



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN PASTORAL SOCIETIES

Fiona Flintan

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ACRONYMS

ABRDP	Arsi Bale Rural Development Project
AIWO	African Indigenous Women's Organisation
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
ALDEF	Arid Lands Development Focus
APDA	Afar Pastoralist Development Association
AU/IBAR	African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BVW	Basic veterinary workers
CAHW	Community animal health workers
CBNRM	Community based natural resource management
CBO	Community based organisation
CEMIRIDE	Centre for Minority Rights Development
CRTC	Chinmaya Rural Training Centre
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMW	Celebration of Mountain Women
DAWN	Development Alternatives for Women in New Era
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GB	Great Britain
GEM	Gender empowerment measure
GL-CRSP	Global Livestock – Collaborative Research and Support Program
GOs	Governmental organisations
GTF	Gudina Tumsa Foundation
GWP	Gobi Women's Project
HLFFDP	Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project
HPI	Heifer Project International
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics
IDRC	International Development Research Centre, Canada
IED	Innovations Environnement Développement
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IIN	Indigenous Information Network
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
ILO	International Labour Office
IDRNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation

ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
ITK	Indigenous technical knowledge
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JFM	Joint forest management
KCC	Kenya Creameries Company
MBOSCUDO	Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association
MPIDO	Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organisation
MWEDO	Maasai Women Development Organisation
MWEEP	Maasai Women's Education and Empowerment Program
MYWO	Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation
NGOs	Non governmental organisation
NORDA	Northern Region Development Agency
NRM	Natural resource management
NTFPs	Non-timber forest products
ODE	Open and distant education
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OSSREA	Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
PCAE	Pastoralist Concern Association Ethiopia
PCI	Pastoralist Communication Initiative
PEAR Group	Participatory Education, Awareness and Resources Group
PENHA	Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal
PWC	Pastoralist Women Council
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SCPP	Strengthening Capacity for Pastoralist Participation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SEAGA	Socio-economic and gender analysis
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SOPHIA	Society for Promotion of Himalayan Indigenous Activities
TBA	Traditional birth attendants
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSO	UNDP Office to Combat Desertification and Drought
USD	US Dollar
WAVE	Women as the Voice for the Environment
WHO	World Health Organization
WISP	World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
WWSF	Women's World Summit Foundation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS.....	i
table of contents	iii
FOREWARD	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION TO EMPOWERMENT.....	4
1.1 Defining empowerment.....	4
1.2 Types of Power	4
1.3 Levels of Power and Empowerment	5
1.4 Empowerment as a Goal	5
1.5 Empowerment as a Process.....	6
1.6 Approaches to Empowerment amongst Development Actors	7
1.7 Measuring Empowerment.....	7
1.7.1 Gender Empowerment Measure	7
1.7.2 CIDA's Empowerment Indicators.....	8
1.7.3 Women's Empowerment Framework	8
1.8 Framework for this Study.....	9
2.0 Basic Survival: The Power to Support Oneself and One's Family	10
2.1 Providing Food Including in Times of Stress.....	10
2.1.1 Food as more than something to eat.....	11
2.1.2 Societal rules governing access to food	11
2.1.3 Supplying food in times of stress	11
2.1.4 Collection and eating of wild foods	13
2.1.5 Fuel for cooking food	13
2.2 Providing Water	13
2.2.1 Providing water during times of stress.....	15
2.3 Providing Shelter.....	15
2.4 Ensuring Health	16
2.4.1 Traditional Harmful Practices	16
2.5 Women and Domestic Violence.....	19
2.6 Reducing Vulnerability To the Above.....	19
2.7 Summary.....	20
3.0 Entitlements and Access to Resources: Introduction	22
3.1 Entitlements and Effective Command.....	22
3.2 Image, Identity and 'Belonging'	22
3.2.1 Identities of pastoral women.....	23
3.2.2 Age and age-sets	23
3.2.3 Cultural change	24
3.2.4 Religion.....	24
3.3 Interventions	25
3.4 Summary.....	25
4.0 Entitlements and Access to Resources: Livestock.....	27

4.1 Women's Role as Livestock Managers.....	27
4.1.1 Herding and grazing.....	27
4.1.2 Management of livestock near the household or camp.....	28
4.1.3 Milking.....	28
4.1.4 Breeding.....	28
4.1.5 Fodder.....	28
4.1.6 Shearing and hide processing.....	29
4.1.7 Veterinary work.....	29
4.2 Women's Rights to and 'Ownership' of Livestock and Livestock Resources.....	30
4.2.1 Women's ownership over and access to livestock.....	31
4.2.2 Nominal property.....	32
4.2.3 Bridewealth and dowries.....	32
4.2.4 Purchasing, sale, disposal or change of livestock.....	33
4.2.5 Project support for women's livestock development.....	33
4.2.6 Trainings.....	35
4.3 Pasture.....	35
4.4 Livestock Marketing and Products.....	36
4.4.1 Milk.....	36
4.4.2 Hides and wool.....	40
4.4.3 Manure.....	41
4.5 Drought Interventions.....	42
4.6 Summary.....	42
5.0 Entitlements and Access to Resources: Education.....	44
5.1 Women's Role as Educators.....	44
5.2 Accessing Formal Education.....	45
5.2.1 Building more schools.....	46
5.2.2 Changes in law.....	46
5.2.3 Provision of mobile schools and education centres.....	46
5.2.4 Provision of boarding schools.....	47
5.2.5 Training of community facilitators and mobilisers.....	48
5.2.6 More appropriate school curriculum.....	49
5.3 Informal Education.....	50
5.4 Radio for Distance Learning.....	52
5.5 Summary.....	52
6.0 Entitlements and Access to Resources: INCOME GENERATION.....	54
6.1 Women as Income Generators.....	54
6.1.1 Handicrafts.....	55
6.1.2 Tourism.....	57
6.1.3 Employment.....	58
6.2 Designing Income Generation Projects.....	58
6.3 Credit and Savings.....	59

6.4 Mitigating Negative Impacts of Income Generation	60
6.5 Controlling Money Raised.....	60
6.6 Does Access to Money Lead to 'Empowerment'?	61
6.7 Commercialisation	62
6.8 Marketing	63
6.9 Summary.....	63
7.0 Entitlements and Access to Resources: NATURAL RESOURCES	65
7.1 Women as Natural Resource Users	65
7.2 Women as Natural Resource Managers.....	65
7.2.1 Pastures/Rangeland	66
7.2.2 Trees and NTFPs (Non-Timber Forest Products).....	67
7.3 Building Projects on Women's Role.....	67
7.4 Access to Natural Resources.....	68
7.5 Increasing Access and Control	69
7.6 Impacts of Conservation Practices	69
7.7 Summary.....	70
8.0 Making Change Happen: Collective Action – Women's Networks and Organisation.....	72
8.1 Importance of Kinships	72
8.2 Women Working Together to Improve Access to Resources	73
8.2.1 NGOs and GOs	74
8.3 Women Working Together to Initiate Economic Change	74
8.3.1 Support from NGOs and GOs	75
8.4 Women Working Together to Initiate Social Change	77
8.4.1 Support from NGOs and GOs	78
8.5 Women Working Together to Initiate Political Change	78
8.6 Challenges of Working as a Group.....	79
8.6.1 Pros and cons of mixed groups	79
8.6.2 Pros and cons of women only groups	79
8.6.3 Leadership.....	80
8.7 Summary.....	80
9.0 Participation: the Power of Choice and Voice	82
9.1 Introduction to Different Levels of 'Participation'	82
9.2 How Women Get to Know What is Happening	83
9.3 Getting One's Voice Heard	83
9.3.1 National gatherings.....	84
9.3.2 International gatherings	85
9.3.3 Alternative Media.....	85
9.4 Influencing and Taking Part in Decision Making Processes of Household	86
9.5 Influencing and Taking Part in Decision Making Processes at Community Levels.....	86
9.6 Women Influencing and Taking Part in Government	87
9.7 Women Influencing Policy Change.....	89

9.8 Summary.....	89
10. Control in Personal and Public Domains.....	91
10.1 Women Controlling the Household.....	91
10.1.1 Hosting guests.....	93
10.1.2 Marriage.....	93
10.1.3 Widowhood and divorce.....	95
10.1.4 Sexual relations.....	96
10.2 Women Controlling Public Domains.....	96
10.2.1 Festivals and community events.....	98
10.3 Women, Conflict and Peacemaking.....	98
10.3.1 Fuelling conflict between communities.....	99
10.3.2 Women as peacemakers.....	99
10.3.3 Women's peace movements.....	100
10.4 Summary.....	102
11. The Impacts of Sedentarisation.....	104
11.1 Fulfilling Basic Needs.....	104
11.2 Cultural Aspects and Identity.....	104
11.3 Changes in Socio Economics and Income Generation Opportunities.....	105
11.4 Access to Land and Natural Resources.....	107
11.5 Impact on Natural Resource Management.....	109
11.6 Women's Representation.....	110
11.7 Women's Views About Sedentarisation.....	111
11.8 Way Forward for Positive Change.....	111
11.9 Summary.....	112
12.0 Principles of 'Good Practice'.....	114
12.1 Understanding Women's Empowerment in a Pastoral Context.....	114
12.1.1 Amongst women themselves.....	114
12.1.2 Amongst men.....	115
12.1.3 Amongst development actors.....	115
12.1.4 Amongst policy makers.....	117
12.1.5 Summary.....	117
12.2 Identification of Indicators to Measure Empowerment.....	118
12.2.1 Quantitative indicators.....	118
12.2.2 Qualitative indicators.....	118
12.2.3 Use of participatory techniques.....	119
12.2.4 Summary.....	120
12.3 Project Design and Planning.....	120
12.3.1 Summary.....	121
12.4 Gender Mainstreaming.....	121
12.4.1 Summary.....	122
12.5 Elements of Good Practice.....	123
12.5 Conclusions.....	124
REFERENCES.....	125

FOREWARD

When reading about women in pastoral societies it is common to find reference to their marginalised roles, their hardship, their oppression and their lack of power as apposed to men's domination, men's ownership, men's power and associated patriarchal relations. For example:

Pastoralist societies around the world are patriarchal. Men own the animals and the women and most decisions. Women typically have little say over their own lives (Simpson-Hebert 2005).

And as Kratli (2001:5) confirms:

The popular discourse about pastoralists portrays women as subjugated and exploited creatures, sold for cows and forced by their fathers into early marriages with lusty old men, often raped by the 'warriors', overloaded with work and enslaved by husbands who sleep and drink all day long and only care about cows. This image is presented in contrast with 'modern' and 'enlightened' attitudes about the issue of gender....

However, others have challenged these viewpoints and suggestions are made that traditional and pre-colonial pastoral communities were comparatively egalitarian with women actively involved in and having great influence on decision making processes and pastoral livelihood practices. It was outside influences such as male-dominated colonial powers or development actors, their monetary-focused economies and the targeting of men in development interventions, that has led to the separation of men's and women's spheres of activity with women's activities being gradually restricted to private service, and a marginalization of women's means of commodity exchange, their role and their authority (Hodgson 1999; Kipury 1991; Joekes & Pointing 1991).

What has become clear in my mind through writing this report is that we have to move beyond viewing a 'traditional' pastoral household as a group of individuals, but rather as a closely interlinked functioning whole in which all individuals play a role and the good of the 'whole' is more important than that of an individual. In this way one can better understand how men and women work hard together for the survival of the household and the pastoral system; one can better understand why women will continue to allow their children to be circumcised so that they are able to get married and the cultural norms continue; and one can better understand why women are kept out of decision making processes that it is believed they have no interest or valuable input.

This is not to say that women do not have a difficult and hard time, but in general men do too. The survival of the household depends on immense physical and mental strength to deal with the vagaries of the environment including periodic drought (and sometimes floods), the lack of appropriate services, and the challenges that a functioning pastoral system produce: extensive migrations; often working for long periods of time with little food and water; carrying of water and fuelwood for long distances; conflict and physical violence; etc. Both women and men need to be strong to ensure that the household, their children and livestock survive.

Indeed pastoral women are extremely strong and powerful people. Despite the many challenges women face, they do find ways to ensure that the household's basic needs are met; they do find ways to access resources and within the pastoral system do have 'rights' to ownership and use of many of them; and they do find ways to get their voices heard. In this report I have tried to highlight examples of these taken from pastoral communities across the world for it is not only in Africa and Asia that pastoral women overcome the many challenges and succeed in retaining a 'pastoral' system, but in Europe and other 'developed' parts of the world too. As will be shown there are many achievements of pastoral women showing resilience, resourcefulness and great strength in the face of adversity.

However I do believe that women could have more power and can be assisted by each other or by 'external' actors to develop ways that enable them to access resources, knowledge, 'rights', seats at meetings and time to contribute to those meetings, that allow them to better achieve their needs, their wants and their aspirations. This was confirmed the other evening whilst watching a film on women in state prisons in Yemen. The film was documenting the life of a woman called Amina who had been thrown into jail as a result of false accusations placed against her by her murdered husband's family. Her husband had been killed in a dispute over land and livestock, and Amina had been made the scape-goat. Though the film revealed that the death sentence hanging over her head had been revoked, she still remained in jail indefinitely with her 2 year old daughter who had been born there and many other women who had found themselves in jail through false accusations, very petty 'crimes' and through little fault of their own apart from being a woman born into a gender biased society.

Gender-focused work has been criticized for promoting Western ideals of female emancipation (Wendoh 2007; Mies and Shiva 1993). However, as this report will show the search for a higher degree of gender 'equality' is coming as much from pastoral women themselves as any donor or NGO agency. What is important is that gender 'equality' and 'empowerment' of women should be taken at a pace that the women involved are comfortable with, and any process should begin with those women fully understanding what is involved and clarifying in their own minds what it is that they themselves want to achieve.

Though women taking and having more power does not necessarily mean taking away power from men, it will mean a change in power relations between men and women, that men can find threatening. Therefore it is vital that women's men (husbands, brothers, uncles, sons, and other male kin) understand why women want and should have more power and where possible be persuaded to accept and support this. If this can shown to be on the basis of an improved and functioning pastoral household system, then the arguments of benefiting the 'whole' rather than the individuals should be more persuasive. NGOs and government organizations can have a role in this and can, with appropriate and good understanding, support and thought, assist women to be more 'empowered'. However as this report will highlight, the more successful support is through attempts to *help women empower themselves* rather than an NGO or government agency attempting to *'empower women'*.

The terms of reference for this report were to produce a global good practice study on pastoralist women's empowerment/development (gender and pastoralism). I have seen this report as an opportunity to highlight the positive roles, values, actions of women in their search for ways to fulfill the needs of their families and themselves, their access to resources, participation and decision making processes, and that contribute to the continuation of a functioning pastoral system (albeit a dynamic system that is adapting and changing as it always has done). As such I have focused less on 'gender and pastoralism' – a mammoth subject in itself and for which there are increasingly good studies and documentation (see for example Hodgson 2000b; Bravo-Baumann 2000; FAO 2003; Ridgewell et al 2007; Ridgewell and Flintan 2007; Gurung 2006; IFAD 2006; Talle 1988; Wawire 2003) and rather I have focused more on the aspect of 'empowerment', namely 'pastoral women's empowerment'.

To understand 'empowerment' and how it is being achieved and supported however does need an understanding of what 'power' women already have and how this is manifested. As such though this report did not want to be another description of gender relations in pastoral societies it was necessary to understand how men and women work together, their roles, access to resources etc. As such I have touched upon these aspects in order to provide a picture of how things are, how things are changing and from this how women use or challenge a situation to achieve their needs and goals.

The report has reviewed 100s of reports and publications that have included aspects of social relations including gender within a pastoral, herding or livestock-based context. From these, case studies have been selected to form a picture of women's empowerment (both that established by women themselves, and that supported by external actors including NGOs and government) and that valorize or add validity to a point. The selection of these examples or case studies is based on the following criteria:

- The women (and men) come from a pastoral, herding or livestock-based society. The majority of the examples come from nomadic or transhumant groups, however a few examples have been included from sedentarised groups for whom livestock is the mainstay of their economy as it was felt that some important lessons could be learnt from them.
- The case study shows an example of women achieving a 'step' or part of a 'step' towards their 'empowerment' as defined by Lilongwe's framework of empowerment believed to be the most suitable framework for this study.
- Where 'empowerment' is said to have been achieved, the women themselves and/or an external actor (NGO, consultant/evaluator or researcher) has concluded that the women's level of 'power' had increased. It is important to note that few independent assessments of projects and interventions were found, so many of the case studies are internally produced reports by NGO staff which raises questions about the judgements and conclusions made and whether they may be biased.
- Priority has been given to case studies that give a voice to pastoral women themselves.
- This is a global study so it has tried to include examples and case studies from around the world. Where possible the context of these has been described.

The final section of this report attempts to draw together the lessons learnt from various situations, activities and interventions to provide some guidance on 'good practice' in relation to women's empowerment. However as one respondent contacted for this study suggested:

I am a bit sceptical whether there are any universal truths or best practices. The social situations may be too divergent among pastoralist groups for that to be possible. If I compare the situation of pastoral women in Mongolia and in India, they have absolutely nothing in common. Here in Rajasthan we have found it very difficult or even virtually impossible to work with pastoralist women, and that too varies from caste to caste. With respect to the Raika, we are aware that they are much more astute than the men (and even handle the money), but they will never speak up in the presence of men. Among the Rajput, the women are house bound and don't even know what is going on with the livestock (Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, personal communication 2008).

Indeed, not only is there difference in the socio-economic status of and constraints over pastoral women, but also there are differences between the pastoral systems themselves and level of mobility on which they are based; the systems of 'rights' available to both men and women including *de jure*, *de facto*, nominal and actual; and women's and men's own perceptions of what 'empowerment' means, just to name a few.

As such the 'lessons learnt' and 'good practice' described here should be treated with caution and any future use or application of them should be aware of the need for incorporation of local understandings and contextual adaptations.

Finally, I should like to thank all of those who contributed to this report – those who provided me with case studies, examples, documents and thoughts on pastoral women's empowerment, plus those in IUCN-WISP who provided back-up, contacts and suggestions.

Much credit for this report should be given to Minoti Chakravarty-Kaul who has contributed most of the examples and case studies from Asia, plus her invaluable and thoughtful input in relation to pastoral women's empowerment from that part of the world.

I hope that you enjoy reading this report – for me it was wonderful to be able to focus on the positive and successful aspects of women's role and position in pastoral communities, rather than the hardships that they face. What is important now is to build on these successes to continue to support pastoral women as part of a pastoral household and system that in itself is finding it increasingly difficult to survive. As women speak for themselves, they do want to see change for themselves and for the continued survival of pastoral communities. What we have to do as development actors is work with them to find out what is the most appropriate and effective support that can be given to facilitate this change, and how best to provide it.

There is much to celebrate.....but there is also much to do!

Fiona Flintan, Addis Ababa, August 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO EMPOWERMENT

1.1 Defining empowerment

There are a variety of understandings of the term 'empowerment.' Although the term is often used it is rarely defined. Box 1.1 provides a sample of the different ways empowerment has been described with particular reference to women's empowerment.

Box 1.1 Defining 'Empowerment'

Empowerment is the process by which the powerless gain greater control over the circumstances of their lives. It includes both control over resources (physical, human, intellectual, financial) and ideology (beliefs, values, attitudes). It means greater self-confidence, and an inner transformation of one's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barriers to accessing resources or changing traditional ideologies (Sen and Batliwala 2000).

"Empowerment comes from 'inside', from the individuals themselves, it cannot be granted by others" (SIDA 1997 in Aguilar et al 2002).

Currently the phrase 'empowerment of women' is in vogue. In common usage the concept describes women making independent choices, enabling them to emerge from a subordinate position and make claims on their share of the benefits of development interventions as their right, rather than being passive recipients of welfare distribution (Pradhan 2003: 53).

"Working towards gender equality and women's empowerment means enabling women to express their potentials, as producers, managers of resources and providers of services, to the benefit of their households and their communities....Women are not viewed as vulnerable recipients of assistance but *as powerful allies in the process of social and economic change*....Initiatives are designed with specific measures to empower women, enabling them to 'catch up' and acquire the means and ability to participate in the mainstream of social and economic development" (IFAD 2003c: 7-8).

Women's empowerment is said to be important "for reasons of both principle and pragmatism. It's the *right* thing to do because women have the same rights as men, but it's also a *necessary* thing to do, because it will make the world a better place and help us attain human development" (Oxfam GB 2005: 7).

1.2 Types of Power

'Power' is central to em-power-ment, in every sense of the word. Power can be defined as "control over human, social, material, or intellectual resources" (Oxfam GB 2005). There are different types of power. There is **invisible power** – the beliefs and attitudes that shape our understanding about who we are; **visible power** – that we can 'see' demonstrated in things like structures and behaviours; and **hidden power** – the 'rules' that determine who has power. Some people (i.e. those with power) know these rules and can see them; others can't. "Power relations can be changed if we understand and focus on all three dimensions...and if we think about the power we have in different ways" (ibid: 5).

There is coercive or '**hard**' power (for example, the ability to command and enforce) and persuasive or '**soft**' power (for example, the ability to bring about cooperation, to provide legitimacy and to inspire) (see Table 1.1). We often find men rely more on 'hard' power and women on 'soft' power. Soft power is sometimes overlooked or underestimated because it is exercised by those who generally are regarded as not so powerful.

Table 1.1 Sources of 'Hard' and 'Soft' Power

'Hard' Power	'Soft' Power
Wealth	Unity
Physical strength	Peace
Legislation	Community norms
Money	Bye-law
Fences and boundaries	Charisma
Violence	Persuasion
Security	Cooperation
Demonstration	Common understanding
Authority	Education
Status: Economic, social, legal	'Sit-in'
Hardness	Knowledge
Policy	Organisation
Energetic	Confidence
Government	Self-esteem
War	Information
Force	Active
	Respect
	Community
	Skills

Power can be understood as operating at different levels and in different ways. Relations of domination are multiple and inter-related. There is a difference between 'power-over' and 'power-to' and there is also 'power-with' and 'power-within'.

If I have 'power-over' you, increasing your power comes at the expense of mine: this power is an 'either/or' relationship of domination or subordination or 'power-over'. It is often based on threats of violence and intimidation, invites active and passive resistance, and requires constant effort to maintain. If you try to take such power away from a person, he or she may resist and the situation is likely to result in conflict. Power-over requires the creations of simple dualities: good/evil; man/woman; rich/poor; black/white; us/them. There *are* differences and different groups have very different interests.

However power can also be 'power-to' be able to do something. This is a power which is creative and enabling, the essence of individual aspects of empowerment. Most people describe situations where they felt such power as those in which they solved a problem, understood how something works or learned a skill. Attempting to give people 'power to' do things is less likely to cause resentment or conflict.

Collectively, people feel empowered through being organised and united by a common purpose or common understanding, aiming for collective goals. 'Power-with' involves a sense of whole being greater than the sum of the individuals, especially when the group tackles problems together. For example women in particular may feel greater power to change things when working in groups (see Box 1.2).

Box 1.2 Women's Groups and Networks

Women's groups and networks can provide strength to their members through solidarity and support. Often such groups already exist in communities though they may be of a low profile. Sometimes such groups may need to be formalised to increase their sustainability. Understanding how they work, their role and influence in the community is an important part of understanding how men and women relate to each other.

Another kind of power is 'power-within', the spiritual strength and uniqueness that resides in each one of us and makes us truly human. It refers to self-confidence, self-awareness and assertiveness. It relates to how individuals can recognize through analyzing their experience how power operates in their lives and gain confidence to act, to influence and to change this. Power-within recognises the strengths and weaknesses that exist in all of us and does not automatically condemn difference, or categorise in either/or terms. Power-within stresses self-acceptance and self-respect, complementary rather than duality, recognition of aspects of 'the other' in oneself. A healthy society will appreciate and value the positive aspects of these differences, and use them for its betterment (Williams et al 1994).

1.3 Levels of Power and Empowerment

Power exists and works at different levels including within the political, the institutional, the household and the individual. For example when understanding what power women have and/or what they can or have achieved one could look at a) decision making processes and b) access to resources within all these different levels.

The empowerment approach which has its origins in feminist and third world organisations such as DAWN (Development Alternatives for Women in New Era) emphasises the collective ('power with') dimensions of empowerment. DAWN stresses the importance of women's organisations in demanding and promoting change towards their vision of society and to create political will for serious action by those in power. Proposed activities necessary for change include political mobilisation, legal changes, consciousness raising and popular education (Sen and Grown 1985).

However the meaning of empowerment can be seen to have altered as it has gained support in mainstream development thinking. Today, empowerment tends to be seen as individual rather than collective, and focused on entrepreneurship and individual self-reliance, rather than on cooperation to challenge power structures which subordinate women (or other marginalised groups) (Oxaal 1997). The notion of power and empowerment is a major shift from the conventional socio-economic perspective of viewing subordination of women as a lack of socio-economic measures of power indicated by education, income or access to resources (Pradhan 2003).

For some, power is a zero-sum game: one group's increase in power necessarily involves another's loss of power. Redistribution of power therefore can involve conflict. Often men will have more power than women and in this perspective women's empowerment could mean less power for men. As such "a key issue is how men perceive and understand empowerment. While they may lose 'power over' – some of which may only be myth and stereotype, entrenched by socialisation – they will gain 'power with' and potentially be liberated by the process" (Oxfam GB 2005: 7).

However this need not be the case: if one focuses on supporting women to have power-to do more things, particularly focussing on the 'soft' power types described above (such as skills, understanding, cooperation, confidence, respect) then conflict may be avoided. As such a zero-sum situation becomes win-win.

1.4 Empowerment as a Goal

Usually empowerment for women involves opening up more opportunities, greater access to and control over resources and equal participation with men in decision-making (often cited as 'strategic needs' as apposed to 'basic needs' for survival). Tactics for empowerment or addressing of such strategic needs can involve increasing:

- awareness;

- self-confidence;
- knowledge and collective activities;
- reduced vulnerability to violence and exploitation;
- economic security, independence, options and opportunities;
- shared responsibility for reproductive work with men and the state;
- organising with other women for strength, solidarity and action;
- political power;
- ability to improve the lives and futures of their children; and
- humanistic and just development processes.

Empowerment needs to move beyond a socio-economic institutional perspective which assumes that individual socio-economic characteristics such as women's education, labour force participation and income and access to resources will determine a woman's ability to exercise control over forces of adversity, improving her power relations with men. Indeed empirical evidence shows that despite improvements in education, income and access to resources and credit in the last 10-15 years, women's position in the areas of health, decision-making, employment and freedom of rights have not improved significantly as indicated by human and development indicators (Pradhan 2003).

1.5 Empowerment as a Process

Empowerment is not only a goal but also a process – see for example Oxfam GB's definition in Table 1.2. Empowerment is not only about opening up access to decision-making, but also must include processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to occupy that decision-making space (Rowlands 1995). It should involve understanding one's position and why it is how it is. It is a process by which people can take control and action in order to overcome obstacles such as gender discrimination. Empowerment is sometimes described as being about the ability to make choices, but it must also involve being able to shape what choices are on offer (Oxaal 1997).

"Empowerment is essentially a bottom-up process rather than something that can be formulated as a top-down strategy. Understanding empowerment in this way means that development agencies cannot claim to 'empower women'. Women must empower themselves. Devising coherent policies and programmes for women's empowerment requires careful attention, because external agencies/bodies tend to be positioned with 'power over' target populations" (ibid: 6). As Wangari Maathai agrees when she said: *The solutions to our problems lie within us.*

Table 1.2 Key Elements of Women's Empowerment (Oxfam GB 2005)

Processes	Outcomes
Power is demanded not given; we can't say that we 'gave' women power.	Must be visible – we need to see that women have changed and there is broad impact.
Analyse invisible, hidden, and visible power and how it is maintained, and then develop a new definition of power (power with, power within, power to).	Begins with the mind and with changing how women perceive themselves – their abilities, capacities and potential.
Education is central.	Involves redistribution of power and control over resources.
An external force or stimulant is needed.	Changes both women's position (in relation to men) and their condition (material, everyday needs).
Create a political force of women that is listened to – a movement from the ground.	Benefits women in general, not just individual women (collective not individual effort).
Spiral, not cyclical: every change brings greater changes.	Transformation takes place at many levels – in women's minds; within development workers as change agents; in the creation of an enabling environment.
Make separate spaces and time for women to go through the process (but eventually come back to the mainstream).	

As such, appropriate external support and intervention should foster and support the process of empowerment through an enabling or facilitating role rather than try to 'empower' women themselves. Programmes can support individual women's empowerment through encouraging women's participation, acquisition of skills, decision-making capacity, and control over resources. Women's collective empowerment can be supported by providing funding for women's organizations which work to address the causes of gender subordination, by promoting women's participation in political systems, and by fostering dialogue between those in positions of power and organizations with women's empowerment goals (Oxaal 1997).

However, this means that "empowerment can not be defined in terms of specific activities or end results because it involves a process whereby women can freely analyse, develop and voice their needs and interests, without them being pre-defined, or

imposed from above, by planners or other social actors" (ibid: 6). Women should be able to formulate and decide what these interests are and development actors can assist them with this.

1.6 Approaches to Empowerment amongst Development Actors

Within development work it is more common to find more emphasis on 'power to' with little attention to the need to create spaces for women to be involved in shaping the decisions. For example UNDP promotes the empowerment of women in political and economic decision making at all levels through increasing women's decision making powers, the support of income generating activities and provision of skills and education to women (UNDP 1996).

A number of areas have become closely associated with the promotion of women's empowerment such as microcredit, political participation and reproductive health. However there are clearly limits to the extent to which such activities in and of themselves can be genuinely empowering. As Oxall (1997:10) describes:

There is a tendency to assume that increasing access to resources, or decision making power in one area, will necessarily carry through into other areas. It is not the delivery of credit per se, but the context in which credit is delivered which is vital in ensuring that women's control over resources and bargaining power is increased. Similarly, increased decision-making power at individual level and greater access to economic resources of women do not necessarily translate into greater representation or power of women within political institutions, an area which has proved remarkably resistant to change. Conversely, empowerment in one area cannot be sustained without attention to other facets. Reproductive and sexual rights, for example, cannot be fully exercised where women's lack of independent economic resources undermines their freedom to make choices and bargaining power.

1.7 Measuring Empowerment

The claims for women's empowerment to be the goal or ultimate objective of many development policies and programmes leads to a demand for indicators for empowerment, both to reveal the extent to which women are already empowered, and to evaluate if such policies and programmes have been effective towards their stated aims (Oxaal 1997: 20). However, IFAD argues that "ultimately the measure of impact will be that poor women and men improve the aspects of their lives that they consider the most important" (IFAD 2003c: 10).

Different frameworks will be described below and others that are more specific are provided within the different thematic sections. However it is stressed that "none can be taken as complete measures, because the nature of empowerment is a multi-faceted concept that means that it is not readily quantifiable".

1.7.1 Gender Empowerment Measure

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) was developed by the 1995 Human Development Report. It is a composite indicator used at country level which looks at women's representation in parliaments, women's share of positions classified as managerial and professional, women's participation in the active labour force, and their share of national income. It aims to examine whether women and men are able to actively participate in economic and political life and take part in decision making.

The GEM shows that access to basic needs, economic, education, and health does not in itself automatically mean empowerment for women. For example though women in France, Japan, Greece, UK, Ireland and Spain have very good access to economic, education and health needs, there GEM is very low (in Oxaal 1997).

Pradhan (2003) argues that measurements such as the GEM which utilize such quantitative socio-economic measures of empowerment are useful indicators as a first approximation but they are not sensitive enough to capture the nuances of gender power relations. As a result an 'agency aspect' is needed which describes women's agency behaviour as being the extent of the ability of subordinate groups and individuals (women in this case) to act in a way that resists the social and cultural forces of adversity that expose them to food insecurity, health risks etc. From an 'agency' perspective we can find out how or in what ways women influence decisions even under conditions of structural subordination.

Information generated through quantitative methods alone is inadequate for understanding gender relations and the interactive processes through which 'weaker' groups in society strategize ways of gaining from unequal relationships. Using quantitative indicators and methods alone makes it difficult to understand the links between empowerment as an independent variable and specific forces that we want to understand. Therefore it is suggested that an in-depth anthropological method is essential or at the very least inclusion of qualitative indicators (ibid). Suggested indicators of both are given below in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Measures of empowerment (Pradhan 2003)

Aspects of women's empowerment and their indicators	
1. Socio-economic	2. Socio-cultural and gender relations (human agency)
Ownership of property (land, house, animals, jewellery, machines etc. Employment/income Education level	Participation in decision making Spouse/age difference Husband/wife communication Age at first marriage and choice of life partner Formal/informal association with support groups or kin.

1.7.2 CIDA's Empowerment Indicators

CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) has developed a range of indicators of women's empowerment, both quantitative and qualitative (described in Oxaal 1997). They state that projects with empowerment objectives should specify the type of empowerment (e.g. personal change in consciousness, change in social and economic order); the rough time scales within which the project objectives will be accomplished; the numbers of people to be affected; and the degree to which they will be affected. Many of their empowerment indicators are process indicators, broken down into legal, political, economic and social empowerment.

CIDA argue that because of the complex nature of measuring empowerment, qualitative and quantitative indicators need to be underpinned by qualitative analysis. Some key questions for qualitative analysis suggested are:

- How have changes in national/local legislation empowered or disempowered women or men (e.g. concerning control over resources such as land)?
- What is the role of local institutions in empowering/disempowering women/men?
- Is the part that women (as compared to men) are playing in major decision-making in their locality/household increasing or decreasing?
- Is there more acknowledgement of the importance of tasks customarily carried out by women e.g. child care?
- How are women organizing to increase their empowerment, for example against violence?
- If employment and education for women are increasing, is this leading to greater empowerment?

1.7.3 Women's Empowerment Framework

A very useful and practical way of measuring empowerment is to use the Women's Empowerment Framework developed by Sarah Longwe. The framework defines different levels of empowerment from 'welfare' to 'control' that can be used as a basis for assessment (see Box 1.3). This framework can be useful to analyse the different levels of empowerment achieved by women, activities, projects etc. Though the framework suggests that greater empowerment is achieved in the fourth (participation) or fifth (control) steps, it does not dismiss achievements at the lower levels but encourages implementers to work towards the higher levels.

The first level – the welfare level – requires that all gender gaps between men and women in their material wellbeing are eliminated. Improving women's welfare alone will leave them as passive beneficiaries or recipients of development assistance: it means, for example, that women are provided pipe-borne water without having the power to influence the location of stand taps. As a result the access level is very important for gender equality as it is at this level that women have the right to obtain services, products or commodities (Oxfam 1994).

Eliminating obstacles to women's access to resources (e.g. credit, land) is an important further step towards empowerment. Women's successful drive towards equality and empowerment very much depends on the level of awareness about the extent of women's discrimination among themselves that is created. This is because awareness provides them with the basic actions to overcome and dismantle the obstacles which are holding them back. At the level of participation, women should be able to take part or have a share in both resource and power allocation. This will lead to the fifth level of 'control' where they are able to direct or influence events so that their interests are protected and they are, therefore, empowered at all levels. "In fact, empowerment is only real when women have attained control over themselves, resources, factors of production and decision-making, be it at home or in the public arena" (Fongjon 2002).

Box 1.3 Women Empowerment Framework

The achievement of power and a greater degree of gender equality can be seen as a series of steps, reliant on access to resources and decision-making processes. The Women's Empowerment Framework suggests that these steps are as follows:

- **welfare** (basic survival: the power to feed and support oneself and one's family);
- **access to resources** (including opportunities for self-realisation: the power to access resources necessary for survival and livelihood practices on an equitable basis);
- **conscientisation** (an awareness of and will to alter gender inequalities): to achieve this type of power there may be the need to build up self-esteem, confidence and self-value: group power through the establishment of social movements and self-help groups can play an important role;
- **participation** (including an equal role in decision-making: the power of choice and voice); and
- **control** (in both the personal and public domains: the power to lead one's own development and change at a pace and in a manner that individuals – women and men – or communities, want).

The framework can be developed as a tool for project assessment by asking – *what impact has the project had on women's lives?* – for each of the different levels. The impact of the project on women's empowerment can then be classified into three categories (negative/neutral/positive). An adaptation of this was used by Oxfam GB Uganda in an assessment of a project in Kotido (see Section 11.0) (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004).

However using the Women's Empowerment Framework is not without its constraints. Firstly it can be difficult to classify specific activities or achievements into the different stages and to identify causality and effect. Further the framework focuses on a micro-level understanding of gender inequality and tends to downplay institutional, structural and political issues.

1.8 Framework for this Study

To establish a structure for this study, Longwe's Women Empowerment Framework is used. The report begins by looking at the fulfillment of basic needs (welfare), moving through access to a variety of resources including livestock, natural resource management and income generation, to control of private and public domains.

In order to identify how much power women have to access resources, it is necessary to include looking at the different roles that women play within the household and how these roles impact on their entitlements and access. The study will also assess the role that NGOs, GOs and other agencies have played in improving women's rights and access to resources, supporting their roles within pastoral societies and ultimately contributed to their 'empowerment'.

2.0 BASIC SURVIVAL: THE POWER TO SUPPORT ONESELF AND ONE'S FAMILY

The first concern of many pastoral women is to ensure their basic survival and that of the household (often including extended family members). In a pastoral setting this can prove highly challenging and women show great strength and power to achieve this. Indeed pastoralism is highly dependent on the complementary roles of both men and women: husband and wife but also sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, in-laws, and other kin. In general men and women work together to make the pastoral system function and make the best use of resources (environmental, social and economic). Despite this often women's role in pastoral systems is ignored or belittled (Ridgewell and Flintan 2007).

When trying to improve or support women's empowerment, it is possible to start by improving the 'condition' of their lives and those that they are responsible for which relates to their practical or basic needs including food, water, shelter and health. It may be the case that only once these basic needs are fulfilled, will women have the time, energy and resources to invest in improving their other needs.

2.1 Providing Food Including in Times of Stress

Usually a woman is responsible for ensuring that food is available for the household and for herself. To enable her to do this she commands a large degree of control over food items. This food may be generated from livestock and crops grown within the household or a woman may sell produce and goods in order to purchase food items such as grain. For example amongst the Parakuyo of Kenya, distribution and consumption of milk and other food are the undisputed responsibilities of a woman. Though women and children only eat when the men have taken their share, the women will always keep back enough for themselves and their children (Mitzlaff 1988).

For many women, particularly those with access to fewer livestock, the selling of goods has become a daily necessity in order to feed their families. "The poorer the family the more likely it [becomes] for food to be brought on a hand to mouth daily basis in exchange for whatever products women [can] sell" (talking of Maasai in Tanzania, Brockington and Homewood 1999: 525). Contrary to crops, animal products, such as eggs and milk, are produced throughout most of the year. Selling them provides a small but continuous income, which is more likely to be reinvested in nutrition than the income from selling a cow or a cash crop (Bravo-Baumann 2000). Further some families send their children to schools to access the free lunches of feeding programmes.

A strategy to ensure a more continual supply of food, particularly in times of drought, is the preservation of food. This can be milk, dried meat, intestines or vegetables (Muhammad 2002; Wawire 2003). Table 2.1 provides examples of a range of preservation techniques used by Turkana women in Kenya.

Food Item	Product	Preservation method	Storage duration
Milk	Dried milk	Milk left to dry in sun in wide surface container. Stored in leather sack. Alternatively it is boiled until it evaporates and forms solid mass, then dried in sun.	1-5 years
Milk	Fresh milk	Boiled to keep it fresh	7 hours to 1 day
Milk	Butter/ghee	Milk left in gourd overnight or up to 4 days. Water added before being shaken. Put in open container. Butter forms at top and ghee left at bottom.	2 months
Milk	Sour milk	Milk is covered and left to sour for 3 or more days.	4 days to 1 week
Meat	Fried meat	Fat and meat is cut into small pieces and fried in own oil for 20-30 mins. Meat separated from oil and put in locally made containers. Oil stored separately.	2 weeks
Meat	Dried meat	Meat from camels, cows and wild animals (eg buffalo and elephants) cut into strips hang on shelves or low acacia bushes to dry in sun. Then folded and stored.	10 days to 2 months
Fish	Dried fish	Dried after harvest and cleaned, then packed into sacks. Dusted every two months to keep clean.	1 year
Maize, green grams, sorghum	Dried grains	Dried after harvest, cleaned and stored in sacks. Dusted every 2 months to keep clean.	1 year
Doum palm fruit	Powder	Skin removed. Rest of fruit is dried and crushed into powder.	3-4 weeks

Source: Wawire 2003

But it is not only in Africa that women might find it challenging to feed their families – in Asia and Eastern Europe too. In Kazakhstan for example women have been profoundly affected by the changes experienced since the break up of the Soviet Union, especially the dissolution of state farms. In the course of transition the farms dissolved and jobs disappeared. The majority of households have had to focus on subsistence production with small numbers of sheep, cows and horses. Men try to work, selling livestock and milk. Most women stay at home and focus on small-scale food production. Instead of buying food as they did previously, they make bread and butter, milk cows and horses, and plant vegetables to save on food expenses. They have had to provide child and healthcare as government services closed down. As a result “rural women became more dependent on their husbands for livelihood after the decline of the Soviet Union, and became tied to unpaid work at the homestead....” (GL-CRSP 2006: 219).

2.1.1 Food as more than something to eat

Food is not only something to eat. In pastoral societies many food items particularly those coming from livestock are symbolic and central to pastoral society and identity. Dairy products in particular are seen to be highly linked to women and their roles and characteristics. Within the Guji of Ethiopia for example, milk is symbolic of good and abundant life. The constant use of butter keeps people healthy, gives them a ‘shining’ complexion, and keeps them ‘wet’, meaning fertile (van de Loo 1991).

In Mali too milk can be a sign of a woman’s social status, symbolizing social relations and hospitality as well as a woman’s beauty. The gift of milk to guests maintains social significance through the preservation of good relations. A woman is responsible for this and can refuse. This will damage her husband’s standing and position in the community (de Bruijn 1997).

2.1.2 Societal rules governing access to food

Societal rules can govern who has or has not access to certain types of food. Where these rules exist in favour of women, they can lay down social pressure and claims to access food at certain times. For example, among the Turkana, Kenya, women occasionally gather to solicit meat from herd owners, who are customarily obliged to provide for them as part of a meat eating party (*akinyaqaan*) (Wienpahl 1984).

Further there may be complex taboos over food. For example amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania, warriors ‘ilmurran’ are not normally allowed to take any nourishment apart from milk when adult (i.e. having been circumcised) or eat meat that has been seen by a woman (with the exception of very old women) (Mitzlaff 1988). And in pastoral tribes like the Todas in Tamil Nadu, India, women are ritually excluded from “touching the sacred buffaloes or the milk” and “even prevented from cooking at least whenever the food contains milk as an ingredient” (Vasanthi 2007).

Customs can be to women’s advantage too. For example during pregnancy and after childbirth women are looked after and given better foods to eat. In Afar, Ethiopia women are given highly nutritious *tobno* after they have given birth (boiled cooled camel meat).

2.1.3 Supplying food in times of stress

In times of stress men may migrate with the livestock to find grazing and water and/or employment. It is usually the women who must stay at home and feed themselves, the children, the old and the infirm (Langton undated). Often the usual food sources such as meat, milk and blood are scarce and there is more reliance on maize and beans: these need more time to cook and more wood which will have to be collected (Wawire 2003). During more desperate times of famine people will eat roots, leaves, tree bark, fleas and ground skins: women make all of these edible (Muhammed 2002).

Additionally women will work together through informal associations to help each other and try to ensure that all have adequate food to eat. For example among the Boran of Ethiopia informal women’s groups make cash contributions to help those who lose livestock, are hospitalised or those confined for childbirth. Women share relationships of bond friendship with one another, which are established through family contacts initiated by the sharing of gifts such as milk and grain (see Box 2.1). Women may also allow other women to use one of their own milking animals. Such social networks are important for ensuring the continued flow of food into the household during periods of stress (Joeke and Pointing 1991). Provisions of good and services serve as ‘investments’ and are reciprocated when occasions arise. Households where women are absent lose access to these social security networks controlled by other women (Oba 2001: 103).

Box 2.1 Interview with Oba Sarite Kura, Boran, aged 96 years in 1987

“During the famine...of the gada of Harero Gedho (1921-1929)...[m]y father, one of the richest stock owners, whose name is still remembered in cattle songs and my elder brother, died during the famine. I was also on the verge of death. The only members of my family who went about gathering wild food were my wife and my son Jirmo. She collected *buuri*, *biis gumbo* and other roots....*Effliira* is easy to cook. It is chopped up like potatoes, while *d’eend’e* is scrubbed with sharp sticks and cooked with soda ash....The other fruits which were usually eaten were not available....We went to beg the Gabra for camel milk. It was during this period, while my wife was gathering roots that she came across Elema Boru, one of the Gabra ethnic group, whose husband was my bond-friend....They gave us milk every day until my children and I recuperated. This was because we had fifteen years earlier helped them when they were under difficulties....”

Source: Oba 2001: 106

During times of stress there will be increased pressure to turn to income generation activities in order to raise cash for grain. This will usually fall on women. However as an example from Sudan describes (see Box 2.2), such activities can achieve much more than just a cash raising (food accessing) activity, and in fact contribute to a sense of empowerment and freedom from the day-to-day burden of finding enough food to eat.

Box 2.2 Conquering Hunger and an Expression of Hope

During the drought in Darfur the big concern that faced people was finding the means to buy grain. Unlike men who were forced to migrate most women stayed home and confronted these challenges and find ways to raise cash. The breakthrough for women was to turn to traditional handicrafts. And in this way woman artists were able to create jobs for men who marketed their products abroad. The baskets were items of beauty, and "the invention of beauty in desperate times is an affirmation of life, an act of self-actualization and empowerment" (Pershing, 1993). To fight the aftermath of famine, women artists depicted patterns and symbols in their baskets to signify the cruelty of the times of hardship; it was a self-realization in conquering hunger, destitution and an expression of a hope for a better life. Even the local sheikh recognized their effort:

It was our sisters who worked for our survival during famine time; without them we would have perished.

Source: Muhammed 2002: 9-13.

In times of such as famine, households and/or women with children may move closer to emergency food distribution centres. Often women specifically will be targeted with food aid as government and donor agencies accept that food security at the household level can only be achieved by including women (Oba 2001). Therefore their presence is demanded to ensure access. Similar to the networks used by men, women use informal systems of distributing food and other resources throughout communities.

Often emergency interventions lack sensitivity to gender issues due to their nature of quick response, however increasingly agencies are recognizing the need to understand gender relations prior to intervention if a more equitable distribution of food is to be achieved. A great influence on this was the work of Oxfam GB in the late 1980s – early 1990s on gender and food distribution. Margie Buchanan-Smith wrote an article called 'The Entitlement System', around 1993/4, which evaluated the food distribution methodology. "It was the first time that agencies started thinking seriously about women's control over food aid. For example how you accommodate polygamous households in registration, women named as recipients (rather than men), and women's role on relief committees (Izzy Birch personal communication 2008).

More recently, women often have been given a greater opportunity to be involved in food aid distributions (on the assumption that by doing so household members are more likely to benefit), and given the opportunity to sit on relief committees. Many women have taken up the positions with force for example in Garissa, where CARE Kenya through ECHO has been implementing a destocking programme (see Box 2.3).



Photo: Women leading a discussion on food distribution (Kenya) (Source: Internet Rural Poverty Portal Website 2008)

Box 2.3: Mama Rukio

"Its only a shepherd that knows what sheep needs more attention" comments Mama Rukio, in a Baraza. She is referring to her role in the relief committee. Mama Rukio has beaten all odds; she currently chairs the relief committee in Saredho, northern Kenya. Many of the members count on her for effective food distribution targeting the most vulnerable. In early times, it was not common to have women representation in such committees. Today, the situation is different, as in Saredho representation is at 60%.

Source: Rural Poverty Portal Website 2008

The impacts of such emergency situations can be positive for women in the long-term: exile of male members can provide opportunities for women to gain organisational and educational experience, which can be a useful resource in rehabilitation. Women often have to take up the position of household head. Men and women working side by side on emergency activities or e.g. food for work can have long term positive impacts on social relations. "Indeed, international involvement in crisis and post-crisis situations can be an opportunity to promote positive social change" (IASC Working Group 1999: 5).

Though women can be considered to be more vulnerable than men, they may more easily 'cope' with the situation and make the most of new economic and social opportunities. Men can experience more negative aspects: in the face of a disaster and being unable to protect or support their family, men may struggle with feelings of inadequacy and failure. Aid may be viewed as a stigma challenging their roles as breadwinner. The assignment of women as the controllers of humanitarian aid can be seen by men as an exasperating factor in this process, as Wawire (14: 2003) describes of a drought in northern Kenya:

Most of the men interviewed felt that "women" status in the family was uplifted as a result of the fact that they received famine food relief. Many men interviewed however felt threatened by this because their role as providers was undervalued by the relief food controlled by women. This had brought conflict in some families.

2.1.4 Collection and eating of wild foods

Wild foods (roots, tubers, leaves, seeds) are collected on a regular basis by some pastoral groups, particularly women (and children) and can form a large part of normal diets: in other communities they are relied upon more in times of crises such as drought and famine (Gullick 1999; Sobania 1988; Langton 1984). The collection of wild foods does not necessarily involve expending a great deal of energy though some such as the *mukheit* shrub found and used in Sudan in times of famine needs heavy and laborious processing (Muhammed 2002). Many foods are collected along the wayside whilst going about other chores. Others may be quite labour intensive e.g. digging up of tubers. Collection may become burdensome when the foods become the major part of the diet particularly during times of food scarcity and famine. The nutritional analysis of wild plant foods from all over Africa shows them to be very nutritious and not inferior to domesticated varieties. For example, the calorific value of wild grains, seeds and kernels can be higher than the calories, protein and oil of cultivated varieties (Gullick 1999).

Wild foods also enhance palatability. The popular use of leaves with a mucilaginous sap which gives the food a slimy texture is a recognised way of easing ingestion of accompanying foods. This may be particularly important for encouraging children to eat (Gullick 1999). For women these foods are an important source of income, to buy e.g. important non-food items such as soap (discussed in more detail in Section 3.0).

2.1.5 Fuel for cooking food

Finding fuel for cooking food is a hugely labour intensive and odious task for many pastoral women whether it be collection of wood or collection and making of dung pats. During times of stress the need for fuel can increase as there is more reliance on foods such as grain that need more cooking time. Finding alternatives to fuelwood and dung (that can be used to fertilise fields) not only saves women labour, but also has positive environmental impacts too. Further cooking with alternatives from such as solar and bio-gas can also benefit women's health. A project in China supported by IFAD has been trying to address these issues resulting in benefits not only for women, but also for the environment too (see Box 2.4).

Box 2.4 Benefits of Bio-Gas

In the West Guangxi province of China the Poverty Alleviation project has helped more than 30,000 poor households to build bio-gas digesters to produce bio-methane gas from animal and human wastes. Poor people with just one cow or two pigs can produce enough biogas to cook meals and light homes, eliminating the need for wood or coal. This has reduced the workload of women pastoralists and meant that they sell the excess animal dung to others for conversion into biogas. Knock-on environmental benefits include a reduction in the release of methane and conserved forests. And with additional time to invest in other activities like tea planting or silk-worm production, women are now contributing to a rise in household incomes.

Source: BBC World 2008.

2.2 Providing Water

Pastoral women and men tend to divide the responsibilities for provision of water ensuring both the household and the herd has adequate access. Women tend to be responsible for the watering of livestock left around the homestead, and the household needs (an exception being in Turkmenistan – see UNCCD 2007). This usually means burdensome transportation of water from its source. In drier areas and at drier times of the year, ensuring adequate water supply can be a day to day battle. In order to cope often women will work together dividing up tasks and resources (Bee et al 2002). In Ngurunit, north-eastern province of Kenya, women have organized themselves into groups in order to overcome obstacles they face including lack of access to water. To do this they trapped water from the Ndoto Mountains and piped it into three tanks to supply a source of drinking water (EU 1998).

Traditionally access to water would be managed by customary institutions (Bee et al 2002). There would be complicated rules of access often prioritising livestock before human use. This can still be the case in many pastoral areas and should be understood if interventions and/or activities to improve water supply are to be promoted and negative impacts as described in Box 2.5 are to be avoided. Further, increasingly water sources are being 'privatised' and thus women and other users now require money to access this basic necessity. Though involvement in water schemes (such as that described in Box 2.4) may have encouraged women to have a greater role in village meetings and election to positions in the village government "women's involvement in project management has not empowered them enough to secure reliable access to services" (Tukai 2005: 3).

Box 2.5 Privatisation Complicates Water Access

In Tanzania WaterAid has supported the rehabilitation of a borehole in a transhumant community. However, women's access to water was linked to men's watering of the livestock: the husband paid for the water when he brought the cattle to drink and only then were the women allowed to collect for domestic use. Some men were reluctant to allow the women to take the water before the cattle had drunk – a common practice at the traditional wells in the district. An attempt was made to allow women to collect separately, but they had to pay separately too: and many could not afford to do so. Even if women had been able to pay, it is unlikely they would have been given priority over cattle. As such, "under community-based management, the project has served to propagate inequality in accessing water services" (Tukai 2005: 5). Additionally men do not tend to use the borehole during the wet season. As a result women can not access the well then because they could not operate the machine themselves: they were forced to revert to traditional water sources. The project may even have worsened women's position as many households have moved closer to the borehole for easier access – but further away from the traditional wells which women remained dependent upon during the wet season.

In communities where pastoralists have become more sedentarised and mix with farmers, a different system exists where all including women pay per bucket. Livestock watering households bring diesel plus the required amount of cash, as a contribution to the regular maintenance scheme. Women in these communities are able to raise the required cash for domestic water because they are entitled to milk and chickens: they can exchange these for cash. Thus access to water is independent from livestock use.

Source: Tukai 2005

Accessing water is a key challenge for pastoralists in Asia too and is one of the greatest determinants of pastoral woman's workload. For example, women in the mountains of north-west Pakistan have to climb long and steep slopes to fetch water on a daily basis and women in Gujrat walk further than 2 kms a day. "The data shows that women spend 5.3 hours per day in livestock rearing. In no-source [water] villages, during the time of insufficient supply, women reported spending almost 3-4 hours per day to fetch water" (Upadhyay 2004).

When water points and pumps are established in communities it is usual that only men will be trained in their use and maintenance. This can have negative impacts on women's access. As one Hamar woman, from the south-west of Ethiopia said whilst speaking at a global pastoral gathering: "before Redd Barna came here 13 years ago, we women had to walk long distances to fetch water. When the water points came it was much better. But now some of the pumps are breaking and Redd Barna is gone and there is no-one to fix the pumps. We women are the ones who carry water and we pester the men to fix the pumps but they don't care and they don't fix them. Why didn't Redd Barna teach us women to make the repairs? The water committees are all men but it should not be so since the men are not responsible for collecting the water" (Simpson-Hebert 2005).

In India women have been trained in the management and repair of water pumps (as described in Box 2.6). Not only has this assisted their water needs and meant that more technicians are on hand for a quick response if there is a problem, but it has also helped to break down stereotypical images of women not being able to learn about and tackle technical problems. Additionally holding the position of water technician, the provision of a salary, the ability to solve their own problems without relying on their husbands or 'outsiders' and the wearing of the uniform over their saris, has given women increased confidence and self-esteem. They will only call on the men when the need arises, such as to carry the heavy pumps and other hard labour.

Box 2.6 Female Water Technicians in India

Five women technicians Narayani, Rasia, Shambhu, Mira and Lakshmi have been trained by an NGO in Rajasthan under the UNICEF assisted Sanitation, Water and Community Health Project to service and repair the Indian Mark II an India made hand pump designed specifically for water challenges of the country. They check each pump every two weeks. Dressed in grey uniforms covering their brightly coloured saris, the women can be seen trudging down the fields. They were met with jeers at first but no more. The team is called upon at least five or six times a month to get a pump up and running. They are paid a small salary for their efforts of up to 2 full work days a week. A pump weighs 15 kgs and at times they have to ask for the help of their husbands or those villagers where they visit. At first there was resistance but now this has been dissipated. Some of these women have started to take literacy classes. This experiment has been tried successfully in other states too.

Source: UNICEF website undated

Alternatively quotas may be set to include a percentage of nominated women on village water management committees. Care needs to be taken that such quotas do not result in mere tokenistic participation and though the percentage may be fulfilled it is unusual that more women will be included. However with effective encouragement and follow up this need not be the case: Sahel ECO (in Mali) for example found that following a visit to the villages by the gender advisor, equal numbers of men and women (five of each) were nominated to all four committees set up in 2007 (Sahel ECO 2008).

2.2.1 Providing water during times of stress

Drought makes the collection of water more difficult, labourious and dangerous (Wawire 2003). In conditions of water shortage, women spend many hours each day collecting water, with negative consequences for their own health, income earning opportunities, household survival and child care. In order to beat long queues at water points, women may have to start the trip to collect water before dawn. This can be dangerous because they may be attacked on the way.

As droughts become more common in some parts of Africa, women themselves are taking special means to prepare for water shortages and store water through different means (see Box 2.8). During times of drought it is common for emergency responding agencies to tank in water as a temporary supply. This eases the pressure on women and their water collection. Analysis of the water tankering around Wajir town suggests that six months tankering to a particular site, at a cost of USD 7,700, resulted in savings in woman's time fetching water of USD 27,600, in addition to reduced animal mortality valued at USD 12,300 (Oxfam 2002 in Morton et al 2002).

Box 2.8 Overcoming Water Shortages

Due to recurrent droughts in Kenya women are face a daily challenge of fetching water, sometimes having to walk over ten kilometers. However the Maasai women of Kajiado, are implementing measures to avoid this by constructing cement water tanks for their households. They collect rain water from their iron-sheet roofed houses and store it in the tanks. The project is being spearheaded by the UNEP and the Regional Land Management Unit of the World Agro-forestry Centre who are providing equipment and training for the women. To date, over 200 tanks have been constructed under the initiative. The women are also involved in digging mini reservoirs or 'earth-pans' to collect run-off water from sloping land. This in turn is used for irrigation purposes to water their crop and vegetable fields. "It's time to determine our own destiny...We are fed up with scorching temperatures and spending entire days searching for water," says Luise Mwoiko, chair of the Mataanobo Women's Group. The women's initiative cooperates to construct water tanks in one homestead at a time. They are proud of their work, as Mwoiko makes clear. "We never bother our men to climb up the tanks and make the final touches. We do it ourselves," though she adds that the women's husbands assist financially in their projects. Another member, Jerusha Lasoi, said their projects will ensure that the Maasai will no longer require food aid from outside their community. Pointing to her secure reservoir of water, a milk cow and thriving business in vegetable sales, Lasoi felt confident of their future.

Source: Nanzala 2008

2.3 Providing Shelter

It is not only women's responsibility to feed and water the household, but often to provide shelter too. Amongst the Boran, Gabbra and Somali of Ethiopia and many of the groups in Kenya and Tanzania for example, women are responsible for 'house' building, dismantling, loading, unloading and rebuilding as the need arises and the family move from place to place (Wangui 2003; Riviere-Cinnamond and Eregae 2003; Aliff 1995). This is one of most hard and time-consuming tasks, and in better-off households a man will pay casual labourers to do this (Mitzlaff 1988).

Some projects have tried to encourage the building of more 'modern' houses, however this has met with limited success for a number of reasons including the fact that such projects have been implemented without a good understanding of gender relations and sensitivities, so women have been targeted without the inclusion of men (see Box 2.8). By targeting women only as development motivators without inclusion of and discussion with the men the project hit social barriers: the men resented being told what to do by the women. The involvement of both men and women in the workshops to introduce innovations in cultivation and housing might have yielded better results.

Box 2.8 Limited Success in Building 'Modern' Houses

The Maasai Peoples' project has been successfully employing women as development motivators. The Maasai women are encouraged to cultivate land as a way of diversifying family diets and improving food security e.g. during the dry season when milk production is low, providing extra income for basic needs. One-day workshops were held to motivate women comprising of lectures, role-playing, drama and discussion. The development motivators would then make follow-up visits community homesteads. One of the workshops sought to encourage Maasai women to build modern houses: traditional ones leak during the rainy season which leads to respiratory infections. Efforts to introduce the use of polythene paper sheeting on walls and roofs to keep out moisture proved futile, however. Although among the traditional Maasai it is the women who build houses, the community is governed by a "male gerontocracy". The male elders are unwilling to let women engage in activities that appear to be departures from their age-old social order. Furthermore, the new type of housing required relatively large monetary investments, which were difficult for the women to acquire it being the men who had access to household cash.

Source: Sindiga undated.

2.4 Ensuring Health

Both pastoral women and men face great challenges to their health due to the very nature of the pastoral system. Long distances are traveled when moving with livestock (often with the homestead) on a low energy diet and in heat. Heavy loads of water, fuelwood or other resources are carried long distances causing stress on the body. Cooking over wood fueled fires can cause respiratory and other diseases. The collection of firewood exposes women to injury from falls and the risk of miscarriage (Bates 2002).

Modern health services and infrastructure in pastoral areas are poorly developed due to a lack of funding for such services and a failure in overcoming the difficulties of serving a nomadic or semi nomadic community. Therefore many still rely on traditional medicines and treatments, which can be unpredictable in their success.

Social factors also determine access to health care: though traditional services may often be available 'free' or as part of traditional support mechanisms, modern services need to be paid for and therefore this can exclude those who do not have ready access to money. Income determines the level of health care that can be paid for (Owoh K cited in Thuren 1991). In many cases within pastoralist households, the men control the money (for example from livestock sale) and any household members needing some will need to ask for it. For whatever reason a husband can prevent his wife visiting a clinic. Traveling to the clinic as well as treatment can mean that a visit can be very expensive.

The health sector can provide an interesting case of how empowerment can operate on both an individual and collective level. "Traditionally health programmes have focussed on a top-down approach of service delivery. An empowerment approach emphasizes women's individual sense of self-worth connecting to the value they attach to their own health (linked to 'power within'), women's individual decision-making over access health care ('power to') and women's collective empowerment through organizing to make health services more accountable and to increase women's choice, decision-making and control over their bodies ('power with')" (Oxaal 1997:17).

Links between empowerment and health in general and specifically for women are receiving growing recognition. Research has highlighted the relationship between powerlessness and susceptibility to ill-health, and the health-enhancing capability of empowerment defined as 'control over destiny' (Wallerstein 1993 in Oxaal 1997). As the WHO position paper on women's health produced for the Fourth Conference on Women, Beijing, states:

The empowerment of women is a fundamental prerequisite for their health. This means promoting increased access for women to resources, education and employment and the protection and promotion of their human rights and fundamental freedoms so that they are enabled to make choices free from coercion and discrimination (WHO 1995: 8).

However often assumptions are made between improving health and improving empowerment, such as decision making. Further it is suggested that "the feminist empowerment and 'women's right to choose' language has to some extent been adopted by the population control lobby for instrumental ends (i.e. the promotion of contraceptive use and fertility reduction goals) (Smythe 1994). In this context, empowerment can be narrowly equated with women's rights to have access to family planning services (contraceptives) without necessarily tackling the context within which reproductive and sexual decision making occurs, or broader issues of women's bargaining power and participation" (Oxaal 1997: 19).

There are a few interventions concerned with improving pastoral women's health, for example Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) in Ethiopia has been working with Afar pastoralists for some time through the training and supporting of health workers, linked to formal government standards (see Box 2.9). Some organizations have been providing pastoralists with training and awareness raising on HIV/AIDS (for example Maasai Women Development Organisation (MWEDO) in Tanzania, Sikar and Hodgson, 2006). It is suggested that nutrition levels of families have improved wherever projects have given focus on nutrition education or have brought multiple packages of intervention to improve the livelihood systems of the household. Women traditionally are more aware of nutrition aspects and tend to assure family needs first of all (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

Box 2.9 Training Health Workers

APDA has trained 134 health workers using a 6-month course certified by the Bureau of Health. 59 pastoralist women extension workers teach and motivate women on hygiene, nutrition, safe pregnancy and delivery, and the harmful effects of various traditional practices. Another 370 traditional birth attendants (TBAs) (providing delivery and prenatal services) are networked to the health workers and women extension workers. People are beginning to use soap and mosquito nets, and to eat iron-rich grains to combat anaemia (IIRR 2004). Today this work continues to improve the health of women and the community in general (APDA 2008).

2.4.1 Traditional Harmful Practices

Many pastoral societies still promote a number of traditional practices that can be considered 'harmful' (see Box 2.10). Disproportionately more of these fall on women. Though many of these practices are embedded in tradition and culture, they still cause harm often of a severe degree. As a result some call for more defined steps to promote or force eradication (e.g. www.feminist.org; www.maasaieducation.org). However others argue that pastoralists should be left to make their own decision about how and when to change such practices. As Dorothy Hodgson (personal communication 2008), author of *Rethinking Pastoralism in Africa* suggested, "Few rural women much care about Euro-American emphases on what you call "traditional harmful practices," especially FGM, this is not a priority for them."

Box 2.10 Finding Alternatives to Harmful Practices

In Benna-Tsema-Hamer and Karo, Ethiopia they believe that if the first tooth of a child appears on the upper gum this is bad: the child is labelled as 'mingi' and is thrown away immediately in order to die e.g. over a cliff, irrespective of its sex, by the order of community leaders. In Arbore, if a woman gives birth to twins, they will also be labelled as 'mingi' and once again, regardless of their sex they will be left to die. Recently options have been identified to killing the children, for example looking for adoption amongst city dwellers or amongst neighbouring groups.

Source: Hirut Yibabe 2001

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is one such practice and one on which there is great deal of focus. Usually it involves the complete removal or part of the clitoris and vulva with severe and painful repercussions (WHO, 2000). These effects can significantly compromise a girl's and women's lifetime health outlook, although the severity of consequences depends on the procedure used. The practice can take place shortly after birth, during early childhood or adolescence, right before marriage, and even at the seventh month of pregnancy. Among the Samburus and Merus in Kenya for example, girls are still circumcised during adolescence. Though research findings from Nyamira District in Kenya indicate that "parents circumcised their daughters earlier and earlier for a variety of reasons including avoiding refusal of circumcision by older girls, belief that younger girls heal faster and to avoid government regulation" (Mohamed 1997:25).

FGM is practised for a variety of social and cultural reasons. At the heart of these is the rendering a woman as "marriageable". The practices are perceived as an act of love for daughters and because of this there is strong adherence to the traditions despite many women saying they disapprove of FGM (Population Reference Bureau 2001). It is said that women will be ostracised if they do not undergo circumcision (see Box 2.11) and will not find a husband: they are perceived to be immature or non-fertile. Though the mother usually decides whether the girl will be circumcised, pressure can come from male elders and relatives too. Inaccurately identified with many religions, FGM is not sanctioned by the Koran or other religious texts.

Box 2.11 Cultural importance of FGM

Marriage remains an important rite of passage for Afar women and is their path to community acceptance and adulthood. However, in general marriage cannot happen unless a woman is circumcised. Although many Afar women understand the harmful health and emotional effects of FGM and the Government of Ethiopia has banned it, they are not prepared to forgo marriage and be marginalized within their own community. They weigh the risks and ultimately still choose to circumcise their girls. Even though some women are aware of and wish for certain rights, because of community pressure and structure, they are unable or unwilling to exercise them. Research shows that Afar societies are focused on the community as a whole, and not on the individual in terms of needs and rights. Collective rights are prioritized over individual ones.

"Afar women define empowerment by being *hilaly* and *dieta*" explains Asmare Ayele, Team Leader for CARE Ethiopia. "These Afar words mean powerful and capable, respectively. Having *hilaly/dieta* qualities implies reaching the height of social status and acceptance for Afar women, but this position can be obtained only after marriage, a milestone that, by definition, requires circumcision."

Source: Spadacini 2006

Strategies for promoting the abandonment of the practice include policy and legislation; public awareness and education campaigns; medicalisation (training health professionals to perform the procedure under sanitary conditions); religious condemnation, information; 'just-say-no' campaigns; and attempts to institute alternative rituals or 'rites of passage'. For example MYWO (Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation) have been supporting an alternative rights of passage ceremony for some time dubbed 'ntanira na mugambo' meaning 'circumcision through words' (IRIN 2005).

One programme entitled "E-Solidarity, a means of fighting against FGM" sees the internet as the means to stop FGM and "break the wall of isolation surrounding the rural Maasai community". It not only provides information sessions to rural Maasai communities and encourages women to make bracelets sold through the internet as a campaign: "Buy a Maasai bracelet and help women to say NO to FGM", but also promotes "solidarity" between developed and developing countries and consolidates international help to ban FGM by the campaign working through international websites, spreading "the word" and encouraging "solidarity e-mails" to be sent to Maasai women (see Website: <http://www.e-solidarity.org/campagnes-en.htm>).

According to Mackie (2000), few of these interventions have "had widespread or locally sustained effects because in many cases such strategies have failed to recognise the need for locally generated initiatives to reform such social conventions" (Easton et al. 2003: 446). Alternatively, a grassroots based movement has shown success. It has been an approach initiated by Tostan, a rural village empowerment programme that originated in Senegal (see Box 2.12).

Box 2.12 Abolishing FGM

The Tostan initiative in Senegal began in the late 1980s as an attempt to devise non-formal education and literacy programming for rural women grounded in their own perception of problems and based on their own learning styles. A further education programme focussing on human rights and women's health amongst other things began to raise issues on such as FGM. "Programme designers realised that the human rights component provided a means of addressing health issues as well and of fostering a consciousness-raising, empowering experience that allowed women to open up for the first time about topics that had traditionally been taboo and created a platform for involving both women and men in social problem solving" (Easton et al. 2003: 448). As the focus of the modules was broadened to include men's health, a greater number of male participants began to appear in the classes.

Women (and a few men) from one of the villages that had attended the 'continuing education' course, decided that they wanted to abandon FGM for once and for all. The women began by approaching local authorities and other villagers to win support for a declaration of intent to abandon the practice, and they succeeded. The declaration was read out in front of 20 invited journalists and broadcast on national television and through other media. There was some immediate opposition from conservative religious and political leaders, as much in reaction to the 'shame' of talking publicly about a taboo topic as to the substance of the declaration. Despite this another village followed, and then a third.

Then a much respected 66-year old *imam* came to talk to Tostan representatives and the women of the villages. He was disturbed by the challenge to traditional mores and asked to address the group. But the women suggested that he first talk to his own female relatives about their experience and feelings. He did this and "got an earful". The *imam* came back, persuaded that the women were right – and was ready to help. He also had advice for them. He pointed out that there were two major problems with the way in which things were being done. Firstly because only some of the villages were taking part the women were forfeiting the chance of their daughters getting married. Secondly there was a real problem in choice of language and approach. Terms and images were being used to shock villagers. "This is no way to change a culture, or to help it change itself". So together a strategy was worked out:

- Together they should go to all villages in the inter-marrying community and start by reaffirming personal relationships.
- They should not tell the villagers what to do, but rather what the leading villages had done and why. Then let them tell their own stories and to make their own decisions.
- They should avoid using graphic terms or demonstrations for taboo activities. Refer to FGM simply as 'the custom', as everyone knows what is meant.
- They should avoid condemning practitioners either implicitly or explicitly for practices they have been performing in good faith.

The *imam*, his nephew and a FGC cutter visited 10 other villages, where open, frank and disturbing discussions were held. In the end all 10 villages decided to join the original 3 in opposing FGC. A joint declaration was made and publicised.

The movement then jumped to southern Senegal where a group of villages also enlisted. Since its original breakthrough the movement has evolved along two paths: one front in the media and international forums, and two on the ground. The out-front publicity does not seem to have outstripped the local reality, and the activity has remained largely wedded to its village roots. Tostan has been asked to speak around the world about their experiences and where possible local people have spoken for themselves.

A problem arose when the Senegalese President Abdou Diouf passed a law abolishing the practice and dictating severe penalties for violators. The allies of Tostan were immediately concerned and went to Dakar to testify against the law, not, obviously, because they wanted to maintain FGC but because they firmly believe official abolition and sanction are not the way to go. They believe laws should not be dictated from the top down, but follow changes made at the local level. When the law was passed in protest, one traditional cutter made a point of performing 120 'circumcisions' in the days following its enactment. Perhaps the most harmful outcome was an influential religious leader saying that FGC is a religious practice and must continue. This greatly hampered the activities in that area. However the grassroots movement did continue and by 2001 over 700 communities had made their own declarations.

Source: Easton 2003

The success of the approach used by Tostan can be summarised in 3 aspects:

- It was collective.
- The strategy was grounded in the local context rather than an outside condemnation. FGM was not condemned but talked through its conscious 'abandonment'. The presence of an *imam* who could remind people that Islam never dictated such a practice was also instrumental. In addition, men's support was critical as well as that of the cutters.
- The tactic was empowering. Rooted in personal testimony and the exchange of new information, it left resolution and action up to each community and its members. It cast the problem of FGC in the larger frame of women's health and human rights – topics of importance to men too. (Easton 2003)

Since this time the programme has been replicated in Sudan and Mali. However follow up activities such as village improvement projects and income generation schemes have been cut from the programme. This seems to be causing problems and confusion (ibid).

A similar approach is being used by APDA in the Afar region of Ethiopia. Women who have already stopped practicing FGM are talking to and assisting others to do the same. They are assisted by religious leaders, local extension workers and community health workers. They will visit all households they know after childbirth and attend community celebrations such as weddings and funerals, to facilitate community discussions on the matter. The women appreciate the importance given to them in this role, community members often referring to them as 'women of wisdom' (APDA 2008). However for some girls and women things are not moving fast enough within their cultural context. Instead they have used the law to prevent FGM being conducted (see Box 2.13).

Box 2.13 Using Legislation to Prevent FGM

In Kenya the Children's Act of 2001 explicitly protects the girl-child from early marriage or forced FGM. The act prohibits all forms of FGM, and any person found circumcising a girl under the age of 18 is liable to be charged and imprisoned for one year or fined 50,000 Kenya shillings (US \$710), or both. FGM practitioners and parents forcing the procedure on their daughters can also be prosecuted under child abuse laws, or for grievous bodily harm or unlawful dismemberment of an organ of the body. The weakness of the criminal sanctions is that they do not protect a girl from FGM. Regardless of any punishment the law gives to the practitioner or parent, the procedure is irreversible. However, several young girls have recently successfully sued their parents under civil law to prevent them from forcing FGM upon them.

Source: IRIN 2005

2.5 Women and Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is often an accepted part of society, including pastoral society. Indeed, women themselves accept a level of violence as their 'misfortune'. In northern Kenya for example "women were anxious to tell of their marital disputes that arose due to infidelity, jealousy, neglect of household duties and child care, neglect of livestock-related duties, lack of funds, infertility, and property ownership. Wife beating is a common occurrence, but generally women did not seem highly disturbed by this and frequently joked about personal episodes in group sessions. Women simply commented that they often did not comply with their husbands' wishes or expectations. Some men stated that if they did not beat their wives, their anger would come out in other ways which, in their opinion, could be more damaging to the marriage" (Mitchell, 2003: 6).

However Mizlaff (1988) argues that women distinguish between the violence which occurs as a result of e.g. an animal dying whilst under their responsibility, and that which they receive when their husband comes home drunk and abusive. If they feel that they have been unjustly beaten then often they can take action, which can lead to prosecution by traditional leaders or government or result in divorce (see Box 2.14).

Box 2.14 Stopping Domestic Violence

From time to time Guji women may be beaten by their husbands. *Dirsi kiya wonni na n-dinneesi, ane n-jaaladdu* "If my husband does not beat me, my husband does not like me". The young bride expects to be beaten in the first month of marriage. Reasons for beating are primarily for lack of care of children or cattle. She will receive a slap on the face or beaten with a small stick or whip across her back and on the loins. After beating, the husband is expected to rub butter on the places where he has hit her and state "if you take care as I've shown you, I will never beat you again". If a woman feels that she has been unjustly beaten then she can leave for her parent's house with some of her special possessions. The husband and his father will attempt to get the wife back – after persuading her that he will not beat her again, it is likely that she will return. Should the husband repeatedly beat her without good reason, then she will continue to return to her parent's home until maybe on the fourth or fifth time divorce would be justified.

Source: van de Loo 1991.

In Uganda it is said that a woman who can stand up to her husband is not seen as particularly empowered, but one who is beaten is seen as "weakened". "If a husband beats you, you will become a weak woman. Instead of staying with a man who beats you, you may as well become a prostitute and feed your family." (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004).

Often women will take matters into their own hands. For example amongst the Jie of Uganda, a man who is known to bully girls is likely, sooner or later, to be ambushed by a group of vindictive women and beaten with sticks and whips (Kratli 2001).

2.6 Reducing Vulnerability To the Above

Men and women may be exposed to different risks or may experience different degrees of vulnerability. Vulnerability refers to the intensity with which a shock is experienced, and the capacity to recover from a shock. Gender related differences in vulnerability are strongly influenced by differences in asset ownership (e.g. access to resources) and income; their respective risk preferences; cultural and social norms that influence household dynamics; and political economy issues within the community and at a national level too (Ezemenari et al 2002; Enarson 2000). It is important to understand these vulnerabilities and capacities to overcome them if humanitarian assistance is to effectively respond to the needs of all community members (UN 2005: 1).

Women (and men) may be "powerless but they are not helpless" (SEAGA 2002: 6). Often portrayed as helpless victims, aid agencies place an emphasis on women's need for assistance. However, too often in the rush to provide such assistance, little or no account is taken of what they have already achieved for themselves, despite the fact that women have often developed flexible and

creative coping mechanisms and strategies. Some forms of assistance can distort or disrupt these mechanisms that they have already set up or are utilising (IASC Working Group 1999). Many NGOs have tried to address the challenges that women face in fulfilling basic needs for themselves and their families so reducing their vulnerability. An example from Mali is given in Box 2.15.

Box 2.15 The Mali Sheep Project

Until recently many rural women and their families in the region of Mopti (Mali) could afford only one meal a day. Thanks to the development of microcredit activities spurred by the NGO *Prométhée* and its 'sheep project', rural women are now eating two meals a day, paying for health care and education of their children. The project works through a rotating microcredit system whereby a woman receives a lamb which she will fatten and re-sell for a substantial profit. She reimburses the credit once the sheep is sold, allowing other women to acquire a lamb and benefit from the scheme. Before the intervention the profit women received from raising sheep was minimal – CHF 12 (\$10 or £5). In the area these sheep are called 'house sheep' (*moutons de case*) as the women raise them in their own courtyards. Today women make a net of profit of CHF 110 to 180 per sheep and they fatten three or four of them.

Oumou Diarra has taken part in the scheme. Her husband had left her five years earlier and she had been ill since his departure. Through the scheme she has been able to pay for her health care (\$250 per year), to feed a family of seven people, to set aside more than \$225 and to own a bull worth over \$200.

Source: WWSF 2007

The establishment of women's groups has proved to be an important way of buffering women from and supporting each other in times of stress and shocks.

Box 2.16 Coordinating Harambee in Kenya

In northern Kenya, pastoral women's groups coordinate public fund raisers (*harambee*) to accumulate larger sums of money to support emergency needs of orphans, elderly and infirm. Group efforts to mitigate drought impacts have evolved over time; these have included provision of water and food for the neediest members, goat restocking and extending low-interest loans. Being a member of such a group provides a buffer to shocks and stresses. For example during the drought of 1999-2000 one group assisted each other by harvesting standing hay, managing milking herds, and supporting each other's children with milk. Revenue from milk sales were used to purchase grain and sugar for the neediest households. Others provided money to purchase water and loans with delayed payments until after the drought.

Source: Coppock et al 2006

2.7 Summary

1. A starting point for working with pastoral women should be an understanding of women as part of a pastoral household unit. Though women have their own identity, needs and aspirations, they may have to compromise these for the good of the 'whole' and often do. Though it can be suggested that women should focus on their needs as individuals rather than those expressed as a household member, there is the danger then of risking the collapse of the pastoral system as it exists and functions.
2. Women are extremely adept at finding ways to ensure the household has access to food and water for basic survival, this includes in times of stress. Before any interventions are planned it is important to ensure that planners and decision makers have a full understanding of the different means of accessing food and water, including traditional 'rights' to, networks and support groups supporting shared food/water provisions, and the dynamics of household systems that define access. Traditional 'coping strategies' for ensuring supply in times of stress (including preservation of food and accessing of 'wild' foods) need to be taken into account. Otherwise food and water distribution can upset local systems, cause conflict within and between households, and marginalize the very beneficiaries in most need.
3. However there may also be inhibitors to accessing resources, and again it is important that planners and decision makers understand these, take them into account and address them where necessary.
4. During crisis situations women will often be targeted with food aid, water aid etc. This can provide opportunities for increasing their status, self-confidence and capacities. Such positive social change should be built upon once the crisis is over. However men should not feel that their own capabilities to support the household are being further undermined, as this can lead to resentment even conflict. Men and women working together on emergency activities have proved to have positive impacts.
5. Identifying and supporting alternatives to fuelwood can offer a number of favourable impacts for women, the household and the environment. However they tend to be difficult to implement due to cost, suspicion of technology and the fact that a fireplace offers more than a place to cook: it is a place to gather, provide warmth and light, and is often seen as the central node of a hut or household. This issue needs to be tackled first before alternatives are promoted.
6. Efforts supporting the 'privatisation' of resources, particularly basic needs resources such as water need to be aware of the implications of such privatization, particularly on women. For example if interventions support the payment of water or health, then it needs to be assured that women are going to have easy access to funds to pay for the water or health service and it is not going to cause household conflicts.

7. Women have the capacity, skills and interest to be members of water committees and for example to be trained in pump maintenance. Often they are seen as better treasurers, more trustful of funds, as well as more diligent and committed. Illiteracy should not be a reason to exclude any member. If only one member of the committee is literate he/she can support the others and carry out any necessary literate work. Women's membership has been shown to break down stereotypical images of women not being able to cope with such a position, and can increase women's self-esteem and confidence.
8. The assumption that a cow will always lead to increased household nutrition does not automatically hold – milk may be sold and non-food items bought.
9. The provision of health services can assist women's empowerment at different levels: individual and collective. Firstly women can fulfill their needs for good health which is connected to the value of their own bodies and 'control over destiny' (power within) and secondly women can work together collectively to make health services more accountable and increase women's choice.
10. The provision of health services have proved to be successful when strongly embedded in the community, and includes training of community members as health workers. This can include pastoral women, and illiteracy should not be a barrier. Community women know about challenges and constraints that their fellow women face, are likely to be more trusted and seen less as a threat, whilst offering them employment and opportunities for 'empowerment'.
11. Income generation activities targeting women have been shown to have positive aspects not only providing women with income, but also allowing them to better access necessities and the fulfilling of basic needs of the household. This has reduced their vulnerability with positive knock-on impacts. Women are more likely to use income for fulfilling basic needs than men.
12. It may not be the case that pastoral women prioritise such issues as FGM – they may have more urgent priorities and needs, and in some ways may consider 'traditional' practices as necessary and an important event in their lives. Circumcision itself for example can be seen as a means of empowerment in some cultures, and only through it can a certain status and position be reached. It is important that these factors are taken into account when planning if/how to support a ban on FGM and other 'harmful' traditional practices.
13. It has been shown that locally generated initiatives to ban such as FGM have been more successful than externally-led ones and/or such as legislation (which in itself can be disabling and cause 'backlash'. The process should be encouraged in small steps beginning with the creating of comfortable forums for men and women to talk about and be involved in social problem solving.
14. Any move to ban FGM or any other 'harmful' practices needs to gain the support of all the community, men, women, elders, youth, religious and political leaders: it must be collective.
15. A softer approach rather than "shock treatment" has been shown to have benefits. Rather than telling people what to do, it is better to tell villagers what others have done and why, allowing them to make their own decisions about what to do themselves. This tactic is more empowering for those involved. Further it is better not to use graphic terms, but for example refer to it simply as 'the custom'. Condemnation should be avoided. Media can be useful, but only as a second and parallel track to work on the ground.
16. The majority of pastoral women can themselves gauge what level of violence is acceptable and what is not acceptable to them. When a level of violence is reached that is not acceptable they should be provided with opportunities and means to stop such violence and/or find recourse. Women talking amongst themselves and with other women can be a fruitful way of opening up discussion on such a sensitive subject. It is often the case that there are traditional means of resolving disputes in the household including domestic violence. However these may not be enough for many women who may need assistance in turning to government legislation and support.

3.0 ENTITLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES: INTRODUCTION

3.1 Entitlements and Effective Command

The previous sections focused on how women fulfill their basic needs and those of their families. This and the following five sections will focus on the second step in the Women's Empowerment Framework – that of access to resources (including education, livestock, income generation and credit, and natural resources) on an 'equitable' basis.

It tends to be the case that men and women have different degrees of access to resources, including natural resources e.g. use of trees or land; economic resources e.g. credit; services e.g. schools and clinics; and political resources e.g. information on their 'rights' and legislation, or forums to voice their concerns and needs. Not only do men and women have different access to resources but they also have different access to the decision-making processes that concern the use of those resources and how the money is spent, if they are sold. As such "women's entitlement to productive resources is not just a legal or policy matter; it is essentially a question of social transformation of gender relations and social institutions" (IFAD 2003c: 11).

'Effective command' means the degree that the resources to which social actors have legitimate command, are actually utilized. This is not always obvious and rights to and use of resources can be highly complex. There may be more than one party involved in claiming access to certain properties. Second "transforming a legitimate right into effective access, an entitlement, demands a proper combination of endowments.... Consider the example of a village's common grazing pastures. A female village member may have principal access rights, by virtue of her membership of the village community. However, she may fail to exercise her initial rights due to prevailing gender relations that proscribe that women cannot go out for grazing animals. Alternatively she may find her access rights to the common grazing pastures not translated into actual access because other, more powerful actors have encroached and enclosed a portion of the commons for individual ranching purposes. Finally, she may not be able to access the pastures when she has no grown-up children to assist her. So actual access does not logically derive from principal access rights..." (Koning 2003:28).

In Tibet for example, even though there are "traces of a matrilineal kinship system ...[that] contribute to a relatively autonomous status of women...inheritance generally follows patrilineal lines..."(Nori, 2004). Similarly in Mizoram, the North East State of India the legislative influence on changing conditions of customary law and emergence of capital as a form of inheritance have contributed to the submergence of matriarchal land rights of women leaving them very little leeway (Kelkar and Tshering, 2004).

3.2 Image, Identity and 'Belonging'

Women and men often have different images of themselves and of each other:

Self-images of women/men: that is the way women/men see and value themselves, their position and roles. Women often have low self-esteem and confidence, together with a belief that they have little worth contributing beyond the household. By increasing women's self-worth, self-esteem and self-confidence, one can encourage them to take a more active role in decision-making processes etc.

The images that women and men have of each other: Men and women also have different images of each other. If a project is to fit into its specific cultural environment, it must take into account the perceptions of the target group regarding gender roles and status. Different aspects of identity are given greater emphasis in different contexts. For example in a forest a woman may be described as a 'fuel collector': at home she may be described as a 'mother'.

Identity is heavily influenced by relationships with others, and by the dominant culture. Often identity is prescribed by others. Humans have tendencies to put individuals and groups into categories. Such 'stereotyping' is often inaccurate and misleading, based on imperfect information and filtered through individual's backgrounds and life experience. In many societies for example, there is a widespread (and familiar) stereotype that a man should be a head of the household and make decisions on managing resources/

Enormous problems arise when people treat each other on the basis of the stereotype alone. For example, some people perceive pastoralists to be ignorant, backward, dirty, troublesome people and this has influenced how people interact with and treat them: usually in a negative way.

Collective identity is also important such as ethnicity or nationality. Ethnicity can be defined by language, religion, territory, social organization, culture and race. In pastoral societies, ethnicity is a very strong part of one's identity with many cultural, social, political practices being framed and guided by the ethnic group that one is born into. Often it is assumed that men play a more dominant role in defining and supporting ethnic identity through cultural celebrations and practices; however women also play a very strong role too.

Feelings of 'identity' and 'belonging' are important needs for all of us. In pastoral societies they are of primary importance, for both women and men. Pastoralism is a living social system that has strong relationships with the environment and a sense of 'place'. People's identity and sense of belonging to a place or piece of land goes far beyond physical needs, but also encompasses relationships with ancestors, appreciation for beauty, environmental elements and space, dignity, freedom, and enjoyment of food that they are familiar with.

Honour is of vital importance to many pastoral groups for example the Fulbe of Mali. Where such 'honour' is threatened conflict may occur and peacemaking be made more difficult (Lund 1999). This 'honour' seems to be of more importance for men than women. In pastoral societies gender roles become internalised at a very young age – with boys and girls being socialised into performing their respective roles. These influence attitudes and thinking and are carried later into life, making it is very difficult to change gender related issues (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

3.2.1 Identities of pastoral women

Identity of women is strengthened by clothing, jewellery and other adornments. Jewellery can also play an important role in pastoral society as symbols of power (see Box 3.1) and for example, the kind of jewellery worn, illustrates whether a woman is a widow or not. Time spent making jewellery or such as calabash containers with other women, is a time of gossip, stories and song. Women will often work together to make one piece of jewellery (Mitzlaff 1988). Women give each other gifts such as bracelets to cement good relationships (Wangui 2003).

Box 3.1 Jewellery as a Symbol of Power

Maasai and Okiek women actively set, maintain and negotiate ethnic and clan boundaries through the production, wearing and interpretation of beadwork colours and patterns. They make unique designs for each age-set, translating new objects and images (like airplanes) into beadwork patterns and adapting their production to account for new technologies and input (plastic instead of glass beads). More recently such handiwork has been a route to greater economic and social influence or autonomy. Similarly among the Pokot, women's powers as mothers are represented in the design, use and disposal of beaded belts (*lökötyö*). Through these belts, Pokot women may choose to give or withdraw their maternal support to their husband's lineages or even to their children.

Source: Bianco 2000.

Household items can also have symbolic meaning. Among the Borana in Kenya, the hut, milkherd and milk pots are 'ideal symbols of the womb' – they "are practical assets that a woman can transform into motherhood, embodiments of the abstract aspects of the part women play in the division of labour" (Dahl 1990: 134 in Hodgson 2000).

3.2.2 Age and age-sets

Within pastoral societies the system of 'age-sets' or 'age-groups' encourages identity and belonging within a group of approximately the same age. Mistakenly it is assumed that it is only men who belong to such groups, but as Mitzlaff explains in Box 3.2 women also belong to such societal structures. However for women these may not hold the same type of pressures and opportunities as for men, and for a woman her belonging to networks and groups may be of more importance.

Box 3.2 Age-sets for Women

Amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania, age-groups (in contrast to age-class or age-set of men) comprise those women of roughly the same age, who are in a certain social and biological time of their lives (e.g. uncircumcised girls or young wives). They have strong feelings of belonging together, and will share and experience life together, though this will weaken when they get married. However, although the age-class system of men is an important factor for the relations of men and women, it is not the decisive element in the life of a woman. While membership in an age-class and a clan determine the life of a Parakuyo man to a large extent, the social connections of a woman are more complex. She is simultaneously a member of several groups (which she can change). Points of contact and communication between women and men are relatively rare in everyday life and intimate relationships are also actively brought about by women. Because of this, women's relations to men are less relevant to their self-esteem and identity than their position and role within the various groups to which they belong. The acceptance, recognition and criticism they encounter in these groups shape the way they see themselves far more than the opinions men have of them.

Source: Mitzlaff, 1988

Both very young and old women tend to experience a lot more freedom than others. For example, amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania, young uncircumcised girls have much greater freedom; on marriage their movement is limited and they are not fully integrated into the women's groups. However as time passes and she has her first child then she is allowed to go to the weekly market and her status and involvement in village life improves. Older women tend to have the greatest freedom however. For example, it is only in the home of old women that the *murran* (young male warriors who have been circumcised) can meet, hold long discussions and be boisterous and uninhibited, without making the elders angry. Any other woman would be suspected of having an affair. This familiarity gives the women direct and indirect influence among the *murran* (Mitzlaff 1988).

Both older women and men tend to have gathered a large amount of respect by the time they reach old age. Both are seen as inexhaustible and valuable sources of historical information and experience. In contrast to male elders, women's knowledge is likely to be of a more private nature. She may know about family ties and relationships, about love affairs, births and illnesses as well as most rumours.

3.2.3 Cultural change

Access to 'modern' goods changes identity and culture. For example, there is an increasing reliance on modern replacements for traditional goods such as carrying containers (replaced by plastic) or housing (traditional replaced by heavier structures needing male input): as a result both men's and women's contribution to pastoral culture is reduced risking a weakening of identity and sense of belonging (Joeques and Pointing 1991). Celebrations of pastoral cultural identity are one way of encouraging pride and support for revitalization of pastoral identity and culture (see Box 3.3).

Box 3.3 Festivals Revitalize Culture and Identity

Behind the merriment, the Toureg's festival del'Air in Niger has another purpose. As the new generation is drawn towards Western trappings, the festival is trying to preserve traditional Touareg culture. '[The Festival] is a calling to the youth to remind them who they are,' says the president of the Iferouane cultural community. 'One is no-one without cultural identity. It is life's cement.' And it seems to be working. Few of the young attending the festival dare come to the event unveiled.

Here, at least, they experience the historic customs that were part of daily life until their parents' generation. But it isn't just a reminder of bygone traditions. Thanks to the organisers' efforts, the festival is helping to revitalise Touareg culture. Groups of nomads from all over the north now flock to the festival to take part in competitive events, including displays of singing and dancing and presentations of new jewellery, textiles and saddle each with generous cash prizes. It is particularly encouraging to note that the number of women chanting poetry accompanied by the imzad – both greatly revered skills – has doubled in recent years.

Source: Butler 2007

In Asia cultural norms and segregation by caste generate divisions in communities, suspicion and a lack of trust. Segregation of women excludes them from public places where there is a mixed community in the village. One woman leader of an NGO established the SURE project which systematically co-opted a community's men (of different caste divisions) to get together for restoring the pure breed of bull called Tharparkar in the arid district of Barmer, India. In the process this succeeded in bringing down obstructive barriers set up through the caste and class divisions, and 'empowered' the village women at the same time (see Box 3.4).

3.4 Livestock Management Cuts Through Caste Divisions

Livestock breeders of two districts in India wanted to turn around the diluting of a pure breed cow called Tharparkar ('thar' meaning desert) by hiring in the service of quality bulls. The quality and strength of their breed had been lost due to changes in livestock movements resulting from the partition of the country in 1947: before the pure breed was brought from Sind. Fodder shortage forced the cattle to move to districts where the breed got mixed. Meetings were held where all community men of different castes and class had to sit together on the floor. The women formed a group called the Janki Mahila Mandal (women's group) for the development "of our livestock" again crossing caste divides. As one woman put it, "it was difficult, for our family members to accept this change...Forming a group has made us stronger!" Village Livestock Workers, mainly coming from the lower caste, were expected to go around the villagers to collect information on the cows, their yields of milk etc. Again, all the villagers had to interact with the Village Livestock Workers as only "we know the yield of our cows". One of the cows of a member of the women's group fell sick and her husband was away. "Earlier, we would have just waited, but as a group we took the cow to the medical centre at Chotan, about 20 kms away and that helped save the cows life..." The women discuss together about what needs to be done to care better for the livestock, they save money for credit, and now their husbands and the village elders take account of their opinion when activities are to be planned in the breed development programme. As members of the VLS "we now have a say in these matters" (Jamna Devi, 34 years, member VLS, Dedusar Village).

Source: SURE undated.

3.2.4 Religion

Religion should be viewed as part of a wider cultural complex. In the absence of women's recorded narratives, experiences and their views on what religion means to them, analysis has often reduced peoples' experiences/relationships with religion to the political use of the latter in the public arena. These are not the same. "Approaches which fail to make this distinction and which focus on religion as an obstacle to women's development are discordant with aspects of women's own experience of religion where it can provide women a space which is absolutely their own and means of self-affirmation and social participation" (Balchin 2003: 42).

Religion has played a role in changing pastoral societies. In Kenya for example, where Christianity has grown, religious leaders condemn wife beating practices and encourage men to treat women as equals. One result of this has been an expansion of women's economic opportunities as husbands allow them to travel further and work more independently than before. This has also increased their economic responsibility and time spent on livestock and crop duties (Wangui 2003).

In many countries there has been a strengthening of Islam and sharia law, see for example Nigeria (Imam 2006). As a result there has been a "Sharianization" of parts of society and new offences have been created, mostly surrounding sexuality, which has had a negative effect on women's rights. Islam has undermined aspects of pastoralist women's powers through the introduction of new inheritance laws, marriage and divorce provisions, spatial sanctions, dress codes, and ritual practices and regulations. For example among Boran, men's conversion to Islam introduced polygyny, increased the ease of divorce of women by men (but not vice versa) and loosened the bonds of infertile couples, who can now divorce (Aguilar 2000). This has led to an increased number of NGOs

being established that focus and support women's rights. However what is also needed, it is argued, is a "demystification" of Sharia for the Muslim communities (Imam 2006).

Some men feel threatened when women do claim their Islamic rights such as equality between men and women, the right to education and the right to participate in community affairs. Their reaction is to put women down so that the authority of men will not be questioned. In the Qur'an, in the translation made by Yusuf Ali, there is a commentary in the Chapter of Women (Sura al Nisa) that says "What can be a holier cement to society than the....women's right secured; ...and all life lived in faith, charity and kindness sincere to all our fellow creatures." The essence of this is that if women are treated well, the whole society benefits (Affi 1995).

3.3 Interventions

NGOs, government and religious organizations are often criticized for forcing change in pastoral communities (see Box 3.5). However it is difficult to ascertain if such change is really negative (particularly in the long-term) and secondly it is almost impossible to identify clear and sure causal relationships: one intervention is unlikely to have a direct impact and it is likely to be a number of interventions or influences that have contributed to the effect.

Box 3.5 Cultural Change: Good or Bad?

It is suggested that NGOs have had a negative impact on the Maasai culture. Some of the NGOs have been spreading the gospel of "gender equality" and human rights. Some of the Maasai who have followed this move have changed their culture, believing that what they were doing was bad or inhuman. The problem with these NGOs is that they are bringing their own ideas that they want to impose on the people and get rapid results without involving the communities. With the introduction of formal education, the role played by religion and NGOs, Maasai women are increasingly being empowered. As a result their traditional roles in the communities are now changing. The breakdown of the traditional value systems of the pastoral community has made pastoralists more susceptible to communicable diseases such as sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Together with all these changes, there are certain aspects, which have not changed. For example the Maasai have retained some of their distinctive elements of culture: the traditional attire and the role of traditional birth attendants. Moreover, they still respect and observe the traditional age-group leadership system.

Source: Bee et al 2000.

3.4 Summary

1. Pastoral men and women have differing entitlements and access to resources and command over them. Rights to and command over resources can be very complex, of different types, overlapping, and dynamic. It is important to understand these entitlements and rights before attempting to initiate change as without doing so 'hidden' rights of access can be destroyed, and new rights of access can marginalize less powerful groups.
2. Further understanding 'identity', its importance and its manifestations is necessary to ensure that the right approach is taken to support change. Discussions should be facilitated as to what images men and women have of themselves and each other, whether they are happy with such images, and if not, how they can be changed. Facilitating such a discussion opens up space for community members to consider deeply who they perceive themselves to be and how can change be initiated from within: considered to be an important element of 'empowerment'. An intervention or project must ensure that it takes account of such images in its planning of activities.
3. An important part of a pastoral woman's identity can be jewellery, beadwork, dress, carrying containers and other household items. Often social norms, values, customs and statements are expressed through the jewellery and handiwork. As such these items are worth far more than just a commodity and should be understood so.
4. Age can be an important factor in defining status and respect. Women as well as men belong to age-sets, though for women these may not be so important as the informal groupings and networks that they belong to and which form the basis of many reciprocal and supportive relationships. Young unmarried women tend to have relative freedoms. Once married this tends to be limited until they grow older. Older women tend to have the greatest of freedom in mobility and in socializing with men and women alike.
5. Both men and women are facing and experiencing changes in their culture and society. This is having knock-on impacts on their identity and images of self and each other, as well as how pastoral communities interact and access resources. For many it is a difficult and unsure time, where the modern conflicts with the traditional. Many decisions have to be made concerning customary practices and whether they are still relevant, wanted or needed in a 'modern' world. Both women and men are discussing and deliberating amongst themselves as to what and how changes should take place. Development actors need to recognize this and ensure that activities and interventions reflect what pastoralists themselves want in relation to change.
6. Livestock related interventions have been shown to cut through and mend cultural, caste and gender divides. Because it is often the case that similar interests lie in livestock production and management amongst different sections of society, commonalities can be identified and built on to encourage solidarity and consensus.

7. Supporting cultural change can be highly sensitive and problematic. Pastoral men and women should have the right to initiate change at a pace that they feel comfortable with, and not be pushed into change that they are not ready for by 'outsiders.' NGOs and government can support cultural change by opening up room and space for considering change, visioning future components of change, discussion, debate and planning with communities. They can also offer options and opportunities, and organize the sharing of experiences with other communities who have faced and/or are facing similar issues. Cultural and societal change can take decades – often this is beyond the lifetime of a project, programme and/or NGO. As a result it is more important that small and comfortable steps are taken by community members themselves with the understanding that this is the beginning of a process of change, rather than larger upsets initiated by outsiders in order to fulfill project objectives and components.
8. Access to productive resources alone is not enough. At project level, the greatest impact has been achieved when women's improved access to assets has been complemented by relevant training tailored to women's needs, their roles, appropriate extension services, information and group formation.

4.0 ENTITLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES: LIVESTOCK

There is a high level of agreement in the literature that socio-economics and institutional frameworks play an important role in livestock development through determining who does what, and who gets what. Thus it is important to understand who 'owns' livestock or has access to it, and how that relates to livestock management and decision making processes. Livestock projects often assume that women's ownership of livestock is a straightforward concept and that in general they have weak rights of ownership and access. However in general it is much more complicated than this with women having both actual and nominal rights to certain livestock including cattle, whilst having further rights to livestock resources. Therefore analysing the specific situation in a project region, village and household, as well as monitoring changes, are important (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

4.1 Women's Role as Livestock Managers

The many activities that women are responsible for and complete on a daily basis have been well documented (Nori 1994; Ridgewell and Flintan 2007; Bravo-Baumann 2000; IFAD undated; Joeques and Pointing 1991; Kelly 1985; Langton undated; Michael 1984; Mitzlaff 1988; Niamir-Fuller 1994; Sagawa 2006; van der Loo 1991; Waters-Bayer 1985; Wienphal 1984). But it is often the case that women's role as livestock managers is underestimated and belittled. Indeed women are said to be 'the hidden hands' of production and a neglected source of indigenous knowledge (Geerlings 2001; Gura 2006). This section will describe women's role as livestock managers and how this has been promoted. However having a role in livestock management does not mean that one has access to or rights over that livestock and decision making powers concerning its sale and use: this will be discussed in the following section.

Though many suggest that within pastoral communities labour roles and responsibilities can be simply divided along the lines of livestock related (carried out by men) and those that are non-livestock related (carried out by women) in reality it tends to be more complicated and flexible and can depend upon labour shortages, the development phase of the family, the number and type of livestock, the nature of the task, and the intensity with which people adhere to role ideals. For example, Tamang men in Tibet will carry out all activities associated with women with the exception of pounding grain (Panter-Brick 1986). Other examples of 'role reversals' can be found among the Bedouin of Yemen (Adra 1983), and Pashtun of western Afghanistan (Glatzer & Casimir 1983).

Spheres of action and responsibility over livestock can be strictly separated (as among the Jallube of Mali) (de Bruijn 2000) and/or relatively equal (as among Mongolian nomads) (see Box 4.1) (UNESCO 2004). In Iran for example, according to FAO, more than 86% of the milking, 42% of the feeding watering and health care of livestock is completed by women (FAO National Sectoral Report on Women, 1994). And as will be shown below examples can be found where women play a role in the majority of livestock-focused activities. In most cases both men and women are happy with the division of responsibilities (Larsen and Hassan 2003), as long as the household unit is functioning as a whole.

Despite this "in most pastoral areas the strength and ability of a woman to survive or be successful in taking care of livestock is believed to be partly dependent on the presence of a male, whether as a son, husband or a male relative, thereby making remarriages common. In addition support of a male is seen as a form of security in herd management and also in the community social networks" (Arasio 2004).

Box 4.1 Mongolian Livestock Raisers

Women in Mongolia have always been equal to men, since their participation in livestock breeding and related livelihood activities was as essential as that of men's. A herd size of 200-300 animals is considered necessary to make a reasonable living and to provide for an average family with 4-5 members. But the majority of stock owners today have below this threshold with 63% owning less than 100. The absence of markets, poor infrastructure and water make life even more difficult. Women are the main labour force in livestock raising, producing all the necessary products for family consumption, processing livestock products and at the same time, childbearing and rearing, caring for other members of the family.

Source: UNESCO 2004; Asia-Pacific NGO Forum 2004;

In a few rare cases, women are not allowed any contact with or responsibility for livestock, even small stock. One example can be found among the Kalah agro-pastoralists of Pakistan, where men alone are involved in animal husbandry, including milking, and women are supposed to avoid all contact with animals when they are menstruating or following childbirth, when they are considered impure (Loude 1980).

4.1.1 Herding and grazing

Though it is usual for men to herd the livestock there are many examples of women taking up this role as well. Among the transhumants of Asia there are instances of women taking charge of both large and small animals (Undeland 2008; Ali & Butz 2003; Dienes 1975). In the northern areas of Pakistan and in the Chitral alpine pastures, women commonly look after the herds and spend the summer in alpine areas maintained with supplies by their husbands (Sardar 2003). In Kyrgyz Republic women take the livestock up to the summer pastures for months at a time, whilst the men stay behind to tend to and harvest crops. The Tajik believe that bad luck will come to the animals if men appear on the pasture during the first few days in summer (Dienes 1975).

In Africa too there are examples of women taking charge of herding. In Wajir during the 1999/2001 drought it was the women who could be found at the livestock camps with non-school-going children while men were found at distribution centres taking care of the school-going children. In a polygamous family, every wife had a duty of being at the livestock camp at a particular time (Arasio

2004). Likewise Kabbish women in the Sudan are not required to herd, they are praised if they choose to do so (Asad 1970). In other parts of the world women also herd the livestock (see Box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Women Herders in Siberia

The Tuva women of Siberia herd the reindeer while the men are away on hunting trips. Additionally they will accompany their husbands on the summer migrations up into the mountain areas. In winter they will return to the lowlands where the wife will busily make butter, cheese, and curds and freezing milk to see them through the coming winter and the following spring.

Source: Alexander 1999

And across the world, increasingly men are migrating to towns and elsewhere to find work. In the Carpathian Mountains of Romania women play a dominant role in livestock management in the absence of their husbands working away from home (see Box 4.3).

Box 4.3 Livestock Production Systems in Romania

Ioana and her parents-in-law take it turns to tend to their family's four cows and five sheep. Her husband is away for four months in Germany, working as a forester. Today it is Ioana's turn and has to walk for over an hour in sub-zero temperatures to reach the hay barn where they are housed. She has to clean out the barn and store the dung for scattering in the fields later in the year. Ioana milks the cows and makes cheese for the family. In March the animals are moved to the barn closer to the house where they will calve. The family owns five meadows, each with a hay barn. The animals spend time in each of these in the winter months to consume the hay and to provide a ready supply of dung to ensure that every meadow can be fertilized. In April once the snow has melted Ioana and her mother-in-law take it in turns to watch over the grazing cattle on one meadow and to rake dung on another. On the first day of June Ioana walks the cows up to the summer pastures, seven hours walk way and over a 2,200m mountain pass. By the end of July Ioana, her husband, young sons and parents-in-law are working flat out to bring in the hay, a process that can take many weeks. In November or December as the winter weather closes in, the livestock will again be barn-kept and fed solely on hay.

Source: UNCCD 2007

4.1.2 Management of livestock near the household or camp

However it is more often the case that women play a greater role in the management, of livestock kept around the homestead or camp (Bravo-Baumann 2000; de Bruijn 1999). For example, in Afghanistan, all cattle and 20% of sheep and goats are kept at the homestead and managed by women (IFAD undated).

Women care for newborn and young animals, which are not old enough to go to pasture with the herd, together with ill animals kept away from the other animals. In Afghanistan for example, women also remove ectoparasites such as ticks, collect manure and restrain animals when necessary as well as help with cutting up of meat and dealing with intestines (Davis 1995). Women may be responsible for caring for and counting the grazing animals as they come home for the night and for signaling any problems (sickness, birthing, poor health, and missing animals) (IFAD undated).

4.1.3 Milking

In most societies, women are responsible for milking the livestock, whether reindeer in Siberia (Alexander 1999), or sheep or camels in Rajasthan, India (Geerlings, 2004). However, there are a few exceptions, notably the Beja of the Sudan and the Gabra and Rendille of northern Kenya, whose women are not allowed to milk camels (Hjort af Ornas 1989; Morton 1990; Köhler-Rollefson and Rathore 2000); the Fulbe of Mali, Nigeria and Niger where the men tend to milk the cows (Djedjebi and de Haan, 2001; Waters-Bayer 1984); and in the high mountains of northern Pakistan, where women milk cows but only men can milk yaks and goats (Hewitt 1989). In some societies, such as the Dassanetch of south-western Ethiopia, women are not allowed to milk cows when they are menstruating as it is believed to affect and exhaust livestock milk (Sagawa 2006).

However though in most circumstances women milk the livestock, Joeques and Pointing (1991) suggest that women are prevented from decision making about the herd. As Nduma et al (2000) confirm they may not have any control over decisions about which animals are sent out grazing and which remain at the base camp. It is said that they will give first priority to satisfying the milk needs of their children while men put the needs of calves – and by implication the herd – first (Joeques & Pointing 1991).

4.1.4 Breeding

Though it is often assumed that men know more about breeding livestock than women, this need not be the case in reality. For example, Geerlings (2004) suggests that amongst the Raika of Rajasthan women are often more knowledgeable when it comes to assessing the mothering abilities of ewes and issues relating to milk production. Because they care for newborn lambs they are also very knowledgeable about the character, vitality and health of lambs. Ramdas (2007) suggests that women pastoralists in southern India recognise the value of indigenous breeds of cattle which have qualities to adapt as against new breeds which may perish.

4.1.5 Fodder

Women tend to be responsible for collection of fodder in order to supplement the feed of the livestock kept close to the homestead. For example, in Borana Ethiopia married women traditionally supplement the calf diet with cut-and-carried native grasses and

water hauled from wells and springs. Over 90% of Boran camps now have *kalo* or dry season fodder reserves for calves and other less mobile stock.

However, again it should not be assumed that it is only women who collect fodder – in India for example it tends to be the men who are responsible for fodder collection (Geerlings 2004).

4.1.6 Shearing and hide processing

Processing tasks, such as slaughtering or hide processing, can be assigned exclusively to one or the other sex. For example, in most East African societies, men are responsible for slaughtering animals and extracting blood. But among the Maasai, although men and women deny it, women do slaughter cattle and small ruminants (Talle 1988). And amongst the Koochi of Afghanistan, men may slaughter the animal, but it is women who clean the internal organs and prepare the meat for cooking (Davis 1995). The processing and use of hides in Asia has always been men's work, in contrast with such as the Maasai and Barabaig of Tanzania, where women have sole responsibility for this task. It is often assumed that mainly men shear sheep, however as the photo below confirms (women 'crutching sheep' in New Zealand), this is not always the case.



Photo: 'Women crutching sheep' in New Zealand in the 1940s (see file).

4.1.7 Veterinary work

It is said that men tend to have the most ethno-veterinary knowledge. While men typically deal with diagnosis and the choice of treatment, women collect and prepare various herbs used in traditional remedies. If modern medicines are used, then it is usually the man who procures and administers them.

However, recent ethnoveterinary research among Afghan Pashtun nomads not only shows that the women play a greater role in the care of livestock than previously described, but suggests that they also know as much, and sometimes more, about livestock health and disease than the men (see Box 4.4) (Davis 1995). As described above women have a close relationship with many of the herd. It is suggested that the differences in labour responsibilities for veterinary work relates to the different ethnoveterinary knowledge of women and men. For example women have more knowledge of external and internal parasites, as well as such as mastitis. Because they do the milking, women are often the first to notice behavioural changes and other initial signs of disease (Köhler-Rollefson and Rathore 2000). In eastern Turkey women are responsible for delicate tasks such as giving injections and children look after calves and lambs under the supervision of women (Butcher undated).

Box 4.4 Koochi Women's Knowledge

The ethnoveterinary knowledge of Koochi women and men is extensive. Both men and women know, employ and administer a wide variety of indigenous treatments, making use of native plants, minerals and animal tissues. Local plants and minerals are often used to treat internal and external parasites, as well as other livestock diseases. Animal products such as lung tissue from a diseased or freshly dead animal are used in the preparation of indigenous 'ear-slit' vaccines for such diseases as *contagious caprine pleuropneumonia*. This study reveals an interesting trend, namely that women's most detailed ethnoveterinary knowledge is found in those areas in which they have the most responsibility for animals.

Source: Davis 1995

However extension workers are invariably men and often barred by custom from addressing women. Not surprisingly, advice on the treatment of such as veterinary mastitis has not reached the majority of women (Butcher undated). Indeed, veterinary services and extension programmes, and advisory services are mainly designed by men for men (Bravo-Baumann 2000). Extension personnel are often not trained to teach technical subjects to women or to react to their specific questions. Due to limited time and resources primarily, attention is given to men's animals. Extension work with women often requires special didactic knowledge and communication skills because women often only speak the local language or dialect and illiteracy is high.

Few if any women are trained as CAHWs (community animal health workers) despite them often having better knowledge of small ruminants, milking cows and such as donkeys (Amare 2004). Davis (2005) describes the bias of a project in Afghanistan which not only excluded women but also risked removing women's access to such as milk, because men were the ones trained in milk-related illnesses (Box 4.5).

Box 4.5 Women as Veterinary Workers

In the early 1990s a project was set up in Afghanistan to train basic veterinary workers (BVWs). The project trained only men despite the obvious knowledge that women had of livestock due to their livestock-related roles, and the consent of both male and female community members that women could and should be trained. Not only were the men trained to deal with illnesses in livestock that was related to their own roles, but also to treat illnesses that normally a woman would take care of. As such men gained increased access to women's domains and interests and this risked their taking over such as milking and thus access to milk. An encouraging development occurred in the late 1990s under an FAO funded project, where 50 women were trained as community animal health workers and 2500 farm women received training in animal health. Unfortunately in time the project collapsed due to lack of funding.

Source: Davis 2005

Nor are women asked to take an active role in the selection of CAHW committees (Riviere-Cinnamond and Eregae 2003). This is despite the many benefits of including women as CAHWs (see Box 4.6). One reason often given for not including women in trainings for CAHWs is that they are illiterate. However "rinderpest was eradicated from Sudan largely by illiterate CAHWs (90% of CAHWs being illiterate including a large proportion of women) trained by Vétérinaires sans Frontières (VSF)" (Sally Crafter personal communication 2008). Guidelines and suggestions for training illiterate as well as literate CAHWs can be found in Catley et al (2002).

Box 4.6 Benefits of Women CAHWs

Producer groups including women producers are the most successful at selecting effective community livestock workers, rather than individuals. There is male bias amongst both selector groups and CAHWs. Women are perceived as potentially capable CAHWs, but cultural constraints may restrict their role as CAHWs in some communities (Hanks et al 1999). Women CAHWs have been found to be an entry point to contact women from pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities (Amare 2004) as well as to approach conflict issues and CBNRM.

Source: Grahm and Leyland 2005

4.2 Women's Rights to and 'Ownership' of Livestock and Livestock Resources

Livestock and its products mean much more to a pastoral man or woman than an animal to be eaten or sold for profit. Cattle in particular can form an important means of self-value as amongst the Herero of Botswana: to own cattle is to have a kind of self-reproducing security against financial want that does not simply dissipate in the way that money does (Alexander 1999). Additionally sheep amongst the Raika of India play an important role in social and cultural life and are highly valued beyond their mutton (see Box 4.7).

Box 4.7 The Value of Rajasthan Sheep

Amongst the Raika of Rajasthan ceremonies are carried out before sheep shearing, the sheep are washed, paint (tika) put on their head and are given *jaggery* and coconut while incense is burned. Even some are given silver jewellery to wear around their necks. A lamb born during the last day of Poonam (14th day of each Hindi month when it is a full moon) is never sold or slaughtered. Black sheep are highly prized, viewed as good luck and believed to protect the herd against death and sickness.

Source: Geerlings 2004.

As such, rights to and ownership over livestock and particularly cattle can be complex, embedded in tradition and custom, and heavily negotiated. For women in particular though they may play a role in livestock management and husbandry it is not

necessarily the case that they have 'rights' to or 'ownership' over that livestock and therefore may not be able to make decisions about its use, sale etc.

Each animal in the herd has a specific bundle of ownership rights attached to it, depending on its origin, the circumstance of its transfer into the herd, the situation of the 'owner' and the 'giver' and so on. The transaction of livestock moulds and influences social transformations and relationships (Alexander 1999; Almagor 1878; van de Loo 1991:). For example, one may form alliances of marriage or of patronage based on livestock as described in Box 4.8.

Box 4.8 Livestock Based Alliances

In the past, for both Tswana and Herero of Botswana, cattle were in both material and symbolic senses the means by which relationships of inequality and power were forged. The transfer of cattle, in loans or bridewealth, articulated the transactors in relations of power and debt. Something of the giver, his biography, remained in the loaned cow, or accompanied the bridewealth, and sought return in the form of the bride, labour and acquiescence of political will to that of the giver. The Herero 'chief' (omuhona) of the nineteenth and early twentieth century created and retained his position to a large extent through his ability to control people through cattle. Today, while cattle remain 'fetishized' in Botswana to some degree (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992), they have lost some of their unique power to garner support and enforce power. The path from owning a beast to creating influence and power is often transacted through commodities such as clothes and radios, through such items as tractors, 'tipper' trucks, shops, taxis and conspicuous display, or may even be usurped by manipulative middle-men who actually control cattle sales as well as profits. Access to these commoditized items, loans and favours is essential if one is to negotiate both status and productivity. And yet the evaluation of these latter items is often combined with an assessment of an imagined underlying cattle herd. An owner of a profitable junk yard or bush mechanic's trade or a Mercedes driver will always be referred to, or described, as an owner of many beasts.

Source: Alexander 1999

4.2.1 Women's ownership over and access to livestock

In Africa, many stories are told about how originally women used to own all the livestock but due to their mismanagement their rights were taken away (see Box 4.9).

Box 4.9 Women's Cattle

Long ago wild animals used to be women's cattle. Then one morning before the cattle were taken out to graze, a cow was slaughtered. Soon the cattle started moving away to graze by themselves and wandered off. One woman told one of the children to go and drive the cattle back before they went too far. When the child's mother heard this she said: 'Oh no, my child is not going until he has eaten the kidney.' It followed that whenever a child was asked to go, his mother forbade him to go until he had eaten a bit of the meat. This went on until all the cattle, sheep and goats wandered away into the bush and got lost. When all the children had eaten the meat, they tried to bring the cattle back, but they found that they had all gone and lived with the men, who had all along taken good care of their cattle. This is why up to this very day all the cattle belong to the men and women simply wait for the men to provide for them.

Source: Kipuri 1983 in Hodgson 2000

However today, in most pastoral societies, women exercise substantial and recognised rights over livestock which may vary according to the category of livestock, its sources and the purpose of its disposal (Bravo-Baumann 2000). For example in Algeria, Niger and Mali the Touareg women own both camels and small ruminants (Worley 1991). In Pakistan however women own only the livestock that they brought with them as dowry (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

Indeed, women receive and access livestock through a variety of ways and means, and at different stages of her life:

- At birth
- After completion of 'rites of passage' for example in Sudan (Adbel Ghaffer Ahmed 2002: 21).
- After birth of a child for example amongst the Fulbe in order to supplement the nourishment of the child (milk) and to produce calves as a start for a child's own herd.
- On marriage for example amongst the Maasai (Mizlaff 1994) or Julabe of Mali given to her by her husband (de Bruijn 1997).
- Through inheritance for example in Sudan (Abel Ghaffer Ahmed 2002:21); amongst the Julabe of Mali (de Bruijn 1997); the Guji of Ethiopia where a daughter receives a cow on the death of her father (van de Loo 1991).
- At divorce for example in Sudan in order for women to bring up the children (Adbel Ghaffer Ahmed 2002).

It is important to understand specific and local ownership arrangements and access rights in order to establish gender balanced programmes and interventions. Forced promotion of women rarely leads to a sustainable impact and can lead to antagonism between groups strengthening social imbalances. In Mozambique a goat programme which promoted women's ownership was in the beginning rejected by both men and women due to the fear of disrespecting cultural norms. Only after discussion with the whole community was it later accepted (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

Though it may appear that such rights are unequally spread between men and women, livestock assets are certainly more equitably distributed than other assets (such as land and capital). Indeed, some pastoral societies are matrilineal (see Box 4.10). And where the ultimate power over livestock remains with a male leader, it usually the case he must be accountable for his decisions to anybody who holds an interest in the animal and must justify his actions including to his wife.

Box 4.10 Matrilineal Livestock Systems

In the Guarijo of Colombia and Venezuela the society is matrilineal. Women are not involved in animal husbandry but they can and do own livestock. Both men and women are actively involved in all forms of livestock transactions (sales, gifts, inheritance etc.). Adult women can also make certain claims on men's resources. The family's herd is allowed to graze on land belonging to both the wife's and husband's matrilineal ancestors (IFAD undated).

The society of the Touareg of Niger is matrilineal: their mythology traces their descent from the fourth-century Berber queen Tin Hinan, and women own the animals, tent and other household possessions. Marriages are monogamous. Indeed, the women can divorce the men if they are mistreated, and the men are left with nothing. And it's the men, rather than the women, who must cover their faces and mouths, although not for religious reasons (Butler 2007).

In the past often these rights that women have over livestock are not considered within livestock interventions. As a result women's role and status has been undermined (see Box 4.11).

Box 4.11 Undermining of Women Livestock Managers in Mali

After drought in the 1970s where the herds of the Touareg and Fulani were reconstituted, replacement herds were assigned to male heads of households, but none of the animals owned by women were replaced. The social consequence was the inability of young men and women to acquire bride wealth and dowries from their mothers, and the undermining of women's influence and status in their own households and communities.

Source: Joekes & Pointing 1991.

4.2.2 Nominal property

However, sometimes such livestock is only considered to be nominally a woman's property – in practice she is expected to give them in pre-inheritance to her children (they become co-owners) and has to leave them behind in the event of divorce (de Bruijn 1997). For the Jallube the co-property relationship of husband-wife is very temporary because the animals become the property of their children as soon as they are born. This means that the most essential property relations are those between father and child and between mother and child (see Box 4.12 below).

4.2.3 Bridewealth and dowries

Bridewealth and dowries can move either from future husband to the wife's family, or from the father of the bride, to the husband (and sometimes the bride herself). This can be a substantial amount. In some African communities, bridewealth (usually paid to the families of the bride) remains an important part of social transactions and transformations. Though the amount of bridewealth passed today has reduced somewhat, it can still amount to 200 cattle among some groups, though more commonly 30-60. This encourages raiding among the youths to secure the necessary assets to marry (EU/UNDP 2004). Variations in the size of the gift depend on the wealth of the families concerned, on the beauty of the woman and on many other factors (de Bruijn 1997). In times of stress or crisis resulting in a large loss of cattle, there have been instances where bridewealth has been reduced, even dropped (Sobania 1988; Hodgson 2000).

However, amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania it is the couple that receives gifts, including the wife who on marriage receives her own milk cows, sheep and goats. Thus she gains economic security, which in turn enables her to survive in a strange place where she may have neither clan relatives nor friends (Mitzlaff 1988). Gifts can also be presented at the betrothal of the couple, which can occur when they are very young and over a period of time (see for example amongst the Jallube of Mali, de Bruijn 1997). Many of the gifts are presented or given to the bride, rather than to her parents (see Box 4.12).

Box 4.12 Wealth to the Bride at Marriage

The Jallube of Mali have two marriage forms: the *cabbugal* and the *dewgal*. The first may be translated as 'betrothal'. It is a marriage concluded by the families/parents when the bride and bridegroom are very young. Often such marriages are between close kin. The second form of marriage is to be translated as simple marriage; it may be a subsequent marriage or a first marriage that is not a betrothal. In the case of a *cabbugal* the money is given to the bride's parents, who will invest it in household equipment for their daughter. In the case of a *dewgal* the money is given directly to the bride (as is prescribed by Islamic law). She will subsequently give part of it to her mother and to other members of her *suudu yaaya*. The next important gift is the *hurto*, consisting of jewellery, a bed and household utensils. It is given to the bride by her mother and members of her *suudu yaaya*, who may help her mother to buy the *hurto*. The few animals given at this occasion may be considered a gift of both parents and also the last part of the bride's pre-inheritance. Another important gift is the *futte* which consists of the animal(s) given by the husband to his wife on the occasion of the marriage. In Islamic law it is a transfer of property rights over cattle from the husband to his wife. Among the Jallube this transfer is not total, because men retain property rights over the *futte*, and only when the animals have passed into the hands of the woman's children are they more or less transferred, not to the woman but to the children. But even then there are cases in which the men use the animals for their own purposes. This is against Islamic law. Jallube women complain about the practice, but they can do nothing about it. A woman has milk rights over these animals, and if the husband dies when the children have not yet inherited the animals of the *futte* the woman will inherit them. As such the *futte* may be regarded as life insurance. A final exchange of gifts takes place a few years after marriage. A married woman always returns to her mother's house to give birth to her first child. Within a year of the birth of this child she returns to the *wuro* of her husband with many gifts. The gifts consist of couscous made from millet, rice (50 kg minimum), cooked millet balls for the millet porridge, butter and buttermilk. This is the only gift from the family of the wife to the family or *wuro* of the husband.

Source: de Bruijn 1997

In Asia, including Central Asia a dowry is provided to a woman when she marries. This comes from her family. In pastoral and livestock-based communities they usually include livestock (Geerlings 2004). In Kyrgyz Republic, though a substantial amount might be included in the past, today it is more likely to include only one cow and/or a few sheep (Underland undated).

4.2.4 Purchasing, sale, disposal or change of livestock

While men may have management control over livestock, they cannot freely dispose of animals in which women or children have rights (Joekes & Pointing 1991). In most cases purchase, disposal or sale of livestock is discussed between husband and wife prior to action, and often a wife's approval is needed. Amongst the Raika in India for example this includes which animals to sell and at what price, disease diagnosis and treatment of sick animals, and ram lamb selection. Women negotiate dung prices with farmers, while men negotiate wool prices (Geerlings 2004). And as amongst the Fulbe of Mali, a woman will make the decisions concerning her own herd (see Box 4.13)

Box 4.13 Fulbe Women in Control of Livestock

A woman herself decides whether she wants to leave her own animals in her parents' herd, or whether she wants to take them into her husband's herd. The decision is related to various factors. She may consider her husband, who manages the herd, a bad herdsman and decide therefore to leave her own animals with her parents, where they will be more secure and reproduce more. She may already have sufficient milk from her husband's animals and may not need the milk of her own animals to live properly. She may wish to support her parents. She may also take all her animals into her husband's herd, because he has very few animals, or because her husband's animals yield little milk, or because she regards her father and brothers as bad herd managers, or simply because she wants all her animals around her. In this way a woman can manipulate the care of her animals and the yield of milk, and hence the social security she can offer her own children. It may also be a way to keep the relationship with her own family or her in-laws friendly in case she ever needs their help. And a man will never sell an animal belonging to his wife without her approval.

Source: de Bruijn 1997; Djedjebi and Haan 2001

There can be conflicts between men and women and their different priorities in raising livestock for different purposes. For example, in the Dhamar Montane Plains of Yemen, women fatten rams for home consumption or for sale. In general, they take good care of the animals and know exactly what to feed them and how to keep them healthy. But there is frequently a clash between their objectives and those of their husbands whose priority is to raise as many sheep for sale (as meat) and thus try to force three lambings a year. Women complain that such a strategy depresses milk production threatening their fattening programmes (Maarse 1989). Further examples will be given below.

4.2.5 Project support for women's livestock development

Because it is often assumed that men are the livestock managers, it is they who are targeted with livestock interventions. As a result ill advised and planned interventions have marginalized women and their roles in livestock systems. As Davis (2005: 68) describes for Afghanistan, "women now face a male-dominated, Western development industry that brings many notions and stereotypes about women in general and about Muslim women in particular...."

This is despite the fact that livestock production systems offer the potential for introducing a wide range of activities relating to gender promotion from including improved production methods to sustainable environmental practices. In livestock systems it is

easy to show how gender imbalances affect productivity and the possibilities of change are often more evident than in other sectors. For example, if men realise how their wives' commitment to livestock management changes and leads to better animal health and higher milk output when women have access to the proceeds from milk sales, the men's willingness to change increases (Bravo-Baumann 2000).

Indeed it is suggested further that the livestock sector is a privileged entry point to promote gender related issues because:

- a) In many pastoral societies, men, women and children have access to livestock, while access to land for example, is often restricted to men. They have a defined ownership.
- b) All household members have responsibilities in livestock production.
- c) Activities in the livestock sector can be addressed by households of different social and economic levels and all household members are involved.
- d) Livestock projects are related to subjects such as processing, market, environment and nutrition. These subjects are interrelated and to promote gender aspects is a overarching issue for a project.
- e) Long term gender promotion through livestock interventions lead to sustainable development (ibid).

One innovative means of supporting women without a great deal of risk for the organization or for the women involved is a system of revolving livestock, where one woman is given a pregnant cow or camel and then she is expected to pass on the first female calf born to another woman. The Samburu Camel Project for example, funded by Heifer International Kenya (HIK) and implemented by local NGO PEAR aims to improve the lives of 1000 women and their families through the distribution of camels. The project will purchase and place 500 camels with 500 families who will in turn pass on one camel to another 500 families. The group will also receive training on various camel husbandry, group dynamics and leadership skills, gender mainstreaming and HIV awareness and records keeping among others, together with literacy classes. The project participants belong to 7 self-help women groups who decided to seek for help from HIK, having seen the success realized by Salato women group through the camels given to them by HIK between the years 1999 and 2002 (see Box 4.14).

Box 4.14 Excitement over Camels

The current project beneficiaries of the camel project are located in the Ndoto Mountains of Samburu District. The project is still in its early phase of implementation. Coupled with the long gestation period of the camels and that they are yet to breed, impact on nutrition or income of the participating members may take some time to be felt. Despite this, the social impact of the project has already had tremendous effect. During one of the distribution days, the excitement of the recipient women was so high and tangibly visible in their faces. These women have never had the chance to own a camel before either due to cultural constraints or poverty. In the case of the few receiving men, they are able to envision being able to better care for their families, especially widowers struggling hard to feed their children alone. To avoid bias, the placement of the camels was done through a ballot system where camels were assigned numbers and cards put inside a hat. The recipients went inside the hat one by one and randomly picked numbers. The camels were placed a distance from the recipients so that they could not read the tag numbers with the camels. After picking the number, the recipient family then charged into the group of camels looking for their camel with trepidation. *Which one is it? The tall one? The short one? The white one? The fat one?* All was joy and jubilation as each member and their family separated their camel from the rest of the herd. One woman said that because of the literacy classes, she can read her own number and be sure to get the right camel. Spirits were high and all were extremely happy. Even though they know it may take one to two years before they get to drink the milk from their camel, even just owning one has significantly raised their self-esteem. Their hopes and dreams now seem attainable! "Long live Heifer! Long live PEAR Innovations for their partnership", one of the camel recipient families was heard mentioning.

Source: Lemunye 2007, PEAR Innovations Manager

Another NGO supported project is resulting in positive impacts for women beyond income generation including improving household relations (see Box 4.15).

Box 4.15 Social Benefits of a Zambian Dairy Project

Small-holder dairy programmes established by NGO Land O Lakes International Development have been shown to increase women's empowerment in Zambia. The added income women are receiving improve their voice within the household as well as their purchasing power and overall self-confidence. The number one change participants said they noted was the change in household dynamics. Husbands now are sitting with their wives more frequently to discuss both farm/livestock management as well as household spending priorities. It is believed that this change comes from both the shared responsibility of increasing milk production (in both local and cross-bred animals) as well as the relatively large sum of cash the household receives from the monthly milk check. As opposed to the local market, selling to a milk collection center serves as a 'savings account' for the household - at least a monthly savings account.

Similar results are being seen in a programme in South Sudan - although it is more challenging due to the nature of herd management and more traditional gender roles. Because the women have a profitable market in which to sell their milk, we are seeing several male household heads changing their herd management and/or allowing women to retain more lactating animals during the dry season - which is good for household food security.

Source: Carmen Jacquez, Land O Lakes International Development, personal communication 2008

4.2.6 Trainings

Women may not have the capacity for efficient and effective development of businesses and livestock based enterprises. As a result providing them with training can have positive impacts in both income generation and in general household management (see Box 4.16).

Box 4.16 Educating Women in Cameroon

Many NGOs in Cameroon have focussed on making women more productive and competitive in the job market. Training is organized in workshops, seminars, demonstrations and training centres and emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge, skills and information as basics for self-reliant development, which better equips the women. The Sustainable Livestock Foundation (SLF) in the North West province trains women, through group leaders, in sustainable livestock farming. This involves farming in such a way that livestock provide manure for crops, crops provide feed for animals, and livestock manure and crop residues restore soil fertility. The techniques taught reduce women's dependence on the use of fertilizers, thereby allowing for efficient land use and increased access to land since they can now work on grazing land that was not previously cultivated. As a result, the environment is naturally protected. Between 1992 and 1996, over 56 mixed and 66 women's groups were introduced to this technology (SLF Report 1996, 3). In a like manner, the Heifer Project International (HPI) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) focus on the use of cheap but efficient stoves, improved farming techniques, and alternative income activities (e.g. apiculture) that reduce women's dependence on traditional farming and to reduce deforestation.

Source: Fonjong 2001

Trainings may be carried out far from settlements meaning it is difficult for many women to attend. It is unlikely that childcare is provided (Kent 2005). One innovative approach to overcome this is the use of mobile outreach camps based in/near pastoral settlements from which extension, support and training are provided (see Box 4.17).

Box 4.17 Mobile Outreach Camps

FARM Africa Ethiopia use mobile outreach camps to provide a range of livestock and income related services. These camps move from place to place within the area they service, spending approximately 10 weeks in each site (serving two *kebele*). Usually the staff consist of a qualified veterinarian, a community development worker and a women's development worker.

Source: IIRR 2004

4.3 Pasture

Because it is often assumed that men are those who take the livestock to grazing areas and pasture, it is also assumed that the men have all the knowledge about pastures. However, it is often the case that women too are experts, particularly those who are involved in livestock herding and grazing. For example, Yemeni shepherdesses have good traditional knowledge of the best grazing grounds, on which they base daily decisions about animal grazing and for the optimal use of forage, and of pasture rotation systems, in order to prevent overgrazing (Kessler 1987).

Access to grazing, particularly communal grazing may have to be negotiated with those who hold authority and/or be controlled by customary regulations. Often access is in the hands of male members of community and women must gain access through them (see Box 4.18).

Box 4.18 Access Rights to Pastures

In Kyrgyzstan women gain access to pastures through male relatives – fathers, brothers and/or husbands. Customary regimes place the man at the head of the household and thus property rights, including animals and pasture land use rights, are attributed to him. If her husband dies she can still access the pasture if it is protected by her husband's extended family clan. This is despite the fact that legislation, namely Resolution No. 360 on Pasture Management and Use (2002) states that women have equal (individual) rights with men in regards to pasture lands. The break down of the Soviet Republic has meant a return to more patriarchal methods of governing and managing assets, particularly in conservative rural areas. These problems are further exacerbated by the lack of awareness among rural women of the protection of their rights afforded by legal norms. Even if women do know of their rights often cases are not taken to a legal 'formal' court due to not wanting to risk creating bad relations within a clan, expensive costs, and the fact that often marriages are not registered by the husband due to wanting to avoid expenses and restrictions on the age of the bride or the number of wives he can have. Having said that, however, it would appear that customary regimes do allow women better access than if the strict new rules of pasture allocation were followed: today all lease rights to pasture land should be competed over at auction, however in practice more customary rules are followed where pastures are leased out by families or by shepherds and payment is made to district or regional government. As such their clan can act as a protective and restrictive body for women at the same time. In a study of rights to livestock and pastures all women interviewed "think that they are more and better protected by tribal and customary rules than by formal law which is seen by them to be irrelevant and ineffective."

Source: Undeland 2008: 11

4.4 Livestock Marketing and Products

Women exercise much control over the transformation and marketing of livestock products (Bravo-Baumann 2000) for example: the Fulani (Waters-Bayer 1988); the Somali (Herren 1990; Kandagor 2005); the Beja of Sudan (Morton 1990); and Parakuyo of Tanzania (Mitzlaff 1988). Women can be considered the most resourceful in the pastoral economy. However, where social codes restrict contact between the sexes (as in most Muslim societies), women are prevented from moving far from their homestead.

In particular women are able to control the sale of small livestock. During droughts they will often be the target of destocking programmes (see Box 4.19). During the 1999-2000 drought in northern Kenya for example VSF-Belgium and ALDEF (Arid Lands Development Focus) assisted women's groups to purchase small stock through micro-credit, then purchased the meat from the groups for redistribution to needy households, hospital patients and schools (Morton et al 2002).

Box 4.19 Benefits of Destocking

Destocking allows pastoral households to liquidate some of their capital assets (livestock) before they are lost and increases the purchasing power of these households. Some value is therefore salvaged from animals, which may otherwise have died and meat or stock can be redistributed to needy households. In theory protecting herders' purchasing power by buying animals where markets are absent creates two categories of beneficiary: those who sell animals to the intervention/project at subsidised prices, and those who benefit from the general rise in prices on local markets caused by the extra demand created by the intervention/project.

Source: Morton et al 2002.

However too much power in women's hands can threaten men, and particularly where women are taking decisions about livestock including marketing: men can feel marginalized (see Box 4.20)

Box 4.20 An Increase in Women's Power Can Threaten Men

While regions adjacent to former Somalia went through upheavals, conflict, wars and repression, women in Somalia before the 1979 war enjoyed relative peace and freedom. Contemporary Somali women are not subservient, but live with men in a relationship of interdependence. They are considered the most resourceful persons in the pastoral economy. They market milk products, farm produce and their pastoral crafts, as well as producing them for their own use and that of their families, or giving them away, as they choose. This pattern has changed as urbanization encourages migration of young people to towns in search of work, depriving the pastoral family of input. Restrictions on male movement because of the conflict has led to further loss of labour power, leaving women to cope with the management of the family, taking on roles vacated by men. Women play multiple roles in Somali society: in the family, as contributors to the pastoral economy, and bringing resources into the family through girl bride-price. Traditionally women were dependent on men for their needs, for only men took livestock to markets. When women began to participate in animal marketing, the income generated reinforced their power and reduced their dependence on men. This benefited women but increased their workload, and men felt threatened and marginalized.

Source: Kandagor 2005: 16.

4.4.1 Milk

When deciding what to do with the milk produced by livestock, pastoralists have several choices. Initially, they must choose whether to:

1. Let unweaned young animals consume all their mother's milk or
2. Partially withdraw for human consumption some of the milk from lactating female animals.

If a pastoral household chooses to milk (which is frequently the case), then a further choice must be made to:

3. Consume the milk or dairy produce within the household
4. Or sell the milk and produce (Sikana et al 1993).

Influences on the sale of milk are numerous and include size and wealth of the production unit (household and herd), the time of year, the amount of milk available, the availability of other incomes, the demand for milk, availability of food substitutes such as grain, the price in and access to the market etc. For example the greater the distance from market, the greater the potential conflict of labour demands on those who are responsible for marketing. Shorter distances to markets means that women are still able to undertake other commitments in their busy labour schedule (Sikana et al 1993). In the Mogadishu hinterland for example the lack of a suitable person to carry the milk to the market affected the ability of a given household to fully exploit the milk trading opportunities (Herren 1990). The fact that it can easily perish often means women will sell the milk at a low price before the spoil (see Box 4.21).

Box 4.21 Challenges of Milk Selling

In some settled villages (*ollas*) along the main road, Borana women in Ethiopia sometimes sell milk and yoghurt to passing cars during the big rainy season. They sell their products quite cheaply (0.50 Birr, approximately US\$0.05 for a large cup). Somali women in Jijiga, Babile and other small towns sell cow and camel milk to consumers. Milk is highly perishable, and yoghurt goes sour after several days. If there are no buyers the women have no choice but to give any unsold stocks to their families before they spoil. With assistance these women could organise themselves into a cooperative to sell butter, a less perishable product in the towns.

Source: IIRR 2004: 71

For poorer pastoralists the trading of milk means that milk supplies, which would be inadequate for subsistence can be exchanged for grain sufficient for nutritional needs. About three kilograms of milk are required to support a man for one day, but the sale of one kilogram of milk will buy enough grain to support nearly five men (Holden et al 1991). SOPHIA (Society for Promotion of Himalayan Indigenous Activities) has been working with Van Gujjar milk producers in the Himalayas of India to improve their control over the sale of milk and access to fair prices (see Box 4.22).

Box 4.22 Controlling Milk Production in the Himalayas

Van Gujjars sell milk to 2-3 different buyers to avoid over dependence on one buyer. There are more than 45 Van Gujjars who are supplying milk on their own directly to consumers. SOPHIA works as a pressure group so that other milk merchants pay a good price to Van Gujjars. As a result other dairy owners were forced to increase their price for the milk and many Van Gujjars were released from the clutches of the milk mafia and middlemen. In 1988 they got Rupees 4.3 (1 rupee: 0.02 US\$) per litre of milk and in seven years it had only increased by Rs1.95 when they were offered Rs6.25 per litre by milk mafias. When SOPHIA started the milk programme immediately rates jumped to Rs9 per litre. So SOPHIA forced a market correction of Rs2.75 on other private players in the milk business. This was the amount that was being immorally cornered by milk mafia. After making this correction the increase in milk price was more gradual which was essential for financial viability of the programme. The lifestyle of the Van Gujjars has not changed drastically due to the increased income. Today, they sell more milk, keeping less for own consumption. With the money they earn, they buy green vegetables and pulses which has resulted in a more balanced diet for them, and clothes.

Source: SOPHIA website

Milk selling tends to be the domain of women (Talle 1988; Wangui 2003; Mitzlaff 1988; de Buijn 1997), as amongst the Jalube, Fulbe of Mali (see Box 4.23). Once the women have been given the milk, they will decide on how much they will allocate for home consumption and how much they will sell. It has been noticed that increasingly draught and meat animals (rather than dairy) are being held back by the household (male) from sale due to increased cultivation and commercialisation: this is said to be reducing milk availability and therefore women's income (Djedjebe and Haan 2001).

Box 4.23 Women Selling Milk

Though men milk the cattle (see above) amongst the Jalube, Mali, a woman's most important task is the processing, selling and distribution of milk. This is an important economic activity for women, as the revenue is hers and she can enter into commercial transactions only when she has milk to sell. Milk is first and foremost a sign of a woman's social status and symbolises social relations and hospitality. It is also a sign of a woman's beauty. In the *foyannde* (hearthold/ homestead) the milk of the animals of a *suudu baaba* (father's herd) and *suudu yaaya* (mother's herd) (seen from the child's perspective) is pooled, and the rights to the milk and the revenue from it are organised there. A woman gets milk rights from the animals that belong to her (her inheritance and her husband's gift) and from her children's animals, which they receive on various occasions. Furthermore her husband may give her the milk from his own animals. The income she gains from the milk and the way she likes to process it is completely under her control. Her husband has no say in it. The gift or exchange of milk is essential to the establishment or maintenance of social relations. A man depends on his wife for this. If she refuses to give a certain person some milk at his request, the husband can do nothing about it. Although a man has the power to give milk from his own cows to a stranger or relative, it does not equal the social significance of a gift of milk from a woman. Women, then, are able to keep good contacts with their own family, neighbours and a wider range of kin through the gift of milk and other small gifts. In fact it is the woman who keeps all these social relations going. This fact is of crucial importance for her own material and social well-being.

Source: de Buijn 1997

Similarly amongst Bedouin women, sheep and goat products, most especially dairy products, are shown to be tied directly to them, and the roles they play and the power they wield in the Bedouin community. This also helps to explain female ownership of part of the herd, and the special responsibilities women share in the feeding of the young, and their eventual weaning from their mothers. Such female responsibilities, Abu-Rabia states, are fundamental in furthering the creation of "social networks and areas of cooperation with the flock at its focus" (Abu-Rabia 1994: 89).

Women who live far from markets have developed strategies to lessen the opportunity costs of time spent marketing dairy products. One strategy is to develop a rota system whereby one or two women are sent to the market to sell milk on behalf of other women. The personal transportation costs for the women traveling to the market area spread amongst all the women cooperating. Meanwhile the women left in the camp or village look after some of the domestic responsibilities of the marketer and her small

children (Sikana et al 1993). This strategy has been reported among the Somalis (Herren 1990; Talle 1992) and the Baggara of Sudan (Michael 1990).

There are many other strategies too. In Central Somalia women rear donkeys, purchased with dairy earnings, to carry the milk to market (Talle 1992). In Nile Delta villages of northern Egypt, women have acquired milk separators for cheese preparation, not only reducing the drudgery of cheese making but hiring them out for a fee to other women (Zimmerman 1982). In Romania, shepherds spend summers tending flocks of sheep that belong to several families. They milk by hand then make cheese by curdling the milk in an iron pot over a camp fire. The cheese is hauled to town in a cart and sold by women. The money is divided up by the head shepherd based on an estimate of milk obtained from each owner's herd (Pucci 2007).

A more complex specialized marketing system can be found amongst more settled Fulbe (Fulani) pastoralists in northern Nigeria. The trans-regional trade is mainly operated by Fulbe women who transport their products by train or truck to Sabo areas, where have established 'milk depots' as central points for receiving products. The main products are *nano* (sour milk) and *man shanu* (butter) which can last for several days without refrigeration. Fulbe women deposit their dairy products at the depot for storage and marketing, and come back to collect their receipts afterwards. A Fulbe market leader organizes the sales, supplying the Sabo areas first and then other markets frequented by northern consumers. Despite the fact that most Sabo residents are affluent enough to regularly afford 'modern' dairy products, they tend to prefer domestic dairy products on the grounds of taste, nutrition and cultural habit (Sikana et al 1993: 32). Sikana et al (1993: 24) concludes:

The cases cited ... indicate that where the remuneration from the milk trade are sufficiently attractive, pastoral women are willing to re-invest their cash earnings into labour-saving devices to improve the efficiency of their dairy operation and to earn extra income.

It has been shown that in some cases commercialization has resulted in women's control over dairying diminishing and in others their control over milk has not only been retained, but enhanced by their involvement in external marketing (as amongst women in the Nile Delta region of Egypt). This variation may be explained in terms of demand factors which are in turn influenced by other variables such as the cultural value of pastoral dairy products, the availability of alternative non-pastoral dairy products, as well as government policy and prices. Where consumers place a premium value on pastoral dairy products (as in Somalia) or where alternatives are not readily available, then demand for pastoral dairy products is buoyant and women's participation in commercial dairying tends to be enhanced (Zimmerman 1982).

Amongst the Baggara of Sudan total revenue from the sale of dairy products accounts for at least a third of average household incomes. Here women's new role as milk and dairy marketers has given them the opportunity to participate in the 'public' or external sphere, rather than being confined to the 'private' or domestic domain. "However women's participation in the public sphere is still, in the main, oriented towards fulfillment of their traditional obligations in the domestic sphere. For example, a big part of the income earned from dairying is spent on domestic-related expenses such as food, child-care and socialization of young children. Thus men and women have apparently negotiated a satisfactory arrangement for exploiting traditionally male-controlled and female-controlled domains under commercialization" (Sikana et al 1993: 29). Michael (1984, 1990) suggests further that women's access to and control of income has increased their social and economic autonomy as well as enhanced their participation in decision-making. Nomadic Baggara women can influence migratory routes by pressuring men to locate camping sites near a cheese factory, water source or a trading centre, in order to maximize returns from their dairy enterprise. Additionally they take part in management decisions related to improving milk output. They may use some of their income to purchase supplementary feed for the livestock, and remain responsible for milking and hence directly able to determine the level of milk off-take.

Contrary to crops, animal products, such as eggs and milk, are produced throughout most of the year. Selling them provides a small but continuous income, which is more likely to be reinvested in nutrition than the income of selling a cow or a cash crop (Bravo-Baumann 2000). Milk need not be sold to gain benefits: it can also be given away for labour or to build goodwill and reputation with her female friends and relatives. As a result of the benefits obtained from milk NGOs support projects including the provision of milk processing equipment and the provision of livestock (see Boxes 4.24 and 4.25).

Box 4.24 Heifer Project Uganda

The Heifer Project run by the Uganda Red Cross was started in 1991. It gave 20 pregnant heifers to 20 poor women who had been chosen by communities around Kampala. Although the women did not have to pay anything, they had to sign a legal contract promising to pass on two female calves to two other families within their community. Before receiving the animal(s) each recipient was trained in heifer management techniques. In addition each woman had to ensure that she could maintain the animal using a zero-grazing method. However the heifers were exotic and delicate not used to the local environment but chosen because of their high milk yield. In addition the zero grazing technique was new in Uganda and demanded much time. Most of the farmers followed the traditional method of livestock farming which allows the cattle to wander in the local area searching for fodder. An impact assessment of the project after five years showed that despite some problems, the project had had a significant positive impact on household income. The women attributed this primarily to milk sales, receiving an average US\$202.50 per month, which once costs had been included gave a net income of US\$150 per month. The income was used for food, medical care, and school fees. Once they had started getting an income from milk they were able to access loans to open up other micro-enterprises such as poultry raising. All the women claimed that they felt a sense of economic security since they were assured of a daily income. A majority of women said that family health had improved as a result of the project: family members were getting sick less often and when they did fall sick they could now afford treatment. However the extra workload was described by many women as 'excessive' and it had meant that many of them no longer took part in community meetings that they had attended previously. Some said they had to leave their group/community meetings early "in order to go home to milk and feed the animals."

Source: Ssewamala 2004

In Somalia, camel milk and milk products are a very important source of protein (as Muslims do not eat blood and Somalia meat is mainly exported). Despite the large numbers of livestock kept in the country, the growing domestic demand for milk is largely met by imports of milk powder and there is only one modern milk processing plant. Milk that has gone bad or sour fetches a 25-40% lower price than fresh milk. The paradox is that in a country where milk represents a staple food, pastoralist milk producers and urban milk consumers are interlinked through a weak and unreliable trade chain. To address some of these problems, VetAid is supporting a pastoral dairy development project in Beer Village, Somaliland. Amongst other things they have provided training on basic milk hygiene, milk collection, handling and quality control; built a Milk Centre which acts as a focus for villagers' activities including testing of milk quality, training etc.; improved market access and strengthened milk collection networks through simple cooling facilities on charcoal-water basis (evaporative cooling); and are helping to diversify income for poor pastoralists by introducing appropriate processing technology for production of storable and marketable milk products such as oriental sweets, condensed milk and ghee (VetAid website undated). One of their beneficiaries talks in Box 4.25

Box 4.25 A Happy Beneficiary

Ugaso Bulale Warsame is part of the Milk Group in Beer village, eastern Somaliland, which was set up by VetAid's support. For years people in Beer village had been collecting milk in plastic containers which had previously been used to transport dangerous liquids like oil and chemicals. She says: "What made us use plastic containers was because of the destruction during the war. It was the only thing we could afford. We lost everything during the war, including our traditional containers. We got the plastic containers when we bought oil. However now – thanks to VetAid – we realize that this was a risk of health for us and for our children. The training on milk collection has improved the amount of money we get for our milk. Because the milk quality has increased, we can get 6,000 Somali shillings for every litre of milk now. We used to get 4,000 shillings."

Source: VetAid website undated

Even in Europe there are moves to revitalize what were traditional pastoral economies and activities with women producing dairy products such as cheese (see Box 4.26).

Box 4.26 Revitalising Traditional Pastoral Economies

For thousands of years transhumance was one of the benchmarks of rural Spain. When the kings of Spain officially authorized transhumance, establishing drove roads and tolls, the whole medieval system was revolutionized. Transhumant shepherds enjoyed the greatest freedom and had to respect just three prohibitions – they could not walk through cornfields, hayfields or vineyards – and one rule – they had to walk 'como mujer hilando': like a woman spinning (the women who used to follow the flocks used to while away their time spinning wool, walking very slowly). After a decline in the last century, this system of transhumance is seeing some revitalization and migratory journeys of shepherds and their sheep across the country are becoming a familiar site. To date, there have been no females in the group of shepherds, though some have been trained to do the job. The final aim is to re-establish transhumance as a family activity, with the women folk staying at home and waiting for the return of the shepherds to make cheese for sale.

Source: Slow Food Foundation, undated.

It is suggested that when milk selling becomes much more commercialised women lose control of the milk money to their husbands (Talle 1988). Particularly when the commercialization is based on formal dairy schemes for purchasing pastoral milk, men tend to take over the milking and marketing of milk. This can occur when incorrect assumptions about male ownership and control of resources within pastoral households are applied to dairy schemes and milk collection centres. This is reported for a case among the Peul pastoralists in the Ferlo region of Senegal (Madieng Seck 1992 in Sikana et al 1993). Here the women try to counteract the loss of control over fresh milk which was being sold by the men to dairy schemes. By purchasing cheaper dried milk which they

reconstitute, process and resell they have tried to compensate for this loss. "In sum, once pastoral dairying and marketing is transferred to formal institutional channels, it ceases to belong to the domestic domain and men tend to take over, because of their greater familiarity with working of the male-dominated public sphere" (Sikana et al 1993:28).

Though women may have absolute rights over the distribution of milk once in their hands they may not have any control over decisions about which animals are sent out grazing and which remain at the base camp, the length of the grazing day, the supplementation of cattle diets, when to begin milking after birth and how much milk to leave for calves. Rather their husband will control this and therefore much of the access that women have to milking animals (Nduma et al 2000; Waters-Bayer 1985). Influences on changes in control include increased competition from substitute products, changes in official pricing, moves to sedentarisation (plus an increased influence of Islam restricting movement of women – see Lovell 1991 for Niger) and changes in the value of live animals (Sikana et al 1993: 24).

Indeed a key factor in reducing women's access to and control over milk (including both *de facto* access and *de jure* rights) has been the development of a trade in live animals. With the increasing market value of live animals (sold by men) women's rights of stock ownership and therefore their access to milk animals, diminishes. Not only are women given rights to and ownership over less livestock but also women's control over animals is further marginalized by the fact that the previously ambiguous and fluid rights of ownership of animals has been replaced by more rigid and precise ownership rights (Kelly 1985). Furthermore poor women no longer have access to milk animals from richer households which were formally available through traditional redistributive networks. Sedentarisation can further reduce access as it is often the case that beef production becomes a priority over dairy (Sikana et al 1993:26).

McPeak and Doss (2006) illustrate how men influence women's access to milk markets in northern Kenya. Here men make migration decisions and women market milk. Since milk markets are in town and households change location frequently, the husband's decision about where to settle the household has implications for the distance his wife will have to walk to the milk market in town. McPeak and Doss found that men do not locate the household to facilitate milk sales – if anything they locate the household to make milk marketing more difficult.

As such, the intra-household separation of rights over animals and rights over milk influence how much milk is available for the household and income-generating activities. Therefore, Nduma et al (2000) propose it tends to be the better off households that sell more milk. Efforts to link producers to markets may need to be designed with an understanding of these intra-household decision making processes.

4.4.2 Hides and wool

There is a dearth of information on the use of and sale of other animal products such as hides, wool, horn etc. Only two examples were found both on the development of successful businesses based on wool and woollen products in Eastern Europe (see Box 4.27 and 4.28). This is despite the fact that women can have a dominant role in the curing and selling of hides (for example amongst Somali groups) and/or wool processing. Again, when there are large numbers of hides to sell, men may take over believing that women can not handle business deals or large amounts of money (Wangui 2003).

Box 4.27 Successful Wool Business in Eastern Europe

Jumabu Joldubaeva lives in Tokbai-Talaa, Kyrgyzstan. She is 42 years old, married and has five children. Jumabu received support from an NGO and training on income generating possibilities from wool – an important by-product of the main activity in the village – sheep production. In spite of the fact that many village women produced handicrafts as part of their cultural identity, they found it difficult to sell their products. In order to tackle this, the project began working with the women and helping the group to develop their products and markets for them. A range of activities was undertaken including: experience sharing; study tours, training with handicraft groups; development of new products through assistance of an international designer. In spite of the challenges that the women faced, they were optimistic that they would achieve success.

Jumabu became the leader of a group and five other women from the village joined. An important outcome of the project's involvement with the handicraft group was the compilation of a catalogue. This enabled the group to market themselves in the region's capital Osh, and overseas. As a result of the training, the groups have started to keep records of their sales and also dedicate part of the revenue for investing in their enterprise. Since 2002, the income of the group members has increased and the total revenue to date is \$1,500. In addition, the group has internal savings of \$270. Through the extra income that Jumabu has gained through her involvement with the handicraft group, she has been able to repair the fourth room of her house. Like others in the group she has also been able to purchase additional livestock for the family. The group has donated some of their profit to a community fund that has been established to install a water supply system in the village and has made steps to secure the group's future by renting a building in the village as a workshop. Their accounts show that they will be able to maintain this on a sustainable basis.

Source: Ubaidillaeva, undated

Box 4.28 Resourceful Use of Animal Products in Turkmenistan

In Turkmenistan women are responsible for the preparation of food, clothing and the care of livestock in the village, including the watering and milking of camels. Not only do camels provide milk, but their fibre can also be woven into strong warm and durable cloth. In the spring months the camels begin to shed their downy undercoat which is then combed and washed in preparation for carding. Once the wool has been carded, whereby the fibres are aligned and the coarser hair is removed, considerable skill is required to use the wooden spindles to turn the raw fibre into useable yarn. Clothing and quilts are made from the wool, but the fibre can also be woven into lengths of cloth specifically used for keeping bread fresh. Women also participate in shearing sheep and goats and process their wool into felt mats, *ketches*. Some also dye, spin and weave the sheep wool into knotted carpets for which the Turkmen are famous.

Source: UNCCD 2007

Indeed in much of Central Asia women process livestock fibre products from sheep, goats and camels into articles such as carpets and clothing for home and for sale. GL-CRSP are conducting research in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on how commercializing such activities including the production of cashmere might affect women's time. Some women in Kazakhstan have already been supported in supplying local yarn for the American market. The women were given processing equipment including spinning wheels and taught how to spin and dye Merino wool that is produced by the Arkhar Merino breeding farm in the Uzumbulak village. The majority of the women are wives of local shepherds and migrate with their families between summer and winter pastures. The women can spin yarn in their homes or yurts at their convenience. The investment in processing equipment is relatively small and the value of handspun, hand-dyed yarn on the American market is high – around US\$20 for 150 yards. Many American knitters and weavers are interested in purchasing handspun yarn and at the same time supporting the livelihoods of pastoral women in Central Asia. Additional funding is being sourced to create a website for the women and advertise their yarn to yarn shop and non-profit organizations such as SERV International, which assists artisans from around the world in marketing handicrafts. Since women are recognized within the rural society as having specialized knowledge and abilities in handling animal fibres, the development of wool enterprises will enable women to raise their status by yielding more income for their families (GL-CRSP 2006: 225-6).

4.4.3 Manure

One of the most highly valued animal products in Asia is manure. Manure collected at the homestead is used for fertilizer, fuel and building houses. It is so valuable that old animals are kept even when they no longer produce milk or are strong enough to pull a plough. In addition, there is a widespread market in manure, often used to pay for services and labour and exchanged as a gift among relatives and friends. In all these operations, it is the women who are responsible for procuring and processing the manure (McCorkle et al. 1987; Köhler-Rollefson 2007). It is important to take this labour division into account, as a project in Tibet discovered (see Box 4.29).

Box 4.29 Project Manure in Tibet

A project conducted by Oxfam Hong Kong, in a highland desert area of Tibet, has enabled women to participate actively in project planning and implementation by recognizing their roles and reducing their labour burdens. Project staff first identified fertilizer application, traditionally manure – a key issue for rangeland improvement – as a traditional task for women. Given the large size of the pastures, the project would have greatly increased women's workloads in fertilizer applications had no consideration been made at the outset of the project to the gender-related division of labour. Instead, the staff encouraged men to collect and apply fertilizer and offered technical training to women and men in fencing and grass propagation so as to reduce the labour required to apply manure to open, degraded pasturelands. The staff learned that gender integration was most successful when the project offered separate opportunities by adapting to women's schedules so that women could receive technical training and engage in decision-making. This participation led to a reduction in women's labour and raised the social status of women.

Source: ICIMOD 2003 in Gurung undated.

Another project in Bhutan shows how an integrated approach including environmental, income generation and health aspects can have benefits for women and their family members (see Box 4.30).

Box 4.30 Empowering Women in Bhutan

In Bhutan, the Thrimsung Women's Group (TWG) 'empowered' women through a process which started from a small step of converting animal and household waste to income creation. Not only did the project teach the women new skills in compost making but it also encouraged them to be active and enterprising. It also increased women's status: "We now have a lot more things to share with our children and husband at home on things like environmental awareness and health issues. Our knowledge about sanitation we got from the project contributed to this change in our role at home. We are also able to share a lot of these ideas with our peers" (Member, TWA). The project encouraged the women to involve the whole family in the compost making including the men who showed great support in building compost pits (Tirtha Rana, 2006, personal communication). Extra income earned from the sale of the compost is expected to increase women's economic empowerment and thereby their self-confidence and social status. Maintenance of sanitation and hygiene is an ongoing process as they have weekly clean-up of campus. In the process the group educates the families on the benefits of a small family and proper methods of contraception plus offering health services and information on HIV/AIDS. Issues related to teenage pregnancy, adolescence and drug abuse are also covered by the group.

Source: Chakravarty-Kaul 2008.

4.5 Drought Interventions

Restocking programmes often only include and focus on the men in pastoral communities. However a restocking programme in Mandera and Wajir districts of Kenya implemented by NORDA (Northern Region Development Agency) (in Mandera) and ALDEF (Arid Lands Development Focus) (in Wajir) following the drought of 1999/2001 took a more gender sensitive approach. Restocking committees made up of local communities were to comprise of 50% women. Performance of women committee members in the implementation process of the restocking programme was found to be low owing to involvement in family-survival activities, particularly in petty businesses such as selling tea kiosk, milk and *miraa*. However during the evaluation most women members of restocking committees attended the discussions and freely expressed their views, a good indication that involvement of women in decision-making among the restocked communities was upheld. Based on this revelation, increased activity of women members of the committee is vital and opportune in future given that most of the targeted beneficiaries are women. These could be built upon for wider application in other grassroot development interventions (Arasio 2004).

4.6 Summary

1. Assumptions about women's (and men's) roles and responsibilities in relation to livestock should be avoided. Often labour division can be complicated, flexible and dependent on a number of other factors described in this Section. A full understanding of these roles and responsibilities should be obtained before the planning of any livestock-focused intervention.
2. Women as well as men have great knowledge of livestock and livestock production, particular in those areas that they have contact with for example involving milking animals, young or sick, which are more likely to be kept near the home. Such knowledge should form the basis for decisions made about livestock development and women should play a central role in those decision making processes. By valuing women's knowledge not only will a better livestock production system be designed, but also will feel more valued, included and their self-esteem and confidence should be boosted.
3. The challenges and constraints that women in particular face on a daily basis should be taken into account in the design of livestock interventions. This should include constraints produced by lack of mobility, illiteracy, lack of capital and access to resources. These constraints should not be seen as barriers but merely hurdles that can be overcome with appropriate support.
4. Training and extension support should be oriented to those, men and/or women, who are directly involved in certain activities. Trainings may need to be carefully thought out, practical and 'hands-on' including emphasis on learning by doing. It may be necessary to have separate male and female trainings however this should not be assumed. It can often be preferable and more successful to hold mixed trainings without creating artificial and unnecessary divides. It may be necessary to take trainings and extension services to pastoralists rather than expect pastoralists to come to the training or resource centre. In particular this may be the case for more mobile pastoralists and facilitating approaches such as the use of mobile outreach camps can be advantageous.
5. Introduced technology should be affordable, easily maintained, socially acceptable and at low risk. It should not be assumed that is only men who can handle tools and machinery: women are also capable with the right training and support.
6. Before any intervention or activity is carried out involving livestock the dynamics of livestock 'ownership' and access and its function for various household members (men and women in particular) needs to be fully understood and accounted for to ensure that women's rights in particular are not undermined or overridden. This includes the dynamics of access (actual, usufruct and nominal) to and function of livestock products, such as milk. Rights to and ownership over livestock, particularly cattle can be complex, embedded in tradition and custom and strongly negotiated. In particular the relationship between women and livestock needs to be fully identified within the local context and incorporated into decisions made concerning priorities for action. In some cases for example, women may have to depend on male relatives for certain activities or for security in herd management.
7. Though livestock assets might be viewed as unequally spread between men and women, they are certainly more equitably distributed than other assets (such as land and capital). Indeed in many pastoral societies a woman can have ownership and rights to a variety of livestock and livestock assets, provided to her at different times of her life and helps to ensure her economic and food security. She may be solely responsible for decisions about her own herd, though it is usually the case that decisions to sell livestock are made by a husband and wife together.
8. Customary and government bodies can be both protective and restrictive towards women's access to and rights over livestock. The right institutional arrangements need to be identified and supported if women's access and rights are to be strengthened. Assumptions should be avoided with good investigation and clarification.
9. Meat and sale-oriented livestock activities can have a negative impact on household food security if women-controlled activities (used to satisfy household basic needs) change to the advantage of men or if new activities are taken over by men and women's control of assets and benefits decreases. If the objective of interventions is to increase the income of pastoralists, it needs to be recognized that nutritional and social objectives may be compromised and may need a special inter-linked programme to ensure that they are met.

10. The transformation and marketing of livestock products offer women a suitable vehicle for increasing their economic and social empowerment. Often a culturally acceptable employment for women, if well organized and linked with sustainable markets developed, it can offer good opportunities for successful growth. However constraints such as a restriction on mobility may need to be overcome. And it has been shown that unless men are included in activity/business planning with women, give their approval and support, they can feel marginalized as women gain more power and are less dependent on them and their contribution.
11. NGOs, particularly international NGOs, can play an important role in assisting the development of markets by creating linkages with international clients and supporting innovative schemes such as internet marketing.
12. The distribution of milk and its function can be a contested commodity: often a tussle between providing milk for calves (more a man's priority) and for the household or for income generating activities (more a women's priority). If herd and household needs allow, milk offers a good source of cash that can be converted into grain (with higher equivalent energy value) or other necessities. Milk selling tends to be the domain of women. It can be a sign of a woman's social status, beauty and play an important role in facilitating positive relations between neighbours and kin when exchanged. Women have developed complex marketing strategies to ensure that milk and milk products reach markets in time. In areas where women's role in milk marketing has been allowed to grow, it has given them the opportunity to participate in the 'public' sphere and increase their economic and social autonomy. "Give-a-cow" schemes have proved successful in improving household access to milk and economic security through sale, however it has created extra workloads.
13. There is a disproportionate emphasis in development programmes on livestock, particularly large livestock. This misses opportunities for development of other sectors including hide processing (its improvement and marketing), meat processing (including dried meat), wool processing, manure and its sale. Often these can prove to be money-earning activities that can benefit and be controlled by women. The involvement of women in the planning of development activities has proved to be an important factor in identifying and implementing successful and sustainable interventions.
14. Women can prove capable and skilled community animal health workers. Appropriate training programmes including the use of non-literate and practical 'learning by doing' methodologies run by women, can overcome some of the barriers women might face. They can prove to be a good entry point to women from pastoral communities that can be drawn into other activities. Further women can be active and participative members of committees, particularly when effort is made to ensure that the environment is comfortable and enabling.
15. Though it may appear that women are not participating in project activities such as meetings, this may be due to household or family commitments and not due to their lack of interest or willingness to be involved. They may have to find ways to juggle commitments and provide input without their actual presence being demanded. Where possible committees linked to livestock and livestock activities should include women and their participation encouraged and facilitated.
16. The livestock sector can prove to be a privileged entry point to promote gender related issues because of relatively positive access arrangements; the involvement of all household members in production which can facilitate shared goals and working relations; the interrelatedness of livestock with other subjects such as marketing, environment and provision of basic needs; and evidence that long term gender promotion through livestock interventions can lead to sustainable development. It has been shown that livestock-linked projects that include or target women can have empowering impacts including increased self-confidence, well-being, feelings of security and increased purchasing power which has led to improved household relations and a greater involvement of women in decision-making processes.

5.0 ENTITLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES: EDUCATION

Pastoralists use education like other resources and capital, as a safety net and a way of strengthening the pastoral enterprise. Education is seen as a way of accessing resources outside the pastoral circuit (mainly financial and social capital), particularly sought after by the growing number of households whose entitlements within the pastoral settings have been eroded for various reasons. It is suggested (Kratli 2001:4) that “the decision to send one child to school and keep another at home is not based on any consideration about individual development, the choice is not perceived by the parents or by children as favouring one party at the expense of another”, but rather as a contribution to the survival of the pastoral household/unit as a whole. “In particular this should never be forgotten when looking at the reasons for the enrolment of girls in formal education. In general, within the logic of the pastoral enterprise it makes more sense to invest in the education of a boy (whose only economic values come from labour and the volatile venture of raiding), rather than risking the otherwise guaranteed asset attached to a girl: livestock and, above all, the crucial social capital gained when she gets married” (ibid).

Many women who have not had access to education (either formal or non-formal) find it extremely debilitating not to be able to write their name or read a notice from a government department. As such “learning the basics can be hugely significant (being able to sign for money at the bank; being able to read your name on the jerry can of milk that you use to buy/sell milk from the baadia; being able to read your child’s name on their school report). My favourite Wajir story was about a woman from one of the credit groups, who had taken part in the literacy classes, whose goat was killed by a speeding lorry, who wrote down the registration number in the sand with a stick, went home for a pencil and paper, and then took it to the police who subsequently apprehended the driver” (Izzy Birch personal communication 2008).

Indeed increasingly men and women are seeing the benefits of education for both boys and girls (or at least some of the boys and girls within the family). For example Maasai pastoralists speak of ‘being blind’ that is without the skills to cope in their radically changing world and hope that through schooling their children will be able to ‘see the way’ (Sikar and Hodgson 2006). It is suggested that “education, particularly the education of pastoralist girls, is an obvious priority, as countless studies have shown the enduring value of literacy, numeracy and self-confidence for the empowerment of women (and through women, their children)” (ibid: 37). Further education is a way to increase social networks: pastoral homesteads may use the very process of schooling as an opportunity for expanding the family’s social network in order to include supporters from the outside world, particularly as a channel into the ‘powerful’ world of NGOs, churches and other development agencies (Kratli 2001). Box 5.1 provides one example of many.

Box 5.1 Girls are Better than Boys

These days most pastoralists prefer girls and I remember in the year 1999 I met an Elder in a small village in Wajir, Kenya. I asked him what he was doing in Wajir town and he said, “I have a daughter and a son in the secondary school and they were chased away for fees. Due to the prolonged drought I could not afford to retain both of them in school so I went to pay for one of them.” I immediately made an assumption and said so you paid for the boy and he said “of course not, he is lazy and very poor in class, I paid for the girl. He can come and herd the camels for me if he wants his fees paid. In any case girls are better, when they start work they remember you in your old age and while they study they are more respectful and helpful than the boys.” This surprised me a lot and I later started asking a number of Elders what they thought of their daughters and if they would marry them off young. They would mostly say no as they wanted them to complete school and work before they got married.

Source: Halima Shuria, a peace activist from Wajir District, Kenya, personal communication 2008

5.1 Women’s Role as Educators

Women play an important role as educators. Not only is this as a mother to their children, particularly during their early years of life, but also women have great knowledge on different areas of livestock management, the environment and businesses especially those related to their everyday activities and responsibilities.

However, “rarely are women asked for their opinion. The few reports and papers written on women’s ITK (indigenous technical knowledge) are insignificant compared with the tremendous literature available on that of men (Niamir-Fuller, 1990). In addition, there are more passing references to women’s knowledge than there are detailed discussions of that knowledge. A typical example comes from a study in Thailand, where it is merely mentioned that “women have demonstrated their expertise and skill in livestock production and provide their families with a major share of household income” without offering more detail on that expertise” (Natpracha 1991 in IFAD undated). However examples from India of where women’s knowledge has been used are given in Box 5.2 and 5.3.

Box 5.1 Using Women’s ITK for Improved Animal Feed

In Umra village, Nanded district of Maharashtra, ICRISAT scientists conducted trials of groundnuts to ensure uniform stand of a crop with an optimal seed rate. The process of growing these crops is less labour intensive and less tedious. As it is usually up to the women to do this, low labour requirements save them time and energy which have knock-on positive impacts. There is considerable saving in irrigation and the soil fertility is sustained. The outputs have provided improved animal feed from residues which has doubled milk production and consumption besides raising employment and incomes of the village and the region. Such research has helped focus attention on more gender-sensitive research at ICRISAT, say Dr. Cynthia S. Bantilan, Director, ICRISATs Socio-Economics and Policy Program (SEPP and others).

Source: Chakravarty-Kaul 2008.

The valuing of women's knowledge and its incorporation not only improves development/progress and related decision making, but also increases their own self value and self-esteem. Recognising their skill and knowledge gives them a platform from which to address issues like adaptation of livestock breeds to climate change and natural resource management. Women gain confidence to reach out to institutions of formal science and technology which can assist them in future developments (Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Box 5.2 Benefits of Valuing Women's Knowledge

ANTHRA a local NGO in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra states, India has been developing a database on medicinal and fodder plants and traditional breeds of livestock, for which they have consulted many knowledgeable women. From this database they know that women play a crucial role in saving primary germplasm essential for subsequent production. "The breed of Deccani sheep have been sustained...nurtured and cared for by women of those communities over decades." Though the government has been trying to promote the use of cross-bred stall-fed livestock many women have refused the change and have stuck to raising their own sheep and goat breeds under traditional grazing systems. "In both these production contexts, women have been instrumental in protecting and innovating with knowledge, practice and genetic resources, which they have handed down to future generations" (Ramdas and Ghotge 2007).

Women have also been taught by ANTHRA to prepare validated herbal medicines to use as first aid for sick animals including Neem oil, Nirgudi oil, and different herbal powders. Women from some villages also prepare feed supplement for their young lambs by growing fodder trees around their houses and on small fringe areas of their agriculture lands. Women have borrowed traditional food crop seeds from other farmers groups in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and diversified their crops planting jowar, green gram, red grams, finger millets and cowpeas. As a result they now have an enhanced and diverse basket of nutritious food for themselves, and crop residues and crop by products for their buffaloes, cattle and sheep and goats. They have also started growing local varieties of vegetables in their fields as well as at home. In Maharashtra, pastoral women also have started growing medicinal plants in their kitchen gardens (Ashalatha of ANTHRA, personal communication 2008).

5.2 Accessing Formal Education

It can be a challenge for women to access information at all levels however, beginning with when they are young. For a variety of reasons many pastoralists have not received formal education. As a result they are likely to be illiterate and non-numerate. Traditionally nomadic or semi-nomadic societies have relied on oral tradition and bartering of goods, and thus there has been little need for the ability to write or do arithmetic (Gardner, 2003). Further schools in the rural pastoral regions are few, and fail to take into account the nomadic nature of pastoralism. Additionally mainstream curricula have failed to adapt themselves to the needs of pastoral communities, and therefore much of what is learnt may be irrelevant.

Girls in particular find it difficult to attend schools, even if they are available locally. Not only do their busy workloads limit their time, but also culturally it may not be accepted and/or concerns may exist. For example, fathers may not want their girls to attend because they are someone else's wives and if educated may become clever and violate the traditional rules (Lasawi et al, undated; Sanou and Aikman 2005). Not only are they said to be 'missing out' but they may also have to take on extra tasks when their brothers go to school (Wangui 2003).

Providing education and knowledge for girls and women is said to improve their confidence and status. Further it is believed that educating girls has a major impact on food security. An educated woman will provide more diverse and nutritious food and keep a higher level of cleanliness and health. Educated women are more able to earn money and it is likely that in time, they will have less children (Panjwani 2005). Many pastoralist families have seen the value of sending at least some of their children to school even though it may be seen as unconventional (see Box 5.3).

Box 5.3 Valuing Formal Education

Zainab was an only child living in a pastoralist community with no school. At the age of eight, her parents decided that she needed to get an education – and because of the long distance to the nearest school, in the village of Awad, she was taken each day on a donkey by her father. Her father looked after the cattle before collecting her. She got an "A" at the end of primary and was able to go to the "Mediterranean School" in Kassala, Eastern Sudan, as a boarder. After completion, she did a two year teacher training course. Zainab is now back in her own community, teaching in Awad and fully involved in the local community, particularly helping women to deal with health issues. She is also campaigning to get a school built in her own community village.

Amna Ali Fereg was a nomadic child in the remote nomadic village of Kednet. When the freedom fighters opened schools in her pastoralist village, she was able to go to elementary school. She then went to boarding school with her father's support where she completed junior and high school. She then took the opportunity to join an animal health college and now has a diploma in animal health. She has gone back to her village and is working as a vet, helping with the livestock. She is also part of the community as she lives with them, works with them. As a pastoralist, she and her family have their own livestock. She says: "I have a salary and my livestock, I live in better conditions than many others who are not educated. My father is happy about my performances." His comment is: "Many people advised me to remove her from school. But now they understand why I was helping her to learn in school."

Source: PENHA undated

In Ethiopia too individual men and women are fighting to send their children to school despite being berated by their fellow pastoralists /villagers and school fees eating into household funds. The story of one man from Afar highlights why he thought education was important for both his boys and girls: on not being able to read a letter sent to him from Emperor Haile Selassie and having to wait several month to get it translated, he swore that he would see *all* his children educated. Indeed he achieved this and

today his daughters are some of the few educated Afar, working for government and NGOs, commanding high salaries and great respect. They are valuable role models for other Afar girls wanting to have a career but remain linked to their pastoral roots (Zahra Ahmed personal communication 2006).

In Asia too there are a number of examples of girls (and boys) overcoming great adversities to ensure their studies are continued (Box 5.4).

Box 5.4 Fighting to Continue Education in Afghanistan

Women pastoralists are socially empowered through literacy. Women and girls themselves will overcome great barriers and challenges to ensure that they and/or their children can at least read and write. In Afghanistan where Taliban edicts denied access to education for girls and where there is so little communication that a donkey convoy is needed to carry UNICEF-funded books and stationary to schools, in March 2002 nearly 130,000 children returned to classrooms in Parwan province. Nearly one-third of the students were girls. Kuchi pastoralists ensure that their children get some education during the winter months when they return from summer pastures and winter in the village of Namokab, perched 2000 ms. above sea level. UNICEF provides the school with education materials.

Source: Chakravarty-Kaul 2008

Indeed, access to education is increasing, and in many cases a more 'appropriate' education. This is due to a number of factors including the building of more schools; changes in the law; provision of mobile schools; a more appropriate school curriculum; and the training and support of community facilitators.

5.2.1 Building more schools

In many countries governments have realized the lack of educational infrastructure in pastoral areas. As a result programmes have been instituted that build schools, provide equipments and train teachers (for example Primary Education Development Program in Tanzania and the Pastoralist Community Development Project in Ethiopia).

NGOs have been instrumental in also building schools both for formal and non-formal education purposes. As a Hamar woman from Ethiopia describes in Box 5.5. formal schooling can bring about changes and challenges for those who attend, not least in deciding to what degree they should 'conform' or not.

Box 5.5 Schooling Brings Cultural Changes Too

A Hamar woman talking at a global gathering of pastoralists was dressed in 'highland' clothes. She said "We are Hamar women, we are just like all the other Hamar women here...but we are in clothes because we went to school. When we were about 15 years old [between 10 - 20 years ago], Redd Barna (Norwegian Save the Children) came here and opened a primary school. They went from house to house asking the parents to send their children. However none of the Hamer families would allow their children to go. I was the first to go because my family was different. My father is a Hamer from another district and he was considered to be an outsider. The elders got together and decided that the children of one family should go to school because the Redd Barna kept pestering everyone. The elders believed that the Redd Barna wanted to kill Hamar children, so they decided that my father's children would be sacrificed. I had to take off my Hamar skins and put on highlander cloths...This is why I look like this today – I got used to it. This was 13 years ago. I loved going to school. I told my girlfriends, two of whom sneaked out of their houses and joined me at school...they were beaten by their fathers. Now we want to go on to high school and finish to grade 12, but the nearest school is in Kinka, 4 hours away and we don't have the money to pay to live there and study. So we want to ask your help in getting a high school in Turmi."

Source: Simpson-Hebert 2005

5.2.2 Changes in law

Laws on education are forcing change with knock-on impacts, for example amongst the Bedouin in Israel. Here, the traditional labour force – unmarried girls – are now forced to go to school due to government policies, and therefore hired shepherds now have to be employed (Degan 2003). In other countries across the world, as governments attempt to reach such as Millennium Development Goals, laws have been strengthened supporting equal opportunities for boys and girls, as well as in many cases obligatory attendance. To date this is having limited impact in many pastoral areas where infrastructure remains poor, teachers few and implementation of legislation weak.

5.2.3 Provision of mobile schools and education centres

Some countries have developed mobile primary and secondary schools. In Iran mobile schools have been particularly successful. Here teachers from a nomadic pastoral background are trained, equipped with a white school tent (in contrast to the black tents of the nomads) and school equipment, and join a group of nomad camps. During the winter and summer, when the camps move less, the tented schools open for enrolment. One advantage of tent schools is that there is likely to be equal enrolment of boys and girls, since girls remain under the close supervision of their parents. Families tend to camp near the tent school, which is often in a local chief's camp, meaning there are enough children for a mixed-age class. In spring, when the camps move from lowland winter quarters up into highland summer pastures, and in autumn when they move back down, the tent school moves with them, although there is not usually much teaching during the moves. Children who qualify for secondary school go to standard sedentary facilities in local towns (Global Drylands Imperative 2003).

In several African countries too, mobile schools have also been introduced to encourage pastoral children to attend. In Sudan for example there were 200 mobile schools in 1997 with 8863 pupils (Eisa 2002). These have had a number of positive impacts (see Box 5.6).

5.6 Positive Change Towards Education in Mobile Schools

In northern Sudan there have been several positive impacts of the mobile schools established there. A positive attitude change has been seen increasing the demand: parents are making enquiries about their children's progress and girls are being sent back to school after they have married. There is a two way support between teachers and the communities: the communities will sacrifice a number of animals to pay the teachers, and the teachers will not only educate the children but also assist the communities by reading letters or any other documents that they receive. In the past they had to travel for two to three days to find somebody to read for them. Dropout children have returned and even some families are settling nearer the schools so that their children can be more fully educated whilst the fathers and adult males still move with the animals. Here most teachers are from a nomadic background. They receive incentives from the local communities: both cash and other such as between 10-15 animals during a 3-4 year contract. The communities will continue to look after these animals for the teachers.

Source: Eisa 2002

However, problems can arise in that teachers are often not from pastoral communities and find it difficult to move with the pastoralists. They may demand extra payment and incentives that can prove debilitating for local governments to fund so some governments (as in Mali) have discontinued them (Sanou and Aikman 2005). Absenteeism is also common. Another major problem facing the national curriculum in mobile schools is the failure of those schools to complete their syllabuses at the end of prescribed 4 years of education. Length of school year in mobile schools varies between 3 to 6 months at the most, depending on the availability of enough water and pasture to enable the nomads to settle in one place. Children from schools that failed to complete the required syllabus have to spend an additional year in cluster boarding schools before proceeding to fifth grade. For those reasons, nomads prefer the increase of mobile education to six years instead of four. In such cases, the system of multi-grade one-teacher needs to be changed and teachers for the additional subjects need to be availed (Eisa 2002).

To overcome such problems APDA, a local NGO in Ethiopia, has been training pastoralists themselves to be teachers and as such they are more willing to live and work within their communities (see Box 5.7).

Box 5.7 Pastoralists As Teachers

In Ethiopia APDA trains pastoralists to teach reading, writing and basic health to others in their community. The community chooses who is to be trained, who if illiterate will be first taught by APDA. Once trained, they live and work, and move with the community. APDA works with and through Afar culture. Koranic teachers and healers have always moved with the people they serve. APDA has adapted this approach, using an agreed curriculum and training manuals. The project is governed by clan law and is controlled by local leaders. They strongly support the teachers. Since 1995, APDA has trained 127 teachers, who have in turn taught around 37,000 Afar how to read and write their own language, as well as basic English and Amharic. Nearly one-third are women and girls. APDA also writes and publishes books in Afar and produces and shows videos and broadcasts radio programmes in the Afar language.

Source: IIRR 2004

5.2.4 Provision of boarding schools

A number of NGOs have been supporting the building and attendance of pastoral girls and boys at boarding schools. However when children move to boarding schools, families lose the needed labour input of these children in addition to worrying about the capability of those children to take care of themselves. Nomads in general are very suspicious about the probability of their children's return to nomadic life once they move to urban areas whether for education or otherwise (Eisa 2002). Additionally parents particularly worry about the safety and security of their girls.

The Gudina Tumsa Foundation (GTF) in Ethiopia has been supporting a boarding school for pastoral children for some years. The school is found within the community built in the GTF compound where community trainings and meetings take place, and the gates are always open to visitors. As such there are opportunities for worried parents to visit their children and ensure themselves that the most is being done to provide a safe environment for their stay there (personal observation 2006). Many Kereyu girls are being educated and several have gone on to complete their secondary education at another GTF supported school in town. The first girl to fully complete her secondary education is now training to be a lawyer in Addis Ababa. A poem written by her is found in Box 5.8.

<p>Box 5.8 Do You Understand Me <i>by Aliya Hawas</i></p> <p>Do we understand each other? Do you know me? Do you realise my potentials? Do you appreciate me?</p> <p>For many centuries You have oppressed me Why have you denied me my rights?</p> <p>I was created perfect, Why do you then look down on me? Why have you built a fortress around me? I have a strong desire to learn, to grow, to reach where others have reached; support me, strengthen me.</p> <p>Don't oppress me because of my gender, Don't damage my feelings using slanderous words. Don't say, "girls are useless!" Treat me as equal, because I am equal. Why am I treated different?</p> <p>Do we understand each other? Do you know me? Who will understand my pains? I'm part of you, don't hurt me!</p>	<p>Don't say that I am weak and look down on me. Recognise me as your partner, support me, let's hold hands.</p> <p>Be wise and educate me, if you give me a chance I will be a cure to you, a remedy. If we could only listen to each other we could benefit one another.</p> <p>Don't you see, don't you understand? But my oppression is your oppression. Why is this happening? Open your eyes and see.</p> <p>Educate me today, I will help you tomorrow. Be wise, don't be ignorant!</p> <p>Education is useful and profitable, it lifts up the oppressed. All is found in education, don't be weak, catch sight of it.</p> <p>Leave your old ways, let's grow together out of ignorance. Let us enjoy the sweet test of life together, Acknowledge me as one with a great value. Educate me today, I will help you tomorrow.</p>
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5.2.5 Training of community facilitators and mobilisers

In the Gao region of north-east Mali Oxfam GB has been trying to improve gender equality through the work of *animatrices* – female community mobilisers – who support girls' access to education and foster their participation through developments designed to make the curriculum more gender-equitable. By encouraging positive attitudes to school attendance for girls, while discouraging practices that infringe the rights of girls and jeopardize their well-being, the programme aims to change beliefs and ideas about schooling for girls, using a rights-based approach. However though the work of *animatrices* has been successful in increasing attendance of girls they have failed to challenge conventional roles of women and girls and even may have increased women's workload (see Box 5.9). Thus it was decided that the programme needs to work more towards change at other levels simultaneously, including the curriculum (see below).

Box 5.9 The Work of Animatrices

An *animatrice* is appointed to each school to work with parents, telling them about the importance and value of schooling for both girls and boys. They monitor girls' attendance and work with the teacher to ensure safe and girl-friendly school environments, so parents are more likely to allow their girls to make the long daily walk to school or stay in the school itself during their families' long treks in search of pasture. When girls drop out of school the *animatrices* follow up with families to find out the reasons and try to encourage the girls to return. The *animatrices* are local women most of whom have completed Grade 6. The programme gives them some training in community mobilization and most recently, in gender awareness. They lobby for changes in attitudes towards girls' abilities and their right to attend school, both in the community, with parents and community members (including working with Parent Associations), and in the school, with teachers and head teachers. As relatively well-educated women in paid employment, promoting schooling, the *animatrices* serve as positive role models for local girls, overcoming many challenges to their work. Constant dialogue between the *animatrices* and the members of the communities has also influenced attitudes and had an impact on early marriage. One *animatrice* told of how an old man and 20 young girls walked for miles, determined to find a school they could attend. She reported also that in the district of Menaka three girls have completed primary school: the first to do so without dropping out. *Animatrices* have also managed to reintegrate five girls into the school system after they were forced into marriage by their parents. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the average age of marriage is rising from 10-12 years to 14-16 years of age.

Source: Sanou and Aikman 2005

However it may not be easy even for community mobilisers and such as *animatrices* to convince parents to allow their children to stay in school: there are so many pressures on girls to leave early including for marriage. However the girls themselves are also fighting for change (as Box 5.10 describes).

Box 5.10 Fighting for Change

Fatimata lives in Bourem town, an area inhabited by nomadic and semi-nomadic Touareg, Songhoi and Arabs. The population is conservative and predominantly non-literate. Women are said to occupy a subordinate place in society, with little or no autonomy in decisions regarding certain aspects of their lives such as choice of partner or age of marriage. Sidiki, a 30-year old Touareg decided that it was time to get married to his first cousin Aisseta, who was 15 years and attending secondary school in the town of Gao. He paid a handsome dowry and lavish gifts to Titi, Aisseta's mother. Realising what was planned for her and not wanting to marry, Aisseta fled home in the middle of the marriage preparations. Afraid of the scandal that Aisseta's flight might cause her family, the elderly Titi decided instead to give Fatimata, her 11-year old daughter, to Sikiki. Fatimata, a jovial bright pupil in Standard 2 in Bourem Primary School was not happy about this, but she was accustomed to doing her mother's bidding. Fatimata had an aunt Djeneba, who lived some distance from the family and worked as an *animatrice* in one of the Oxfam-supported schools. Djeneba came to visit Titi which coincided with Fatimata's marriage preparations. On hearing of the intention to marry off the 11-year old, Djeneba threatened to have Sidiki and Fatimata's father imprisoned. She quickly mobilized members of the local women's association and together they went to see the headmaster of Fatimata's school and the school inspector to try to prevent the marriage. Djeneba had herself been a victim of an early forced marriage 20 years previously and she did not want the same fate to befall her niece. Sidiki seeing the trouble that this marriage was going to cause and seized by fear, announced to the family that he would allow Fatimata to continue her education. But he did not renounce the marriage altogether. Fatimata was able to continue her studies and her aunt Djeneba continues to keep a close watch over her.

Source: Sanou and Aikman 2005

5.2.6 More appropriate school curriculum

Many feel that 'normal' school curriculums are not what pastoralist children want or need. As such they have been trying to adapt and develop state curriculums so that they are considered 'more suitable' (see Box 5.11).

Box 5.11 Applied Studies for Pastoral Children

PCAIE has supported a school in Liban zone Somali region Ethiopia, which has tried to encourage the enrolment of girls. The school is situated in the village and teaching is flexible to cater pupil's special needs and takes into account religious holidays and the dry months when pupils are away at remote grazing areas. The curriculum includes applied subjects such as mathematics lessons in how to manage a business (many of the girls earn money as petty traders), while health lessons discuss FGM, birthing and child nutrition. Instruction is in Somali rather than English. Additionally the school management committee tries to solve girl's problems – for example if a girl is repeatedly absent then a committee member will visit the family to find out why. Many have progressed to join grade 4 or 5 in a regular school, however dropout rates remain high as the girls still have other duties and as they get older many leave to get married. The school is changing attitudes towards girls' education in the area: by making it possible for girls to become educated while still contributing to their families, it is making the idea of girls' education more acceptable in this traditional society.

Source: IIRR 2004

As described above in Mali, Oxfam GB has been funding a programme aimed at promoting more gender equality in education for pastoral girls. As well as supporting the programme of community mobilisers (*animatrices*), Oxfam has been working to influence

the national curriculum-reform process. Oxfam carried out a study of the current materials used within schools and the curriculum. The study highlighted that though many of the text books include pictures of women and girls they only illustrate perceived 'acceptable' roles for them. One textbook depicts a sick mother with her daughter pounding millet while her brother stands by, looking on with his hands in his pockets. Pastoralist women are always pictured 'behind' the men, and their destiny as wives and mothers appears unalterable. Oxfam is working at a national level lobbying for fundamental change in the curriculum that will promote more gender equity. A starting point is changing these illustrations in the text books (Sanou and Aikman 2005).

In Sudan PENHA believes that many contents of the national curriculum are irrelevant to pastoralist's life and needs. As a result they have introduced an education project in Kassala in Eastern Sudan which is trying to develop a more relevant curriculum. It seeks to be practical and sustainable and may even begin to change some of what is taught in other schools in the Horn (PENHA undated). The curriculum now includes health (first aid, immunization and common veterinary diseases and cures) and environmental conservation. Female teachers receive additional training in midwifery (Eisa 2002).

However it can be problematic to obtain the right expertise for curriculum design: and the level of demands and skill-levels for creating such as texts can be underestimated. Printed materials may need extra time and there have been examples where their production and delivery are late. Gender issues may not be adequately tackled. In Mongolia for example some materials were inappropriate for women because written by urban men; and some male officials were appointed as tutors and were not able to discuss such as family planning or teach such as knitting (Robinson and Solongo 2000).

5.3 Informal Education

An alternative to formal education is informal education which offers alternative subjects more relevant to people's lives and practical applications, together with alternative methodologies used in teaching. Further sessions can be given at times of the day suitable for the students. In Borana Ethiopia for example Irish NGO GOAL supports a programme that offers the same sessions in the morning and afternoons so that families can send some children in the morning whilst others tend to livestock, and in the afternoons those who attended in the morning will tend the livestock while their brothers and sisters go to school (personal observation 2006). Often informal education may be directed at adults as well as to children (see Box 5.12).

Box 5.12 Non-Formal Education and Distance Learning in Mongolia

Until the 1990s in Mongolia nearly all herder's children went to boarding schools in the nearest district so basic education was accessible, compulsory and provided by the state. This resulted in an educated nomadic population and in every family there was at least one member with eight years or more of formal education. However since a change in government in 1991 and a privatisation of livestock, high drop out rates from schools appeared (particularly for rural boys whose labour was important to herding families) and illiteracy has grown. The Gobi Women's Project (GWP) began in 1993 with two main aims: to develop national capacity in non-formal education and ODE (open and distant education), and to assist Gobi women to survive the sudden changes affecting their lives (through providing access to information and knowledge, changing attitudes and developing skills for self-reliance and income generation). An organisational structure was set up with committees at national, provincial and district levels. The committees coordinated the programme and monitored progress. Print and radio 'lessons' were developed, together with training and technical assistance provided by consultants. A teacher-training programme was developed and local tutors were trained. A pilot phase was carried out involving 1,500 women from 10 districts. Jeeps were provided to allow tutors to reach the learners in a very spread out population. Women learners were selected by local committees. Radios (240) and batteries were distributed. The pilot programme began with a 3-day 'crash' course in district centres, when women received booklets, writing materials, batteries and radios, and met their tutors. Five booklets and 17 weekly radio programmes were produced. The main phase began in January 1996 for one year. It involved 15,000 women, aged 15-45 years in 62 districts in the six Gobi provinces. They were supported by 620 tutors who worked on a voluntary basis. Each tutor was responsible for about 15 learners and traveled round by horse, camel or occasionally motorbike. Learning materials included topics such as family planning, making camel saddles, making milk and meat products, bread and sweet making, leather processing, civics and the law, and setting-up small businesses. Literacy support booklets were produced for children. The role of the radio was to support the booklets. Small learning centres were established. If women were busy working, their husbands or other family members might take notes for them.

Source: Robinson and Solongo 2000

Another organization MWEPP (Maasai Women's Education and Empowerment Program) works with Project Boabab and educators for some of the classes. MWEPP was set up by a group of Maasai women with help from some interested and supportive Americans (who had visited Maasai on safari), which was built on the philosophy and cooperation of a local self-help group. Apart from MWEPP providing funding for cost-share educational opportunities for girls and women through secondary schools, college and vocational opportunities, and life and entrepreneurial skills at the village level, they also educate Americans about life of Maasailand women and organize American fund raising support of Maasailand women's education (MWEPP 2008).

Indeed, because many adult pastoralists have not been formally educated, a number of initiatives support adult education programmes. The more participatory programmes work with the recipients to develop a suitable curriculum, taking into account adult learning and 'ways of knowing' and testing it with them (Box 5.13).

Box 5.13 Providing Education that Pastoral Women Need

An innovative approach by a Senegalese NGO called Tostan developed a programme with women that started with an introductory session on problem solving and continued with modules on hygiene, oral rehydration, immunisation, leadership skills, feasibility studies for local projects, and project management techniques. Literacy lessons in the language of the participants were interwoven throughout. The objective was to enable women to come to grips with their most pressing problems and to acquire the skills to design and manage their own projects as the means of addressing those needs. Participants are encouraged to 'adopt' non-participating adults and – collectively – a non-participating community. Tostan provides learning materials, training for local facilitators, the bulk of their salaries, and outside monitoring services. The village is responsible for recruiting participants, building and furnishing a learning centre, housing and feeding the facilitator, contributing to the facilitator's salary and establishing a management committee to supervise the activities. A programme of 'continuing education' has been developed on demand. The first step once again was a needs assessment. Modules include: human rights, women's health, early childhood development and sustainable NRM. Two months were allotted to the study of each.

Source: Easton et al. 2003: 447

The REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques) programme is seen as an empowerment tool with women and men enjoying coming to the meetings; discussing problems; and finding solutions – it is based on dialogue and many of the sessions are open/facilitated discussions. Following the philosophy of the programme, the gatherings of REFLECT participants are called 'circles' (see Dadhi and Reshid 2005). The programme aims to initiate 'change' within local communities through their own problem solving and action. The programme prefers to use local facilitators though it can be challenging to find some with sufficient education themselves. GOAL Ethiopia has been supporting a REFLECT programme for some time in Borana: its appreciation is highlighted in Box 5.14.

Box 5.14: Appreciation for REFLECT

The REFLECT programme is highly appreciated by the women around Teltelle Borana. It has made them stronger and better able to cope with crises. For example, during the most recent drought in the area, the women were able to buffer the shocks and stresses by discussing, supporting each other and selling firewood (temporarily) as a collective concern. Today the women are able to assert more control over productive assets in the household such as grain which is more commonly saved and sold when prices are higher. And one woman recently prevented her husband selling a cow, but rather a goat that was sufficient for their needs. After one and half years the women are coming to the bank to open an account, deposit their savings and sign their names. They proudly showed us a map of their village and the different resources in the area that they use.

Source: personal observation 2006.

In West Africa, a number of organizations have been using the REFLECT approach. This includes Sahel ECO (Box 5.15).

Box 5.15 REFLECT in Mali

In Mopti, Mali the REFLECT approach to adult education and literacy is being promoted. To date 73 moderators of REFLECT circles have been trained, including 20 women. Since the project started 554 men and 419 women (43%) have taken part in and benefited from membership of the circles. More of these women came from areas where there had been a history of literacy training and there was closer access to Mopti. This created conditions more favourable to women's participation (greater awareness, more social and economic freedom) compared to the more isolated and traditional rural areas. Activities promoted by members of the REFLECT circles include support for income generating activities; training in human rights, justice and in decentralisation law (for commune officials and village chiefs); training in "Associative Life" for women leaders including training on managing an association, management tools etc.; and management training for an association of Peul women who sell milk in Bankass.

Source: Sahel ECO 2008

In Cameroon MBOSCUDA, the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association works with Mbororo Fulani pastoralists. MBOSCUDA sees REFLECT as a way of empowering women and building their capacity for enterprise development through literacy classes, providing information on their rights, and training. Each group has a facilitator who holds a weekly literacy class based on community needs. Building on this work the programme has moved to holding gender awareness workshops, mobilizing women into groups and initiating social change (see Box 5.16).

Box 5.16 Achievements of MBOSCUA Women's Empowerment Component

Building on the REFLECT work MBOSCUA have also held 14 workshops on Gender Sensitive Participatory Approaches in the North West Province in which 582 people (367 women and 215 men) participated and a series of sensitization meetings and campaigns on gender issues such as gender based violence held with members of 34 communities. As a result of their work, some Mbororo Women have become members of executives of school PTAs, councilors in local councils and representatives in traditional institutions. There is increased self-esteem and recognition of women and hence increased participation of women in decision making especially at family level for example in issues relating to their children's education and marriage.

Further they have achieved registration and official recognition of Mbororo women's groups as Common Initiative Groups (CIGs). 16.1% of groups are always invited to public meetings in their localities. This has increased group participation in other local development programs. There is increased use of formal financial institutions (Local Credit Unions). 100% of groups save with local credit unions and 3% of women in groups have individual accounts. Additionally the women have increased skills in business management, marketing and simple accounting (small scale business record keeping). 94% of women in groups can count or calculate money while 80% are able to make purchases in public markets and sell on behalf of the group. At least 85% of groups are able to project market trends, determine sales prices and keep good records. The average profit per group is 144,558 FRS. Some groups have generated income of more than 100% of the amount of loan provided. Increased skills, techniques and involvement in agricultural activities have also been seen such as semi-improved sheep production, gardening (pepper, huckleberry and cabbage cultivation), as well as processing and commercialisation of farm produce like maize and rice. As a result there is increased social integration and co-existence between Mbororo communities and their farming neighbours through buying and selling of items and use of community resources.

There is a reduced negative culture such as "pulaaku" (culture of silence) and increased self – esteem of women. Mbororo women have developed the courage to approach men to claim debts, share ideas and contribute in decision making. There has also been increased advocacy and realisation of girl child education. Through group activities, women are contributing enormously in developing the rural economy. Food is available locally which has reduced trips to far away markets. And as a result there are improved social relations amongst members due to joint business and common interests.

Source: Ramatu Sali personal communication 2008

5.4 Radio for Distance Learning

For isolated, little serviced and mobile communities radio has proved to be an important way of accessing information and in some cases education materials. As described in Box 5.12 above radio has proved vital for the distance learning programmes initiated in Mongolia. In Nigeria too radio is proving a successful means of providing education for mobile pastoralists (see Box 5.17). Further it has been shown that electrification can improve women's illiteracy and access to information through television and radio (Panjwani 2005).

Box 5.17 Interactive Radio Instruction in Nigeria

Dr. Nafisatu Muhammad – the Deputy Chair of the African Union Specialist Task Force on the Pastoral Policy Framework for Africa – is convinced that education tailored to suit pastoral needs is the key to articulating and recognizing the contributions of pastoral livelihoods in a national economy. Dr. Nafisatu is also the Executive Secretary for the Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in Nigeria which is charged with the implementation of the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) "aimed at providing and widening access to quality basic education for nomads, boosting literacy and equipping them with skills and competences to enhance their well-being and participation in nation-building." One innovative approach is said to have been the development of the Interactive Radio Instruction which is "aimed at mobilizing, sensitizing and empowering communities through the provision of services for the benefit of nomadic groups. Radio listening groups have been established and function in the same way as mobile learning circles." To date the Commission has established 138 adult literacy centres and 230 registered radio listening groups. It is said to have been "successful in...sensitizing nomadic pastoralists to the value of modern education for their children. Encouraging nomads to enroll in adult literacy programmes, and informing husbandry practices as well as acquainting them with their civic responsibilities, including the formation of cooperative societies and radio listening groups. Dr Muhammad believes "An educated pastoral community in Nigeria will be empowered to articulate and affirm its role in the economy and nutrition of Nigeria, as well as participating in policies to advance the viability of pastoral livelihoods".

Source: Pastoralist Voices, 2008.

5.5 Summary

1. The decision of parents to send children to school within a pastoral context is more often a decision for the good of the household rather than for the good of the individual. It is a way of spreading risk (as a safety net), accessing resources and contacts (expanding the social network) outside the pastoral circuit, and strengthening the pastoral system. This needs to be recognized when trying to influence the attendance of both girls and boys.
2. Women play an important role as educators both in and outside the household. Not only do they spend the majority of time with children in their early years and therefore greatly influence their learning, but also women have great indigenous knowledge on livestock, natural resources etc. Often this knowledge is not given adequate recognition and value. Recognition of these roles and knowledge can not only improve the knowledge base of projects and their activities, but

also increase women's self-value, esteem and confidence as well as increasing their value and status within society. Where women have felt confidence in their knowledge they have defended it, even when questioned by outsiders.

3. Before education interventions are planned or designed a careful and thorough needs assessment of the potential learners/students and their contexts should be carried out. Any learning and education programmes designed should reflect and be rooted in the local cultural, socio-economic and political environments.
4. Improved access to education and knowledge is said to improve the confidence and status of women and girls, whilst improving household health, nutrition and economic security. Support for formal education is a key area of NGOs, particularly indigenous NGOs, and testimonies from several girls suggest that they have realized many benefits whilst remaining committed to their roots illustrated through their return to their communities where they live and work. Further examples have been highlighted where girls have fought to remain in school.
5. Development actors are increasingly recognizing that formal education may only offer the means and benefits for a small number of pastoralists who are able to access and use it. However for many not only is it unattainable, but also for many it is unsuitable. As a result effort is being placed in making schools and the lessons taught more accessible and suitable through such as the provision of mobile schools, boarding schools, community facilitators, and a reformed curriculum.
6. It has been shown that providing education to pastoralist students is more successful if this is done by pastoralists themselves i.e. teachers with a nomadic background as they can have more understanding and sympathy for the students and their way of life. Additionally if they are trusted people from a community parents are more likely to allow their children to attend school. Parents prefer to be able to have a degree of supervision over their children whilst at school, particularly their daughters, so where this is facilitated parents are happier to allow them to attend. It may take longer to complete formal educational milestones due to the transient nature of pastoralists, so students may have to attend classes for an extra year or two and there is the need for extra teachers. Education provision in the local language is advantageous.
7. NGO support for community 'mobilisers' or 'facilitators' has proved successful in fostering the attendance of girls in particular at school by gaining trust in communities, ensuring a safe schooling environment and highlighting the value and benefits of sending children (girls) to school. They have been able to influence other social change and attitudes including to early marriage.
8. NGOs are also supporting the development of more 'appropriate' curriculums for pastoral students. This includes ensuring that textbooks are not reflecting negative 'stereotypical' roles and include references and illustrations relevant to pastoral societies. Curriculums are being designed to be more useful to pastoralists, more practical and appropriate for both girls and boys. Subjects include health and environmental conservation. Such programmes have shown that girls are able to attend school but also able to continue contributing to pastoral systems and livelihoods: this is proving important in encouraging more parents to send their children.
9. Some suggest that formal education itself does not provide pastoralists with the skills and education that they really need. Instead these needs can be fulfilled by informal education, as a replacement or a supplement. Non-formal education has proved particularly useful for providing adults who had not received schooling previously, in obtaining the necessary skills for such as livelihood planning, business development, health and nutrition promotion and NRM. Tools such as radio broadcasts and adult learning techniques have been used. Radio is particularly useful for increasing the reach of the programme.
10. A particularly successful non-formal education programme has proved to be REFLECT. This programme includes amongst other things an emphasis on women empowering themselves through improving their knowledge on issues prioritized by themselves, and building up skills they themselves decide would be useful. Such issues might include women's rights and relevant legislation, enterprise development and how better to participate in development processes. As a result women's status, self-esteem, and participation in decision making has increased, women's groups have been strengthened and relations both within communities and with other communities have improved.
11. It should be recognized that when pastoral girls (and boys) attend school it is likely that this will increase the labour demand of other household members as they will have to take on the extra work that the girls or boys no longer have time for.
12. Education programmes, particularly those for pastoralists need to be grounded within the local context and local 'ownership' encouraged. Support must be given by local communities and they should be encouraged to take part in the design of education programmes as well as take an interest in their children's lessons and activities. It has been shown that when community members fully value an education system and their child's education they are more likely to provide resources and their own time freely for school activities including parent-teacher committees.

6.0 ENTITLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES: INCOME GENERATION

Economic empowerment is said to be a priority for pastoral women – “developing independent (that is, not controlled by men) access to income so as to ensure security of their household” (Dorothy Hodgson personal communication 2008). Pastoral women have developed and entered into a range of income generation activities that are complementing livestock-based strategies. However the challenges of starting and maintaining a business in pastoral areas is challenging, let alone further developing it and ensuring growth. It is not clear to what degree involvement in income generation leads to women’s empowerment (economic and social): are they able to hold onto incomes raised and if so does this have an impact on their status and participation in the community. These points will be discussed in more detail below and examples given of where and how development actors have been supporting women in their endeavours.

6.1 Women as Income Generators

The success of pastoralism as a production strategy has been heavily dependent on women’s diverse economic roles as traders (Hodgson 2000b). As pressure has increased on pastoral societies and economies to become more diversified as livelihoods based on livestock become ever more challenging, women in particular have taken up more income generating activities (Beaman 1983). As Sikar and Hodgson (2006: 37) describe for the Tanzania Maasai, “pastoralist women themselves are desperately seeking ways to earn their own income, including dairy projects, goat businesses, and producing beadwork crafts for the tourist market. As one woman explained:

We can no longer depend on our husbands, we must support ourselves.

Income diversification as a risk strategy is often taken to imply a trade-off between a higher total income involving greater probability of income failure, and a lower total income for greater income security. (Ellis 2000). For example, women need to ensure that they have a certain amount of money to hand to feed the family and therefore may be happier to have a small but more secure income. Men however may be able to take more risks and are keen to see larger returns for their input: livestock sales for example. As described below this will have an impact on which income generation activities women chose to get involved in.

In many cases women may face greater difficulties than men in setting up pastoral enterprises. Women are likely to be less familiar with modern markets and powerless to influence them. They can be hampered by cultural norms, lack of mobility and access to information on new technology and market variations. Unlike their husbands, they are rarely given training in modern small-business management or help with dealing with exploitative middlemen or transporters (IFAD undated; Nduma et al 2000; Gullick 1999; Flintan 2007b). As Nduma et al (2000) suggest for the Rendille of Kenya, though women are increasingly educated the education is often not the right one for helping them increase their income generation activities.

A high percentage of low-income women lack the skills, ideas, or ability to innovate and to respond to threats in the marketplace. Low income women micro-entrepreneurs tend to work in the same kind of businesses such as commodity trading or food kiosks, which can saturate markets. These businesses require low capital and are familiar therefore the risk to entering into them is low. When one business folds they often begin another that requires similar inputs, but in a different sector (Haight 2005).

Indeed it is rare that a micro-enterprise particularly one started by women grows to anything more than a small business and very few small businesses grow into medium or large ones. Their lack of mobility, coupled with their lack of ability to secure proper operating premises means they are often home-based and this prevents them from seeking out markets, information on better economic opportunities, and business assistance. In addition, women tend to have meagre financial and human capital at their disposal. Women are largely deprived of property ownership and consequently are not able to offer the collateral required to access bank loans (Stevenson and St-Onge. 2005).

However despite the challenges that women face it is often the case that pastoral women’s enterprise groups have been more successful than men’s (see for example in northern Kenya – Global Drylands Imperative 2003). And as Box 6.1 shows women have taken up a variety of income generation activities.

Box 6.1: Examples of Pastoral Women's Income Generation Activities

The Bedouin of coastal Egypt have experienced the ups and downs of tourism. Growth in the 1980-90s was severely curtailed by recent political events and conflicts with the country's neighbours. Having become increasingly sedentarised their reliance on tourism proved risky, and now as numbers of tourists have dropped, the household is turning to women and their bead making to increase income and support household needs (Gardner 2003).

In the mineral rich area of Simanjiro area, the Massai *moran* (warriors) have joined the mining business mostly as middlemen. Women have moved to mining centers like Mererani to set up small business such as foodstuff vending, restaurants and guesthouses. Other women have moved to urban centers to sell traditional medicine or work as housemaids (Bee et al 2000).

Belonging to dairy cooperatives in Gujrat, India has assisted women in ensuring a more efficient business, through more timely delivery of milk and collection of payments. This has helped to raise their socio-economic status. For cows to produce milk an adequate water supply is needed: the greener the fodder they are given the greater the fat content of the milk. Women need to decide whether to invest in fodder or not – and many of them do to ensure a higher quality and quantity of milk and therefore a greater income. The women reported that the money raised is being used for household expenses as well as for children's medical and school fees. The majority of women (60%) reported that male members of the family now have to approach the female custodian for money for their personal or other use (Upadhyay 2004).

With education for girls, Somali women increasingly join the work force, which in urban areas has reversed their dependence on men. Many well-off women participate in family decision-making. Acceptance of such participation by society is tilting the balance in their favour and they are increasingly breadwinners for the family while still managing the domestic scene (Kandagor 2005: 16).

Analysis of who sells wild vegetables outside Mkomazi Reserve, Kenya showed a predominance of women and especially school age girls. 36% of the vendors were children. 26% were women of 50 years of age and above. Children used earnings to buy school materials. Middle aged women vendors (though few) earn more from wild vegetables. Most of these were selling *Zanthoxylum* powder which proved increasingly difficult to collect as the drought of 1996-7 ran and wildlife congregated closer to settlements (Hildegarda et al 1999:543).

In Europe too, women are showing their strength in taking over family livestock-based businesses (see Box 6.2).

Box 6.2 Taking Over the Family Business

The Causse de Blandas is a calcareous high plateau in southern France, with a steppe like vegetation. It has been a pastoral regional for several thousands of years. For European standards the Causse de Blandas is considered a less favoured area (LFA) in agricultural respect. That implies that only very extensive livestock keeping is possible, with some cereal fields in the most favourable areas.

Christelle Durand was brought up as one of two daughters on a farm in the Causse. Her parents were breeding cattle of the local breed (Aubrac, which comes from the very close Lozère). She decided that she would work on the farm with her parents and one day take it over. She had always helped her parents on the farm and went to agricultural school. In the early 1990s she thought to diversify their farming system somewhat and invested in a herd of goats. She has been producing the local goats' cheese (Pélardon) until this year and used to deliver the cheese to her clients (mainly restaurants and a few shops) twice a week. Her mother was helping with the cheese production until last year; then she had to stop because of health problems. Christelle then decided to give up the production of cheese and now sells the milk to a regional cheese factory also producing Pélardon. Christelle is married and has two children of school age. One day, she will take over the family farm with her husband. At the moment, the farm allows for her parents, her own family and one employee to make a living.

Source: Jean-Pierre Biber, personal communication 2008

Further Samburu women have been seen to reconfigure the terms of development itself (for example by translating their cash-earning activities from individual entrepreneurial initiatives to collective community development such as trading, and back again) and these are more accurate and expedient to the changing needs of Samburu pastoralists than the interpretations Western development planners have in mind (Straight 2000).

6.1.1 Handicrafts

Both men and women make handicrafts. For example in Namibia "wood carving appears to be the domain of men" while "weaving and pottery is carried out almost exclusively by women" (Suich and Murphy 2002:3). Similarly in Ethiopia men carry out wood carving of such as pots and furniture and women dominate crafts (mats and baskets for example) made from palm and grass (see Box 6.3). However both men and women can carry out weaving and pottery. Rather weaving which mainly takes place in highland areas is divided more by religion than gender norms, and pottery tends to be carried out by certain (marginalised) ethnic groups.

Box 6.3 Craft Division in Afar

In Afar men make furniture, bracelets, knives, milking bowls, sandals and spoons with prices ranging from 5-10 Birr for a bracelet to 100-350 for a hunting knife. Women make baskets, brooms, goatskin storage bags, fans, milking vessels, necklaces, sleeping mats. Prices range from 2-5 Birr for a broom or fan, to 70-100 for a goatskin water container.

Source: IIRR 2004

Trade in traditional handicrafts can generate income for highly vulnerable rural women providing a safety net and helping reduce poverty (Pereira et al 2005). The prices of handicrafts are relatively stable, unlike those of livestock and farm produce. It may not be just the cash earnings that matters to the crafter, but what those earnings mean – such as the potential for craft income to improve access to resources such as food, credit, healthcare, education and investments; the risks and time involved in the enterprise; the nature of the work and the degree of dependence or empowerment (Suich and Murphy 2002:7). It is often the case that women tend to control the sale and distribution of handicrafts and have full rights to their income (IIRR 2004).

Handicrafts can be made when women (and men) have the time. The raw materials (hides, skins, grasses, leaves, wood, rocks) are found locally. Many of these materials are affected little by drought. Pastoralists can make handicrafts all year round though some are only made during times of stress and others may be restricted to drier seasons – palm leaf for example can be damaged during heavy rainy seasons. Handicraft-making skills are easily learned and passed on. Skilled artisans willingly teach clan members who wish to learn the trade (Flintan 2007b).

Many handicrafts are light and durable. They require only simple tools that pastoralists can take with them easily when they move with their herds. Many handicrafts can be transported easily. Though returns can be small, the flexibility of the product and its other advantages still make it a worthwhile investment. However many households do not feel their investment in these activities can cover livelihood requirements completely and thus divide their time between crafting and other activities (Makhado and Kepe 2006; IIRR 2004).

Handicrafts find their roots in local culture and tradition. Traditional items are culturally important, and will continue to be made for functional use in the homes of rural people and sold to urban dwellers who want to maintain links to their rural customs (Pereira et al 2005). Further as Muhammed (2002: 13) describes, during famine times in Darfur the production of handicrafts by the women resulted in “the invention of beauty in desperate times [as] an affirmation of life, an act of self-actualization and empowerment. To fight the aftermath of famine, women artists depicted patterns and symbols in their baskets to signify the cruelty of the times of hardship; it was a self-realization in conquering hunger, destitution and an expression of a hope for a better life”.

Handicraft businesses however tend to stay small. There are a number of constraints and challenges to their development. Women (and men) lack the skills and entrepreneurship to build up handicraft businesses, as they tend to be started by those who lack skills to start other businesses. They may be illiterate, poorly organised and lack experience. They can lack basic education, accounting and computing skills to support business management including finances, to produce advertisements and leaflets, and to maintain linkages with markets/buyers through such as phone or email (if communication is available to them) (Flintan 2007b). NGOs can help women to better organise themselves and market the handicrafts (see Box 6.4).

Box 6.4 Assisting Women to Make and Market Handicrafts in Ethiopia

Pastoralist women in Elidaar, in the north of the Afar region Ethiopia, are generating income from the sale of handicrafts processed out of wild palm leaf or ‘aunga’ used for roofing or sleeping mats. The palm is also used for food and as medication for joint pain. The making of mats from aunga has been a traditional day-to-day activity for Afar women. Now, through a capacity building programme provided by a local NGO, APDA, the women have organised themselves into groups so that they can process, dye as well as decorate and sell palm tree leaves to the local market. Women buy a bundle of unprocessed palms for six Ethiopian Birr and sell for ten Birr (approximately USD 1.5). They have plans to develop this market and even to sell to tourists in Ethiopia’s capital, Addis Ababa. This will be extremely challenging as transport and communication linkages are very poor and the women lack the necessary knowledge and skills to market the goods. Some training and exchange of skills has been provided by women from neighbouring Djibouti and local NGOs will continue to assist them. The women’s husbands support them in this activity and help them harvest and carry the palms. These palm trees are found on communal land and are currently being harvested sustainably, however it is likely that they would benefit from a community-led monitoring system too.

Source: UNCCD 2007

Often handicraft makers will copy others and what they are selling, rather than try out something new: they would rather go for a sale (competing with their peers) rather than risk no sale at all with a new product. Other constraints include not having a central place where the women (or men) can meet, price and display products, and a lack of money to advertise the products such as a sign outside the centre and/or a simple leaflet describing products and providing information on the producers and their way of life (Box 6.5).

Box 6.5 Importance of a "Centre" for Bedouin Craftworkers in Egypt

Due to reduced numbers of tourists, which the increasingly sedentarised Bedouin had come to rely on, the household is turning to women and their bead making to provide income for fulfilling household needs. One woman called the opportunity as the "door of wealth". Experience has shown the need to have one centre for the women to come and deliver their bead work, and one person in charge of keeping track of the beads, products, income raised, pricing of the products, liaising with and taking orders from clients, and organising the women to fulfill the orders. A basic education is needed to provide adequate skills to do this: one woman said that through the support of her family she had been able to attend school and now she can teach others. The skills for bead work are passed from mother to daughter. The work is often completed during visits to each other's houses, whilst catching up with news and drinking tea. Exposure of and interest in the Craft Centre helps to motivate women in their work.

Source: Gardner 2003

There can be stiff competition from mass-produced and cheaper goods. Throughout many of the pastoral regions in Africa for example, one can observe the replacement of traditional items such as carrying containers by plastic ones. In general, handicraft producers rarely get assistance from tax relief, and there is a lack of government support in the promotion of handicrafts for local sales or for export. A government may consider that handicrafts show a backwardness and entrenchment in 'the traditional' (Flintan 2007b).

However there are a number of factors that provide 'poor producers' with an advantageous competitive edge over other producers. For example ability to include indigenous knowledge about the resource and about local markets, superior monitoring and protective control over the resources, and as the managers are local people living close to the resources they can access specialist 'socially/environmentally responsible' target markets. If action is directed at enhancing these factors the low-income local crafters' chances of success will be greatly improved. (Pereira et al 2005). Increasingly NGOs are supporting handicraft activities as a way of supplementing pastoral livelihoods (see Box 6.6).

Box 6.6 NGO Support for Handicraft Activities

Jumabu Joldubaeva lives in Tokbai-Talaa, Kyrgyzstan. Jumabu who has a full secondary level education worked for many years as a shepherd's assistant with her husband. Several years ago he became the Imam in the village and heard about a new project Sustainable Livelihoods for Livestock Producing Communities (SLLPC). Jumabu had never worked with anyone from outside of the village before but decided to make contact with the project facilitators when they arrived. She soon got to know the project and received training on income generation possibilities from wool. The training left an unforgettable impression on her and she started to think about the possibility of developing new items and apply new technologies for handicraft production. She joined up with two other women to form a group and took part in a number of activities including training, study tours and working with an international consultant to develop new products and develop a catalogue. They have already sold products to customers in Europe and made a profit. People throughout the village now recognize the members of the handicraft group and there is no *Rayan* fair that takes place without Jumabu's products.

Source: Ubaidillaeva undated

6.1.2 Tourism

Many pastoral areas are key destinations for tourists due to their high wildlife numbers, 'open' landscapes and strong 'traditional' cultures. As a result there could be a number of opportunities for pastoralists to benefit from tourism if the right conditions exist and if tour operators are prepared to ensure that communities benefit as well as themselves.

Pastoralists can benefit from tourism both directly and indirectly. Directly pastoralists can act as guides, cooks, security guards (usually the men) or cleaners (women). Tourists want to purchase handicrafts and other pastoral artefacts, as well as watch 'traditional' dances or visit a 'traditional' village. The taking of photographs can also prove highly lucrative particularly within groups that wear decorated dress, jewellery and the like. The Maasai for example are involved in cultural and ecological tourism around their bomas (homesteads) where young people perform traditional dances for the tourists. Groups of women have established cultural bomas where they sell a variety of articles and hand made local crafts (Bee et al 2005).

Indirectly it is more difficult to benefit from tourism. However there are a number of schemes where a tourist venture or a protected area that is controlled by either commercial or government interests, share their revenues with pastoralists who are affected. An example where this might be the case would be where restrictions are placed on the pastoralists and their activities, and in order to compensate them a revenue share is provided to them. This kind of scheme is very difficult to implement, not least in identifying exactly who should receive benefits and to what amount. Gamba (2005) for example describes the problems found in trying to implement 'ecotourism' in Kajiado District of Kenya. Additionally there are always conflicts between conserving the wildlife and resources and providing an acceptable attraction for tourists, and the development of local communities and how they wish to lead their lives.

Some suggest that tourism can have a very negative impact on culture. Tourism encourages "abandoned ethnographic tropes to produce industrial parks, living historical villages, and enactments..." (Bruner and Krishenblatt-Gimblett 1994: 435). Disruption to established activity patterns, anti-social behaviour, crime and over-crowding caused by tourism development can also have a negative impact on local lifestyles and the quality of life of both indigenous and non-indigenous communities (Gamba 2005). In some instances prostitution has grown (Omondi 2003).

6.1.3 Employment

It is not only tourism that can provide jobs for pastoralists. More are seeking wage employment in towns and urban areas. For men such jobs can be as security guards and watchmen. The Maasai for example also perform other minor activities such as building tents, looking after livestock and plaiting *rasta*-hair styles. In a few cases some Maasai girls also seek employment as housemaids. Nonetheless, wage employment demands certain levels of education, skills and experiences, which most pastoralists do not possess. Because of this, most are employed in lesser paying jobs (Bee et al 2005).

However socially, this form of employment may not be desirable as most of those who go to towns leave behind their families to be looked after by other members of their kin. Since there is a general decrease in income and an increase in poverty, sustaining large families will be a difficult task if not impossible. Women may then engage themselves in socially undesirable activities such as prostitution (ibid). Many NGOs also encourage some employment of pastoralists through interventions such as supporting Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs). However though it is common for both men and women to be trained it has been found that it is usually the men who take the jobs.

6.2 Designing Income Generation Projects

It is important to carry out a good analysis prior to supporting an income generation activity. This should include amongst others: the product and current buying patterns, markets, actors, constraints and opportunities (see for example GL-CRSP PARIMA's study in milk purchasing and marketing in Moyale, Kenya: Wayua et al. 2007).

Exposure to new ideas, innovations, alternatives and options can open up people to different income generation alternatives. Learning visits and study tours can help people understand a situation beyond their own community and learn from the experiences of others. For example Desta et al (2006) describe how the aspirations of communities in Borana had been raised by exposure of the Ethiopians to the success of well organised pastoral women's groups from northern Kenya and this has fuelled innovative ideas. GL-CRSP Parima has taken Borana women to other parts of Ethiopia to share their own knowledge and experiences of business development and credit and savings schemes.

Box 6.7 Mentoring Scheme Shares Knowledge and Experiences

GL-CRSP PARIMA have been supporting a 'mentoring scheme' with CARE Awash and local government (Cooperative Promotion Bureau). Six women from Borana travelled to and stayed with women/households in Kerreyu to teach them about their credit and savings experiences and their implementation. They stayed for two days and two nights during which time they discussed and exchanged experiences, many of the discussions happening at night when the women had more time to sit and talk. At one point 28 women were in a meeting and the husband of one of the Kerreyu women came to take her home. The women came out in force and refused to let the woman go until she had finished the meeting, sending the husband home to do the chores himself. The 'mentors' from Borana also learnt from the Kerreyu women, both groups highly valuing the experience. As one Kerreyu woman said: all aspects of life were discussed and shared including history and social aspects. Even some women discovered that they were related.

Source: Dadi Amosha, personal communication 2007

Value chain analysis and development offers a useful tool for income generation development (see Box 6.8). Recently SOS Sahel Ethiopia has established a project focusing on women's empowerment through value chain development amongst the pastoralists of Borana, Ethiopia.

Box 6.8 Value Chain Development

The value chain approach is a central tool to improving market-based approaches. Experience has shown that the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, outgrowers and wild harvesters can be improved through the development of value chains systems, business capacity, technical, marketing, certification and management skills, of environmentally and socially beneficial agricultural and natural products enterprises. A number of different approaches include:

- Selecting sub-sectors (this would include sub-sector selection and mapping, e.g., gum, gum resins and honey);
- Analysis of value chains for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints to competitiveness;
- Engaging key stakeholders or 'change agents' in the value chain most likely to buy into the program design;
- Assisting the stakeholders to identify leverage points and decisions and develop flexible business plans to ensure sustainable value chains; and
- Advocacy, financial and technical support/ training to help build capacity and encourage participation by all members of pastoralist community.

Source: KIT, Faida MaLi and IIRR 2006

The majority of handicrafts are made from natural resources. Though some handicrafts use only parts of a plant or tree such as palm leaves, others utilise the whole of the living tree or enough of it to cause damage. Unless this is sustainably managed the resource can easily be overexploited and eventually be destroyed. Some handicrafts are made from slow-maturing trees that are disappearing fast. As such it is likely to be necessary to introduce or support resource monitoring schemes and strengthen resource property and access regimes. An example of a community based monitoring scheme can be found in Namibia (see Flintan 2001 and Box 7.9).

Handicraft production needs to keep up with new trends and adapting products to changing lifestyles. For example, there is going to be a greater need for household goods as pastoralists become more settled and travel around less. Further businesses need to keep up with new markets. For example tourism in many developing countries has increased greatly over the last ten years and with it a demand for the purchasing of cultural goods. As long as the security situation in the country remains calm and other 'external' factors remain positive, then this market will only increase (Flintan 2007b).

6.3 Credit and Savings

For pastoralists savings and credit institutions can have two major benefits. They stabilise income and consumption, not only minimising sale of livestock during drought when prices are low but also savings allow pastoralists to have more regular income and consumption patterns. They enable people to diversify income sources and reduce vulnerability to future shocks (Smith et al 2001; Gamba 2005). Chakravarty-Kaul (2008) provides an example of credit provision to a cheese making business in Armenia, provided by IFAD: the credit saved the business, local jobs and stimulated the local economy.

However there are many impediments and challenges to providing credit in pastoral areas (described in more detail in Flintan 2007b; Gamba 2005; Smith et al 2001) and not enough is done to adapt to the needs of pastoralists even in countries with more experience. For example IFAD (2007 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008) suggests that more investment could be made in mobile banking, the development of suitable loan conditions, provision of a repayment holiday, and the acceptance of livestock as collateral.

In general, men have easier access to government provided credit than women. Women are rarely considered creditworthy because they do not have access to collateral even if available within the household. For example, women in Kyrgyz Republic are not allowed to use household livestock as collateral unless they belong to a group that is women only – then their husbands will encourage them to do so (Undeland 2008). In addition, often women cannot read and write, and are not used to frequent governmental or official offices without their husband's consent and being accompanied.

Microcredit programmes, many targeting women and claiming to empower them, have become extremely popular among donors and NGOs in recent years. "The change in development policies from the focus on women's active role in production as a means to more efficient development, to the approach of women's empowerment through women organizing for self-reliance, has also meant a change in policies for the enhancement of women's economic role" (Oxaal 1997:12). The focus has changed from providing grants to financial assistance through the establishment of credit schemes many of which are based on credit providers such as the Grameen Bank (see Box 6.9).

Box 6.9 The Grameen Bank, Bangladesh

The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh reduced the transaction costs of lending to the poor by adopting group-based lending with peer pressure to monitor and enforce contracts. It has reached 2 million households in more than half the villages in Bangladesh with approximately 50% of loans featuring livestock. The repayment rate exceeds 95%.

Source: Quereshi et al 1996.

Usually it is the case that women have proved to be excellent borrowers with high and timely returns, and effective use of the loans. For example in Lebanon USD500 loans were distributed to 500 rural women. A study was carried out prior to two credit units being established – one for agricultural credit and one for women. The credit units developed the criteria and procedures for selection of borrowers and the terms of the loans following the survey. A commercial bank served as the financial intermediary for the project but did not risk any of its own funds. The bank has also been the depository for the credit funds. Generally the beneficiaries were required to provide 25% deposit and offer collateral and two guarantors. The loans were repayable in regular instalments (of USD 98 every six months) over a three year period at an interest rate of 9.5%. Importantly loans provided to women were not linked to a specific type of economic activity. In the case of livestock loans the repayments were exceptionally low, whilst in the case of the women's programme, loan repayments have been exemplary. 84% of those paid to individuals have been paid back, and 68% of those provided to women's cooperatives. The loans were mostly used for food processing including making fruit preserves, syrups, honey and prepared sauces. Several factors were thought to explain the high repayment rates:

- Activities were of interest to beneficiaries;
- Adequate pre-training on loan management was provided by a Rural Women's Unit who effectively 'adopted' the women who had taken loans;
- A supportive environment was built based on trust between the beneficiaries and the extension agents;
- There was a constant monitoring of beneficiaries' activities by the extension agents; and
- There were healthy profits made from the activities. For example eggplant pickles made a profit of 500%, grape vinegar 257%, and cheese 100%. The greatest problem was with marketing which the women had to do themselves.

As a result of the high payment rates, the lending unit was able to establish a revolving fund that provided an extra 459 loans. Finally it should be noted that only 2% of the projects based costs were allocated to these activities: their success therefore provides extremely good value for money (IFAD 2004) (see Box 6.10).

Box 6.10 Successful Small-Scale Livestock Development in Lebanon

Nayfeh is the wife of a small farmer who received a heifer from the project and also worked in a plastics factory. Two years ago her husband became bed ridden and his salary reduced to half. Nayfeh took over the care of the heifer. She sold the milk to people in the village and later joined a Rural Women Cooperative to learn different food processing techniques and join their credit and savings scheme. As a result, she began making cheese and yoghurt and sold it alongside the milk. Gradually she bought more cows and renovated an annex of their house and turned it into a little store where she now sells her products.

Source: IFAD 2004

However there may be problems in ascertaining who actually has control over credit, as research has shown that a significant proportion of women's loans were in fact controlled by male relatives (Goetz and Gupta 1996). Further it is suggested that high repayment rates of loans by women cannot be taken as clear evidence that women have made effective loan investments, or that they have been empowered through the loan. Where men take control of loans and invest them badly, women's position may even be worsened, as women may be forced to mobilise repayment funds from resources which would otherwise be used for consumption or savings. "Improving women's access to credit is a positive step, but is by no means enough to secure their 'economic empowerment'" (Oxaal 1997:12).

In recent years loans have increased quite substantially and informal groups have become cooperatives. NGOs can address constraints through specialised techniques but frequently suffer from lack of sustainability because of their welfare orientation, small scale, low absorptive capacity, and lack of exposure to best practices of micro and small-medium enterprise finance (Gamba 2005). As such the local situation has to be well analysed to ensure that those who borrow the money are able to control its expenditure and be responsible for and are capable of ensuring its repayment (Bravo-Baumann 2000). Often structural factors that maintain the economic marginalisation of the poor can be overlooked. Many micro-credit schemes can be viewed as supporting a narrowly individualistic definition of empowerment, ignoring the collective dimensions. By offering credit, women's lack of access to capital is treated as a technical problem which outsiders can identify and tackle without actually committing to deeper structural transformations (Oxaal 1997).

"More attention needs to be paid to the quality of activities financed by loans, to ascertain if they are really empowering women" (Oxaal 1997: 13): women should not be viewed as passive recipients of a service. This requires thinking through all aspects of programme implementation. Emphasis on savings programmes (where women build up their own resources) linked to credit provision and strategies for ensuring that women can access mainstream financial institutions are also important if credit programmes are to be 'empowering' (ibid).

6.4 Mitigating Negative Impacts of Income Generation

Women's experience of participation in rural development programmes can be negative, because demands on women's labour may be intensified without finding substitutes for women's reproductive work at home. Women's potential for acquiring skills, experiencing the 'public' world, joining job-based opportunities and gaining formal sector employment are all limited by programmes which encourage home-based income generating activities (Goetz and Gupta 1996; Oxaal 1997).

Sometimes women's most successful enterprises are those based on the selling of goods that have known negative social impacts including alcohol and *quat* (in Ethiopia) or *miraa* (Kenya and Tanzania) (leaves of *Catha Edulis* - a plant that when chewed provides a mild stimulant that encourages the user to sit around for several hours chewing and can become mentally if not physically dependent). Care is needed to ensure that negative impacts are understood, discussed, accepted as a trade-off, and/or addressed or mitigated. This requires constant monitoring and room for discussion and reflection. A programme or project needs to offer enough flexibility to allow changes in direction, activities and adaptation to new circumstances and problems arising.

6.5 Controlling Money Raised

However though women are involved in and control income generation activities it may be the case that they are not able to maintain control over their earnings. As Joekes and Pointing (1991) suggest, women tend to be drawn into the labour market, though there is no evidence to suggest they have increased control over the products of their labour. Indeed, once again in relation to milk, some Gabra husbands in Borana are attempting to stop their wives marketing the milk, by moving further away from the towns. The findings of McPeak and Doss (2006) suggest that this is because the husbands are not comfortable with their wives gaining control over income. Further milk for consumption was reduced and thirdly men felt uncomfortable with their wives being alone in the town fearing that they might develop relationships with men there.

Others argue that women are able to control the money: "income earning activities of women provides them the opportunity to control and make choices on the use of the money..." more often than not used "to serve the function of the wellbeing of women and their families" (Brockington 2001: 307-308; 326). However Brockington also suggests that even with milk, though women control the product itself, the control over the income may be "continually negotiated and contested" (Brockington 2001:310).

In Burundi, it is suggested that women have come up with a number of strategies for maintaining control over household financial resources. For example women sell their goods at a higher price than they disclose to their husbands and keep the difference for family emergencies (Fitzgibbon 1996c). And in Asia it seems to be more likely for women to control household finances. The Raika

women of Rajasthan, India for example have been described as “family finance ministers” who manage and understand money on a daily basis. “Since the men are usually grazing the herds during the day, it is the women who interact with the traders and middlemen who come to purchase animals” (Köhler-Rollefson 2007:12). And in northern Gujrat more than 90% of women gain an income from milk sales. The majority of women (60%) reported that male members of the family have to approach the female custodian for money for their personal use or other. This has “increased their visibility in terms of contribution of money and hence improved their bargaining power and therefore their social status both within the family and outside it” (Upadhyay 2004 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

If a woman is able to keep her earnings, though the income may be small, it may be the only means by which she can obtain cash that she has control over. Indeed, it is said that men are more likely to respect women if they are raising monies that form a significant part of the household income (ABRDP 1999). NTFPs (non-timber forest products) in particular have been found to represent an important source of income and employment particularly for women, encouraging increased production and harvesting for local trade (Marshall and Streckenberg, 2002).

However, even if women can control their income this might not always be to their advantage. In East Africa it has been shown that where a man may consider his wife's income is adequate for household needs, he may withdraw his own contribution. As such it is said that they have only won the ‘freedom to be poor’ (Robertson 1995 in Brockington 2001). As Brockington (ibid) concludes the extent of dependence upon women and the extent of their independence in using their income as they wish is the product of delicate negotiations and power play.

Within pastoral societies there is much pressure to share all one's possessions including income. As Davies (2005:36) describes for the Afar in Ethiopia, “the strength of the sharing culture in Afar also ensures that surplus income is seldom accumulated by the individual”. Obviously this has its advantages and disadvantages.

6.6 Does Access to Money Lead to ‘Empowerment’?

A common perception amongst development actors is that increased access to income leads to women's ‘empowerment’. There are many examples to suggest that women can benefit from income generation activities beyond them being purely a means of raising money (see Box 6.11). Bravo-Baumann (2000) argues that economic factors are the basis for change because with a greater economic independence, self-confidence and possibilities of upward socio-economic movement increase. “Increasing women's income through improved livestock production would, therefore also increase their status” (ibid: 10).

Box 6.11 Economic Success Brings Financial Independence

With the assistance of an IFAD project in a drylands area of Chad, women in the project area have found economic interest groups to be a powerful and effective mechanism to strengthen their financial independence within their families. Some 2,600 women members of 248 economic interest groups have received funds for agricultural and market activities. Their success in accessing credit and literacy classes has translated into successes in goat raising and petty trading. They have also undergone nutritional education training, which has led to the introduction of vegetables in their daily diets, improved their health status and helped decrease child mortality rates. These tangible benefits have prompted women to perceive that they are real beneficiaries of the project. In their own words: *This project has made it possible to be more and more financially independent from our husbands.*

Source: IFAD 2003 in Gurung 2006.

It is suggested that women's involvement in productive activities gives them much greater bargaining power within the household in terms of their input in all aspects of household decision-making, and the normal social hierarchy is challenged. This happens because “First, women who participate in productive activities make measurable contribution to the household income and second, they are more likely to control their assets, while women engaged only in domestic activities do not make any economic contribution to the household and their domestic work is seriously undervalued. A weak bargaining position not only affects a woman's own welfare (i.e., determining what is in their best interest in terms of resources—water, money, time, labor or other materials—at their disposal) at an intra-household level and their fall-back position in community, but also limits their access to and control over resources”(Upadhyay 2004).

Field experience of FAO suggests that an increasing number of households in drylands are relying less on agricultural activities for income and more on off-farm employment (as well as on remittances from migrant labour). Numerous projects have promoted income-generating activities for women as a source of food security, providing them with management and organizational skills and “empowering them through increased revenues and self-esteem. As a result women are participating more in decision-making process and project activities at the community level” (FAO 2003: 17). Further a study in China showed how women valued a livestock fattening development project not only for its economic benefits, but also for giving women choice and power of household activities; security of income; less physical effort needed than other alternatives such as crop production; and that they could keep their husbands at home rather than seeing them take the livestock on long migrations (IFAD 1995 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Other research indicates that a single woman who becomes a member of CARE supported Village Savings and Loans groups gains increased community respect due, to among other things her improved financial position. They have increased self-esteem, confidence and participate more in social networks as a result of their membership in the group (Spadacini undated). And amongst the Dassanetch of Ethiopia for example, it is said that a woman's status increases with economic situation (Sagawa 2006).

There are also knock-on impacts of women having money. For example in India it was shown that as women's savings became more important, there was a greater female influence on decision making, with the result that more girls were sent to school. In Mongolia women who have more money invest more in NRM (see Box 6.12). And women in the Kyrgyz Republic linked their feeling of empowerment in the household with active participation in livestock keeping, earning income from it and the fact that it is now they who are in charge of distributing and allocating family funds (Undeland 2008).

Box 6.12 Investing in NRM

In Mongolia women attended a training course in felt-making and received wool processing equipment through a project supported by IDRC. The women now make clothes and other handicrafts with the felt for their own use and to sell. This has meant that women now have their 'own' money, which has allowed them to support women's participation in natural resource management.

Source: IDRC 2003.

A study of a micro-credit programmes in India used a set of indicators (described in Box 6.13) to identify whether women were empowered by the programmes (funded by Grameen Bank and BRAC – Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee). The study concluded that the longer that a woman is a member of the schemes, then the more likely she is to be empowered according to these composite indicators (Hashemi et al 1996). Another study using 'knowledge of accounting' as the indicator of empowerment concluded that the credit programmes which are most successful in empowering women are those which encourage and enable women to participate in the activity funded by the loan (Ackerley 1996).

Box 6.13 Programme Related Indicators of Empowerment

Hashemi et al 1996 undertook research in India to measure the effects of micro-credit programmes on the empowerment of women. They used a model based on eight indicators of empowerment:

- mobility;
- economic security;
- ability to make small purchases;
- ability to make larger purchases;
- involvement in major household decisions;
- relative freedom from domination with the family;
- political and legal awareness; and
- involvement in political campaigning and protests.

These were assessed by questions, for example to indicate empowerment by mobility the respondent was asked if she had ever gone to market, medical facility, movies, or outside the village, and then given a point if she had gone there alone. For economic security the respondent was given one point if she owned her house or homestead land, or any productive assets or savings, and an additional point if she used her savings for business or money lending. For political and legal awareness, points were given for example for knowing the names of government officials and for knowing the law governing inheritance. Using questions like these in each of the eight categories, a composite empowerment indicator was produced. The more points a respondent scored the more empowered she was deemed to be.

Source: Oxaal 1997

6.7 Commercialisation

Commercialisation tends to open up opportunities for different groups of people. However those who have power previously tend to be in a better position to exploit the situation and to turn it to their greater advantage. A number of complexly interrelated factors influence whether commercialisation will benefit or harm women's (and indeed men's) socio-economic status and access to assets. These vary spatially, over time and socio-economic development, and at different stages of a woman's life. Examples from India have shown that women have learned to keep their own personal accounts and the pattern of income management in female-managed households is quite different from male ones. But generally women's control over livestock resources tends to occur with widowhood and to increase with age (Bravo-Baumann 2000). It is suggested that once women have invested money or energy into an initiative they are loath to abandon it, hoping they will receive some return in the future (Watson 2005).

Indeed, increased monetary-based commercialization can have negative impacts. As Buhl and Homewood (2000) suggest: the expansion of capitalist markets and the subsequent commodification of pastoralist resources have had ambivalent effects – while some women lost rights to cattle others have gained new sources of income from such as milk sales. As Elizabeth Kharono, director of the Centre for Land Economy and Rights in Uganda says: "...patriarchy and capitalism are known to be good bed-fellows and are a challenge to the advancement of women even in societies which might consider themselves developed!" (Kharono 2008).

Indeed the poor, and particularly women, are more likely to rely on informal means of exchange such as bartering, and therefore can be marginalised by commercial transactions (particularly large ones) that are often seen to be more the domain of men. As the distribution of pastoral products is increasingly pulled into a monetary-based economy, men tend to take greater control over

assets (particularly those of monetary value), reducing women's independence and access to resources (Talle 1988; Joekes and Pointing 1991; Horowitz and Jowkar 1992; Djedjebi and de Haan, 2001).

In particular, the establishment of milk collection centres and livestock cooperatives has often resulted in men taking control of these operations. Biased development interventions can aggravate this. For example the change from a milk-based to a beef-based strategy has had a similar effect: more emphasis being placed on meat or draught animals rather than high milk producers (Djedjebi and de Haan, 2001). It is suggested that when the income of an activity is greater than a certain culturally defined amount, then men generally take control of its management and disposal. This is not only because men seem themselves as better business managers, but also because they can feel threatened by women's economic empowerment. Bravo-Baumann (2000: 11) suggests "to avoid such a backlash, experience shows that projects must include men and women throughout all negotiations to bring about equitable and sustainable changes. However at the same time efforts must be made to increase the capacity of women so that they are able to confidently negotiate and meet their strategic needs."

Where women are the main processors of natural resource products, the processing technology tends to be rudimentary, returns on labour are relatively low, and the work is often conducted in or near the family residence. Location matters: that is proximity to markets, transport costs and access to extraction zone and/or intensive agriculture. One feature common to many commercialisation programmes for example of NTFPs, is an effort to improve processing technologies for a variety of reasons: to improve quality, to increase locally added value, or to increase or accelerate product supply. Some studies of new technology introductions reveal a pattern whereby men displace women from processing. Even where commercialisation has been targeted at products previously controlled by women, women have failed to retain or gain increased income (Neumann and Hirsch 2000; Campbell 1991).

However, sometimes women may not be as interested in the financial benefits of commercialisation as the social aspects such as social interaction and a chance for exchange of information. In many cases, if their businesses become successful, women owners face the dilemma of either handing over the business to male relatives to prevent conflict between household and business responsibilities or to promote the slow growth of the business in order to retain control (Haight 2005).

6.8 Marketing

A primary constraint to increasing income generation activities and commercialisation is the lack of ability to access markets. This is particularly true for pastoralist areas, which are often isolated, with poor infrastructure and are far from commercial centres. Roads are poor quality and can damage goods in transport. It can be difficult for pastoralists to access adequate materials for proper packing. Despite this many pastoralists have no option but to rely on local markets.

Women may have their mobility restricted by work, cultural norms or lack of access to transport or money to pay for it. Also they may lack access to information about markets that would be suitable, how to access them and how to negotiate prices and favourable terms of sale. Further there is little coordination and/or collaboration to access markets further a field for example organising linkages with traders in the cities, and/or sharing transport. An exception to this is found in Kenya where Maasai women have come together to market milk (Box 6.14)

Box 6.14 Women Working Together to Market Milk

During the rainy season in Kajiado District, Kenya, there is a surplus of milk and to avoid complete wastage the milk is fed to dogs. To prevent this massive wastage Maasai women came together and formed a group called "Ololailai Women Milk Supply Group". The group pools their milk and has it delivered to the Kenya Creameries Company where they receive better prices. Today the group has over 100 women members. The dairy board of Kenya trained the women on milk products management and handling. Additionally the women have learnt basic bookkeeping so they can keep records of how much milk is delivered to KCC. Helen Nkaiseri, one of the local women leaders explains: "This is an action admired by our husbands, our leaders and even the government and the ministry of livestock and we are the only women group supplying a larger amount of milk to KCC. I want our women to know that we can fight poverty, time has come where nothing is for free, you have to wake up do things for ourselves. We must improve our lives and economy as women."

Source: Nkaiseri 2004.

Low-income women in particular tend to hold weak market positions and they can be vulnerable to gender exploitation because they lack economic and social power. An example is women fish traders in Uganda who regularly find themselves subjected to sexual harassment and are forced to provide sexual favours to fishermen in order to gain access to good quality, fresh fish at reasonable cost. However women are not powerless and when working together can force change. For example, in Pakistan the women established tent markets outside their homes, which eventually encouraged the government to allocate space for a weekly bazaar where they could sell their products (Haight 2005).

6.9 Summary

1. Prior to any planning or design of an intervention a full gender analysis of the local context needs to be carried out including what income generation projects are underway already, who is controlling them and how, what are the ideas and priorities of community members, etc. The potential impacts of such projects need to be discussed and planned for, including the mitigation of any negative ones such as increasing women's labour demand and/or their isolation if a home-based enterprise.

2. A full assessment of current and potential markets also needs to be done. As part of this national and regional market structure, policy, prices, services and marketing possibilities should be included in order to determine whether or not a specific livestock-based (or other) income generation activity is economically viable. Gender specific division of work in processing and marketing should also be analysed and activities adapted to the specific society.
3. