Home to the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, and an important centre for the regional body IGAD (the Intergovernmental Authority on Development), Ethiopia plays a very significant role in regional policymaking.

The Government has a strong pastoralism policy, with its \$150 million Pastoral Community Development Programme (PCDP), supported by the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The programme, which PENHA's Dr. Tafesse Mesfen helped to develop, has a participatory element, involving local communities in setting priorities. PENHA and others are encouraged to come in with complementary activities,

particularly capacity building at the local level.

PENHA's Ethiopian Board members, Dr. Hirut Terefe and Dr. Tafesse Mesfin, and senior Associates, Dr. Muhammed Musa, Yishi Gemeda and Beruk Yemane have continued to do a wide range of valuable work.

PENHA's local partners, Pastoral Concern and the Ethiopian Agro-Pastoralist Development Association (EAPDA) are active in civil society forums, and eager to collaborate. PENHA is also developing its links with Addis Ababa and Mekelle Universities. PENHA's IFAD Prosopis Management programme has benefited from information and advice provided by Ethio-Feed, a private company producing animal feed and providing training for livestock keepers. This diverse

range of Ethiopian collaborators is vital to PENHA's role educational, research and programme activities.

PENHA's legacy in Ethiopia remains significant. It has helped to foster the development of civil society as well as government organisations and policies.



PENHA staff with Beruk Yemane of Ethio-Feed

PENHA's London Office

PENHA has its head office in central London. It is small, with a core staff of six regular and part time workers, but it is vital to PENHA's work. Staff participate in different development forums - for example with IIED and in Germany at the Humbolt University.

The London office supports the work of the regional country offices in a number of ways.

- Raising the funds and resource necessary for their work with pastoralists, as well as reporting to supporters and donors about the use of their funds.
- By its membership of the Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism (CELEP), it joins with other organisations with the same perspective.
- Its website and the use of social media is informing people about the issues facing pastoralists as well as

networking with others who are similarly committed.

- It has the responsibility of producing strategic documents in collaboration with its colleagues in the region.
- It is registered with the Charity Commission and with Companies House, and so has a clear and regulated legal basis.
- It has worked with other European groups in an EU funded project "Food We Want" on food production and use in the UK and in Africa.

The production of an Annual Report and Accounts, audited by legally qualified external accountants and accepted by its Board means that PENHA is able to accept grants from many Trusts and other grant making bodies which limit their contributions to registered charities.

What the PENHA Head Office in London is NOT is an Ivory Tower.

Supporting Women's Groups in Somaliland

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where a number of similar groups have been given large cash grants by other charities with no expectation of having to repay them. PENHA is aware that loan management requires flexibility in a semi-arid environment, which is subject to severe dry seasons and frequent drought. For example, there are two honey harvesting seasons, and two seasons where harsh environmental conditions limit local economic activity. These concerns were explicitly written into the agreements signed with women's groups and cooperatives, following in-depth and lengthy discussions, which included local leaders (village heads, elders and members of village committees.)

Despite these challenges, PENHA remains confident that groups and co-operatives will ultimately be able to establish profitable businesses and repay loans.

Empowering Ugandan Women's Groups

Women's Groups Uganda which have received support through PENHA are regularly visited by local PENHA staff. Five groups visited very recently demonstrated the importance of doing so. They had received tailoring material (including both sewing and knitting machines), milk processing equipment and goats. The Ntutsi Twekembe group reported:

"These monitoring visits carried out by PENHA motivates us and give us hope. We know PENHA has not forgotten us and that makes us not want to let PENHA down.

"Our group has a strong element of unity. If one of the group members has a problem, we have a meeting and make a decision to give the unfortunate member the proceeds from the group's savings box. The Business Skills training we have attended in previous years has helped us in our group dynamics and in our dealings with each other as members. Inviting us to participate in these workshops also opened our eyes and we now share ideas; we have no time for rumour mongering anymore."

Their visit included the Kanyaryeru Bakayara Tweyombekye Women's Group which had received a cream separator donated by PENHA's patron, Joanna Lumley. This equipment is used to produce gee and butter from milk. The group is hiring it out to local people for Uganda shillings 200,000/- (= £53) per month.

