



PENHA looks to its future

**Regional Consultations and the Way Forward
Addis Ababa Regional Workshop, December 2011**



Summary Report



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Our Mission

PENHA's mission is to reduce poverty among the pastoralists in the Horn of Africa through the empowerment of communities and to foster sustainable and dignified livestock-based and non-livestock-based livelihoods.

Our Objectives

Fostering sustainable livelihoods requires a co-ordinated approach at the grassroots and policy levels. PENHA therefore commits itself to two goals:

To empower pastoralist communities and their institutions to play a full role in their own development

To influence development policy and development programme design in order to foster sustainable livelihoods among pastoralists

Acknowledgement

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Regional Consultations and the Way Forward

Introduction

PENHA held a regional workshop at Desalegn Hotel, Addis Ababa, in December 2011, with thirty participants from across the Horn of Africa.

Two separate workshops, each with quite distinct purposes, were combined into one week-long event. The first three-day workshop aimed to review PENHA's three-year, Danida-funded, Women's Economic Empowerment Programme (WEEP), implemented in Somaliland, Eastern Sudan and Uganda, and to build upon it, outlining future plans. This was immediately followed by a second three-day Strategic Planning workshop, intended to help PENHA to develop its strategic plan for the next three to five years, as well as to assess the prospects for pastoral development programs in Ethiopia. (Both workshops were supported by funds from Danida.)

The WEEP programme was part of the Danish Government's "Women in Africa" intervention, initiated in 2006. A formal agreement between PENHA and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was signed in December 2007 – and the programme under the title of "Economic Empowerment of Pastoral and Agro-pastoral Women in the Horn of Africa" commenced in 2008.

The main objectives of the WEEP programme were:

1. To equip women with the skills and knowledge needed to undertake new enterprises, or expand existing ones
2. To increase women's access to finance and productive assets
3. To promote supportive policies
4. To strengthen PENHA's institutional capacity to deliver programs in support of gender equity

The main activities included:

- Socio-economic Baseline Surveys in the various districts and localities, supporting program design and policy work.
- Value Chain Analyses, assessing the markets for existing and potential products.
- Business Skills Training Workshops for women's groups, with exhibitions of their products for trade-promoting agencies.
- A range of complementary activities, including grants of productive assets (such as exotic goats and sewing machines) and training in improved fodder production.
- Multi-Stakeholder Policy Workshops, with local and central government, the private sector and civil society, looking at the issues facing pastoralist women entrepreneurs.

Value Chain Analyses looked at processing and prices (mark-ups) along the value chain from producer to consumer. They aimed to identify specific interventions that could enhance women's participation in markets. A general finding was that women's groups and cooperatives can allow women to take advantage of economies of scale, market products effectively and move up value chains.

The analytical components of the programme were crucial, in providing a basis for the tailoring of activities to specific, local conditions, and for well-informed policy work. This is a fundamental aspect of the way that PENHA works – policy work is informed by work at the grassroots level

(which delivers tangible benefits for participants), rather than driven by pre-determined conclusions developed in London.

In order to broaden people's horizons and share experience regionally, it had been intended to organize exchange visits involving pastoralist women and entrepreneurs from the different countries, but for a range of reasons, this was not possible. The Addis workshop was, however, used to look at the issues from a regional, Horn of Africa, point of view. The participation of PENHA's Ethiopian associates and representatives of NGOs active in different parts of Ethiopia helped to broaden the sharing of experience.

PENHA country staff from Somaliland, Sudan and Uganda were joined by regional and London staff as well as colleagues from Ethiopia, including two PENHA Board Members (Prof. Hirut Terrefe of Addis Ababa University and Dr. Taffese Mesfin) and PENHA's representative in Ethiopia, Dr. Mohammed Mussa. In an unusual step, the external evaluators who had assessed the programme in Somaliland, Sudan and Uganda were asked to present their findings and participate fully in the discussions.

