

PENHA

Patron Joanna Lumley

Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa

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Soil and water conservation works by pastoralist women in Somaliland



The Drought in the Horn of Africa What is PENHA doing?

The drought – and the famine resulting from this – is serious and is causing devastation in the Horn of Africa – especially Somalia. This is affecting neighbouring countries where thousands of starving people are flooding over the borders into overcrowded camps. However it is a well known that while drought is a natural phenomenon, famine is the result of the failure of governments to deal with either the natural or

human results.

PENHA is not asking for money to help ameliorate the famine – but it is working in all parts of the Horn of Africa to help pastoralists to face their future in a part of the world which has always been as. Droughts are systemic – not sporadic. There is a need to heed the early warning famine alerts, to take timely actions and to have long term and rid and has suffered from droughts for the past 60 or more years effective development to tackle such disaster – not just to treat the symptoms rather than the causes.

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.penhainetwork.org

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Women migrating to better pastures in Somaliland



Sewing and knitting machines for Ugandan women

An important part of PENHA'S strategy for reducing poverty and helping development among pastoralist communities is to expand opportunities for women and girls. As part of this, PENHA has given training in basic business skills and provided improved breeds of small livestock (especially goats) and, just recently, sewing and knitting machines.

With funds provided by the Brentwood United Reformed Church, a total of 18 tailoring machines (sewing, zig-zag and knitting machines) were given to eight women's groups with between five to ten active members in each. They are based in the Lwengo, Kiruhura and Sembabule districts in Western Uganda. These were distributed in June when representatives of the groups came together in Mbirizi – not just to receive and be shown how to use these machines but also to share their situations with each other. They described both their achievements but also the challenges that they faced.

Most of them had more than one activity – most kept animals such as goats (which were supported

and, in some cases, provided by PENHA), pigs and handicrafts such as mats and baskets. These were in addition, to sewing and tailoring. The challenges included the lack of land for animals, the problem of



Celebrating sewing machines

getting the material for the handicrafts and for the tailoring machines and, of course, the remoteness of most groups from towns in which to market their wares.

The women were very happy with the extra machines for their groups – and this can be seen from the dancing and enthusiasm with which they took the equipment home. The combination of training for small businesses along with the provision of equipment has given a real boost to the lives of women in these eight groups.



The women taking their equipment home from Mbirizi

New opportunities for pastoralists

Working with the International Labour Office (ILO) in Nairobi, PENHA Somaliland designed a programme of activities aimed at promoting both immediate employment as well as future enterprises, all of which will support the development of Somaliland and the lives of its inhabitants. This programme is taking place in the Togdheer and Sanaag regions.

The programme includes the rehabilitation of an old, British built, canal which diverts water from a seasonal river to an area of land which is being brought back into productive use. A valley dam has

been rebuilt and this will provide a reliable water source for most of the year for two pastoralist communities.

The photo on

the front page shows that most of the workers were women along with unemployed youth. It is planned to give jobs to 5,000.

A longer term aspect of the programme is the support of women in producing honey for sale and fodder for use in periods of drought. A market study has been completed which shows that there is a real market for these products – but there is a considerable scope for improving the quality of the honey and fodder as well as a need for more effective marketing. The project is being done in partnership with Practical Action in Nairobi and the Academy for Peace and Development and is funded by the UK's Department for International Development. It will end in October 2011.



Qoyta, Somaliland

Women's Economic Empowerment Programme (WEEP)

This programme has been a major activity of PENHA over the last four years. It has been funded by Danida, the Danish Foreign Ministry, and has taken place in Eastern Sudan, Uganda and Somaliland. The aim is to give pastoralist women the capacity to run small businesses which will give them an independent income. A major benefit this will bring is that women tend to spend their money on the family – particularly on health needs as well as supporting the education of their children.

There are several aspects of the programme. Firstly, a number of base line studies have been undertaken to identify the needs of pastoralist women in the particular areas in which they live. Resulting from this, a number of training workshops have been held for small businesses. Representatives were sent from local women's groups. Booklets in English, Somali and Arabic (in Sudan) resulting from the workshops are available for wider use. Value chain analysis, to identify the marketing chain, has also been done in the different areas in order to develop marketing possibilities for the women's business. The women's groups are producing clothes, baskets, maps, honey, animal feed and other locally produced wares. In Uganda, some pastoralist women have had

their product names stolen by other groups using their names. PENHA Uganda has joined with the local branch of the African Women's Economic Policy Network to try to address this issue by providing a standardisation service which is appropriate for small traders.

In this final stage of the programme, PENHA is sharing its experience in the three countries with local administrators and other organisations at both local and national level. For example, in Uganda it invited a local Councillor to the distribution of the sewing and knitting machines to pastoralist women. In Somaliland, PENHA has taken part in a number of national meetings. At an international conference in Addis Ababa this year, a PENHA representative gave a paper on the "Economic empowerment for pastoralist women in the Horn of Africa: Comparative reflections on policy and practice". This described PENHA's experience working with the pastoralist women and the



Business skills training in Somaliland

promotion of development of policies for inclusive societies in Africa. Following evaluations of the programme in the three different countries, a meeting will be held in Ethiopia to bring the programme to a conclusion, to describe the similarities and the differences in the experiences of women and their economic empowerment in the different parts of the Horn of Africa.

The programme has been integrated with the other work of PENHA. In Uganda, for example, the distribution of goats to pastoralist women's groups (with about 100 50% or 75% cross bred goats being distributed in the past year), and the provision of tailoring equipment to these groups has begun to bring economic empowerment alive. In Sudan, the link to the NOVIB fodder development programme has been very productive – and PENHA's local partner, PEAKS (Pastoral Environment Association in Kassala State) has supported the development of a number of large and powerful women's groups (with up to 50 members per group). The first has been registered with the Kassala Humanitarian Affairs Commission – a significant achievement. In Somaliland, the International Labour Organisation programme has benefited greatly from the women who have been to the WEEP workshops.



Improving traditional weaving skills in Kassala, Eastern Sudan

promotion of development of policies for inclusive societies in Africa.

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A successful Sponsored Walk

This year's 10 km sponsored walk was a great success. Nine of us walked through the Essex countryside on the Spring Bank Holiday at the end of May. We had contributions which ranged from £5 to £1,000, mostly in British pounds but with Euros from continental supporters, birr from Ethiopia and dollars from the US. 88 individual donations were made - with others from groups such as workmates or from students returning from a

Halfway through the walk



field trip in Ethiopia. A little over £3,000 was contributed, including GiftAid. You can see some of our walk from a short video on our website.

If you think that PENHA's work is valuable and makes a difference to the life of nomadic pastoralists, then please consider making a donation to our organisation. You will be helping PENHA empower women, men and local organisations in the Horn of Africa. Put this address into your browser:

www.penhanetwork.org/pages/donate

and you will then be sent to our page for donations where you can also have a look at our Financial Yearly Report.

Advocacy in Europe

Dr. Zeremariam Fre, PENHA's Director, met with about 20 representatives of other European organisations, along with three from East Africa, which together form the Coalition of European Lobbies on East African Pastoralism (CELEP). The meeting was attended for part of the time by Fiona Hall, a Member of the European Parliament. The aim was to discuss advocacy policies within the European Union as well as to engage with NGOs from the region. In particular, it discussed strategies on how CELEP could advance the new African Union framework on pastoralism. The meeting was hosted by Practical Action and was held at their headquarters in Rugby, the Schumacher Centre - after its founder Dr. Fritz Schumacher, the author of the ground-breaking book "Small Is Beautiful". The photo below is of those attending standing in front of the Schumacher Centre.



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Agro-pastoralists in South Sudan

Dr. Zeremariam Fre visited South Sudan shortly before its independence celebration as part of a group sent by the European Union to formulate a programme for small farmers and agro-pastoralists. He was part of a group of eight national and international consultants - and was the senior expert on food security. The programme will be for three years and will be worth 14 million Euros. It will be based in the Greater Bahr el Ghazal region where the European Commission has been working since 2006. The groups detailed proposals have been accepted by both the EU and by the Government of South Sudan.

Art to EastAfrica

In the middle of June, PENHA joined with a group on the top of the Queen of Hoxton in east London which is planning to bring Art to East Africa. The inspiration of the initiative is Ruweyda Dool, a designer of clothes and jewellery. PENHA exhibited paintings showing the life of pastoralists in Ethiopia and craft works made by women in Kassala, Sudan. This was an enjoyable beginning of what should be a fruitful partnership.

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