The Ntutsi Twekembe Group also reported:

"We were able to get a goat each for all the group members, we are 15 members in total. The goats have been very

helpful financially. When a male kid is born we sell it at the market to supplement on our children's school fees, or even to give a loan to a needy neighbor or relative. This has strengthened our relationships with people around us. Through goat rearing we have also learnt to save as the responsibility of looking after goats has opened our eyes."

However not all the groups worked together quite so well. The PENHA staff had to arbitrate in Akaku Tutungukye women's group which had split into two. The reasons were complicated and partly caused by the problem of not owning group land for the goats. Because some of them would stray, they destroyed a neighbour's garden plot and others was killed by dogs. Accusations were flying around. In the end, they were helped by PENHA to divide and form two separate groups.

The work with women's groups is important for women's broader participation in the economy and society, and are vehicles for a whole set of related development activities.



25 years of PENHA - a conversation with Zeremariam Fre, Director

What inspired the founding of PENHA in 1989?

The apparent lack of knowledge about pastoralism and its contribution to local national and regional economies, the limited capacity of governments in the Horn of Africa to formulate appropriate development policies for pastoralists and the general lack of a voice for pastoral peoples inspired and motivated me to aim to establish an African-led regional institute for pastoralism and the environment in order to fill some of these gaps.

PENHA prides itself on being the first African led and inspired regional NGO bonding Horn peoples across political, ethnic, ecological and socio-economic barriers.

During 1991 PENHA became a registered non-profit Company Limited by Guarantee under English law and was registered as a UK charity in 1994. In 1993 it formally established its first regional office within the main campus of Addis Ababa University thus bringing PENHA close to the people to whom it was committed.

How has PENHA developed over the past 25 years and what have been its successes and its challenges?

The period falls clearly into two phases. During phase one, 1989-1998, PENHA's central task was to become a lead agency in promoting and transmitting new thinking on pastoralism at local, national and regional level using the regional office in Ethiopia as its main hub. By 1997 PENHA was evolving from being a regional network to becoming a regional centre of excellence

and plans were in place and funds raised to establish a regional institute. It also continued its commitment to empowering pastoralists to advocate for themselves.



Unfortunately, the Ethio-Eritrea border conflict erupted in mid 1998 and PENHA had to close its regional office. The crisis forced PENHA to change its strategy and adopt a country focussed programme approach. Between 2000 and 2001 it opened offices in Sudan, Somaliland and Uganda, while continuing to operate through partners in Ethiopia and Eritrea. This change of direction has, in fact, been positive and has brought PENHA closer to the pastoral and agro-pastoral people at country level.

What are PENHA's new priorities in this 25th anniversary year?

Others have followed where PENHA pioneered and today government institutions, the academia and several home-grown non-state actors are playing a prominent role in pastoral development.

At the same time there are new challenges to pastoral livelihoods in the region: climate change, population pressure, expanding urbanisation and pressure from governments pushing for

a settlements policy, mining activities, conflicts of land tenure rights and regional and local security issues.

More positively, there are emerging livelihood systems and opportunities for pastoralists and other rural communities throughout the region which should not be ignored:

- Stronger urban-rural socio-economic linkages leading to expanding opportunities for women within a semi sedentarised system.
- Pastoralists are now beginning to have a voice in local and national government and to benefit from government and NGO supported social services such as education and health
- Improved communications and access to markets are helping both pastoralist and rural communities

Such changes will continue to shape the future of pastoralism and agro-pastoralism in the IGAD region and PENHA's new organisational vision, and its mission and strategic priorities must accommodate them.

ON 30th November 2014 PENHA will celebrate its 25th anniversary. It is appropriate that the celebration will take place in Ethiopia where PENHA staff will be gathered to reflect on the lessons of the past and to develop a new strategy for the future. Other celebrations throughout its 25th year will include in the UK an international thematic conference on pastoralism and an exhibition, and a book on gender and development based on the PENHA experience.

The PENHA regional dream lives on!!

PENHA needs your help

We work from a small office in central London or from offices in the region. Our staff is mostly unpaid volunteers or part time workers. They do so because of commitment to the work of PENHA. But our volunteers need basic services - email, an office, etc. Please donate through one of the following websites:

www.penhanetwork.org/ways-helping-penha
www.justgiving.com/penha/donate/

PENHA - 1 Laney Building, Portpool Lane, London EC1N 7UL
Tel or Fax: 0044 (0) 207 242 0202;
info@penhanetwork.org and www.penhanetwork.org

Charity number 1038957 Company number 2658932

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