PENHA was fortunate to have the committed participation of several senior figures in Ethiopian pastoral development. Ethiopian participants included:

- The Pastoral Community Development Program (PCDP) of the Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs
- Mekelle University
- Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia (PFE)
- Ethiopian Agro-Pastoralist Development Association (EAPDA)
- Pastoralist Concern (PC)
- Representatives of the Oxfam-America and Save the Children (US) programmes
- Representatives of two commercial (milk and fodder) enterprises

PENHA's local partner in Sudan, the Pastoral Environment Association Kassala State (PEAKS) also participated. The Strategic Planning Workshop was facilitated by Mr. Lars Udsholt, a senior development consultant from Denmark.

Presentations

PENHA's Director, Dr. Zeremariam Fre, started with a historical and regional overview on pastoral development and PENHA.



He emphasized three PENHA principles. Firstly, the region has sufficient human, natural and livestock resources and with the determined efforts of its people can generate development processes leading to self-reliance and peaceful co-existence. Secondly, seeking African solutions to African problems, building on African competence and resources, is central to PENHA's vision and its long term sustainability. Thirdly, women in general and pastoralist women in particular are largely marginalized in the Horn of Africa and PENHA is fully committed to the

emancipation of women in spirit and deed. Dr. Fre noted that, with rapid social and economic in the region, pastoralism is evolving and changing and PENHA must recognize this in its work.

He was followed by Dr. Hirut Tereffe, a PENHA Board member and a Professor at Addis Ababa University. She spoke about the position of women in Ethiopia and the work of the Institute of Gender Studies in the country as a whole as well as in the pastoralist community.



Mr. Belayhun Mamo of IFAD gave an engaging presentation on the Ethiopian Government's innovative Pastoral Community Development Program, funded by the World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. The program takes a strongly bottom-up approach, emphasizing education and community empowerment. So far, it has covered about half of Ethiopia's vast pastoralist area. Results have been encouraging and the PCDP welcomes complementary efforts by CSOs.

Ms. Honey Hassen of the Pastoral Forum Ethiopia described the situation of women in pastoralist societies, with gender inequality embedded in their social, economic and political structures. She emphasized the inter-relatedness of social and economic empowerment. PFE has produced a Generic Gender Guide for its members which provides a practical guide to promoting gender equality for all in sustainable pastoral development.

Three presentations were made by representatives from Pastoral Concern, the Ethiopian Agro-Pastoralist Development Association and Save the Children (US) describing their gender-related programmes. All three concentrated on supporting women's economic empowerment along with other aims. While socio-cultural conditions varied, they faced some similar challenges: recurrent drought, the difficulty of getting credit and low levels of literacy, pointing to the need for basic education – for all pastoralists, but especially for women. At the same time, they reported a significant gain in confidence by women participating in their programmes.

PENHA's Women's Economic Empowerment Programme

Amsale Shibeshi, Regional Programme Coordinator for PENHA, gave an overview of the Women's Economic Empowerment Programme, WEEP. This programme was funded by the Danish International Development Authority (Danida) for a period of three years, working with women's groups in the "Cattle Corridor" of western Uganda, Kassala State in eastern Sudan and in three districts in Somaliland.



The principal goal was to increase women's independent incomes by:

- equipping women with the skill and knowledge needed to develop new enterprises
- increasing women's access to finance and markets
- increasing women's access to information and
- increasing women's participation in business networks

The programme combined analysis of local conditions with the design of local tailored training and complementary interventions. Policy and advocacy workshops were held on the basis of the analytical work, with specific issues highlighted in each country - restrictions on formal-sector employment in Somaliland, as well as the transformational potential of telecommunications and mobile phone banking, and counterfeit products in Uganda.

She emphasized the tangible benefits of business skills training and support for women's micro-enterprise, with women able to cover school fees and medical expenses. But, transformational change requires more.

It is important to link up the grassroots and policy levels. First, micro-projects should inform and enrich policy work. Next, projects, analysis and research must support actions at higher levels. Moreover, achieving transformational change requires supportive policies on trade and taxes (with private and public investments in transport, telecommunications and education and health services trade, taxes) as well as working with higher level business networks (attracting investment).

In the longer term, the key issues are:

1. Getting more pastoralist girls into schools;
2. Improving the quality of education;
3. Increasing women's access to information and training;
4. Improving transport and telecommunications infrastructure and
5. Fostering investment and small and medium enterprises which can employ women.

Thinking regionally, with similar pastoral communities and differing circumstances, there were lessons for each country from others' experiences. Mobile phones in Somaliland enabling women to make payments without traveling. In Uganda, strong support for women's participation in public life helping women to participate in business networks. The scope of the Somali diaspora and regional business networks. The influence of satellite television. Across the region, rapid economic growth and urbanization are bringing new opportunities for women, as well as new challenges.

Country Reports

PENHA's WEEP Project Officers from the three countries presented country reports.

The Uganda project officer, Elizabeth Katushabe, gave a briefing on activities, results and challenges in Uganda. 190 women from a number of women's groups were directly trained – and it was estimated that a total of 4,000 would indirectly benefit. Women who received exotic goats (breeding stock) were able to significantly increase their incomes.



She identified the following key challenges:

- Lack of a clear national policy on pastoralism
- Rigid cultures that still want to confine women to specific roles
- Lack of infrastructure and services in the pastoral areas
- Low levels of education and literacy among pastoral communities
- Women's lack of assets to use as collateral to get loans
- Lack of mutual trust between the financial institutions and the pastoralists
- Donors' main focus is on the poorer, conflict-affected north and north-eastern parts of Uganda, neglecting the (equally disadvantaged) pockets of poverty in (pastoral) western Uganda.



In Sudan, the WEEP programme was implemented in partnership with the Pastoral Environment Association Kassala State (PEAKS). Its Chair, Mustafa Fayd, gave an overview on the programme. About 2,000 women benefited from the programme – with a training of trainers approach allowing the passing on of knowledge by women who had directly received training by PENHA. One result of the programme was that 13 Women’s Leagues (groups) with 40-50 members had been established.

Halimo Elmi presented the experience of PENHA in Somaliland where the WEEP programme had been developed in eleven areas, six pastoral (dependent wholly on livestock) and five agro-pastoral (where rain-fed farming takes place along with animal husbandry). A total of 360 women were directly trained. Apart from being better business women, cohesive groups and increased incomes gave women a stronger voice in local affairs. (“Money talks!”) In one locality, women pooled their resources to pay for the policing of a ban on environmentally destructive charcoal production (which, with the burning of tree cover, also undermines pastoral production). Women also contributed money for sanitation and responses in health emergencies, particularly for women in labour. Women in groups have begun to play a role in local decision making. However, Halimo pointed out that there are still many challenges and gaps to be addressed – including women’s lack of confidence and self-esteem, the high rate of illiteracy, and recurrent drought.

External Evaluations

The programme in each country had involved a set of related elements – analytical and policy work, together with business skills training and other support for organized women’s groups at the local level.

The independent evaluators, Fouzia Musse, Zenab Idris Mohammed and Hilda Akabwai, assessed the programmes - whether they attained their initial objectives and, the broader aims, whether they were effective in empowering the women for the future. Evaluators looked at project documents and visited project areas, meeting with the women’s groups and assessing local conditions.

In Somaliland, Fouzia Musse found that over 360 pastoral and agro-pastoral women from 11 villages had received business skills training. One of the effects of the training was to increase women’s confidence in themselves. They also began to think more carefully about the businesses they are engaged in and the need to diversify activities. More cohesive groups also helped women to lower some business costs, for example, by sending one member to make purchases in Hargeisa, the capital. They began to participate in political discussions and decision making in their villages – and this had been met by a willingness on the part of the local village heads and elders’ councils to include them. The principal weaknesses were the program’s limited coverage and engagement with government beyond line ministries.



In Sudan, Zenab Idris Mohammed found that 770 women from 11 agro-pastoralist villages around Kassala participated in workshops with trainers from Kassala University, from a number of banks and from the Animal Production and Research Centre in Khartoum. Training in improved fodder production bolstered women’s animal husbandry, their principal economic activity. In addition, a group of beneficiaries took part in a study tour to the distant capital, Khartoum. The evaluator commented on the importance of activities

outside the home for women from what are deeply conservative communities, with cultural restrictions on women's mobility. She found the policy and strategy for marketing promising. However she expressed concern that the "men were still at some distance from the point at which they will offer positive assistance".

Hilda Akabwai evaluated the programme in Uganda, which involved business skills workshops in Masaka and Nakasongola for 110 women from ten groups. She found that the women were infused with new ideas, had developed new business enterprises and networks and, at a very practical level, had a better grasp of how to price their services and products. PENHA also joined with another NGO, the Africa Women's Economic Policy Network (AWEAPON), to hold a multi-stakeholder workshop with government officials and the relevant statutory bodies to discuss the challenges women face in marketing their products, focusing on the particular problem of counterfeiting, highlighted in our analytical work. One group which had secured contracts to sell their high-quality ghee in supermarkets had found that an inferior product was being illegally marketed with their branded labeling.



All three evaluations highlighted the problems caused by the low level of education of many (in some cases, most) of the women and the low rate of literacy. They also reported the difficulty of getting the start-up capital needed for the women to be able to make use of their training. However women were inventive in their determination to get into business. In Uganda, for example, the sale of a chicken allowed one woman to get the capital necessary to get into the banana business (plantain is a staple food there). In both Uganda and Somaliland, women have worked as labourers – in a quarry and in digging canals – to get the necessary start-up funds. The continued support of these groups remains a challenge for PENHA.

The WEEP project was part of the Danish government's major "Women in Africa" programme, with continental scope. PENHA has been very pleased to have been part of it, and fully intends to build on the work conducted.

The Strategic Planning Workshop

In the second workshop, PENHA staff and associates began to work towards a strategic plan for the next five years. This workshop was also supported by DANIDA with a consultant, Lars Udsholt from the Danish organisation, Capacitate. He gave very clear guidelines on how to proceed.

He started with some reflections. Quoting from a Chinese saying of Confucius:

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

PENHA has fallen more than once – but it has risen again in a remarkable way. Lars felt that PENHA has a unique position as a regional organization working at both the grassroots and policy levels.



Presentations from Ethiopian participants set out the context for planning, describing developments in Ethiopian pastoralism and the activities of the different actors, government, private sector and

civil society. Belayhun Mamo described the bottom-up approach of the Ethiopian government's Pastoral Community Development Program (PCDP), and how it fits in with the “Growth and Transformation Plan”, emphasizing the need for NGOs and research institutions to play a supportive and complementary role. Abdi Abdulahi Deere of Pastoralist Concern described the considerable infrastructural development in pastoral areas. For example, in 1997 in Filtu (in the Somali region of Ethiopia, where PENHA had worked in the late 1990s and early 2000s), oil lamps were the only form of illumination. They gave way to diesel generators and then photovoltaic panels in subsequent years. Now, 15 years later, Filtu has 24-hour electricity from a hydro-electric scheme. New economic opportunities, with more settled lives and the growth of services, have been accompanied by significant social change.

In group work, participants conducted a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of PENHA in each country. Plenary sessions produced a synthesis, with an overall, regional view.



PENHA’s Strengths included its long institutional history in the region, its African-led basis and its support for local organisations. A major Weaknesses was its uncertain funding and consequently limited administrative capacity. PENHA had also neglected broader environmental issues, despite the increasing significance of climate change. It also did not adequately disseminate its research findings and the results of its practical experience. Among Strengths and Opportunities, included a solid basis of

knowledge which could be shared to the advantage of pastoralists and academic institutions. Furthermore, donors are becoming more interested in funding work with pastoralists. Threats included regional insecurity, the difficulty of regular re-registration in some countries and the increasing frequency of droughts.

The meeting then divided in order to consider the following three topics in terms of PENHA’s long term planning.

Following up on the Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme. In its planning, PENHA had assumed that the programme would proceed in more or less the same way, and at the same pace, in all three countries – but this was not so. Future plans for regional programs should take this into account. In Uganda, there are three distinct groups of women to consider:

1. Better educated and connected women entrepreneurs, including women who have benefited from training – but need support to upgrade their businesses and market more sophisticated products.
2. Less well educated women, often with less sophisticated businesses, including women who have found the content difficult to grasp and need more training to improve their capacity
3. The vast majority of women in pastoralist communities who have not received any training or support.



It was felt that different kinds of support are needed for the first group, while the programme needs to continue with more of the same for the last two groups.

Research and Policy Development. A number of key issues were identified – evolving pastoralism (including conflict with farmers), climate change and its effects on pastoralism and the implications for women of trends towards settlement and urbanisation. PENHA’s research had

mostly come out of programmes – a form of action research – or had been directly related to the actual needs of pastoralists (such as the development of animal feed for eastern Sudan). PENHA needed to expand its partnerships. It also needs to develop and expand the dissemination of the knowledge it has generated.

Environmental Issues. PENHA is a member of the Resource Based Conflict (RBC) regional group – and is involved in other activities directly related to the environment. It is a member of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification - and should consider involvement in the Rio-20 Environmental Summit (20-22 June 2012). PENHA can conduct project work on environmental issues - soil & water conservation, improved fodder production, etc. – linked to work on environmental policy. However, PENHA must develop policy stances, outline core principles and decide if it will address environmental issues only in relation to pastoralism or broaden its scope.

It was agreed that PENHA should not forget the countries in the Horn of Africa where PENHA did not at present work – such as Kenya, South Sudan and Djibouti – and also, if and when possible, Eritrea. Ethiopia remains highly significant because of its central position in the region and the sheer size of its pastoral areas and communities. PENHA may re-establish a presence in Ethiopia by working in association with an Ethiopian NGO, or by re-registering itself independently.

A draft outline for the Strategic Plan was suggested by Lars as follows.

- Introduction: PENHA history, Vision, Mission (2-3 pgs)
- Experience: 2005 to 2011 (2-3pgs)
- Regional and country context (3-4 pgs)
- Key focus area (5-6 pgs)
- Country programme priorities (1pg)
- Organization, including partners (2pgs)
- Resources: financial & human (2pgs)
- Governance (1-2 pgs)
- Strategic aims & monitoring system (2-3pgs)
- Total (20-25 pgs)

It was strongly recommended that the whole of the finalized Strategic Plan be made publicly available – and not just part of it.

Finally, an outline timescale for developing the Strategic Plan, with inputs from the Country Chapters, was agreed upon.



Concluding Remarks

Lars ended the meeting by commenting that PENHA had provided him with all the information he asked for in a transparent manner – showing its maturity and self confidence. He emphasized the fact that pastoralism is dynamic and said that there was a place for PENHA because it is rich in ideas and because of its regional nature, with its wide network of contacts and rare understanding of issues and actors at different levels in several countries. He commended the Director for allowing genuinely open participation and discussion.

Dr. Fre, in his closing remarks, said that the workshop had shown a revival of a regional spirit, and expressed his hope that PENHA would be able to develop a new set of activities to meet new challenges and opportunities. He urged participants to look to the future optimistically.

The Chair of this final session, Dr. Tafesse Mesfin, one of PENHA's Trustees, felt that the future would be bright with all our brothers and sisters from the country chapters and he thanked the organizers and all participants for their contribution in the PENHA strategic plan.

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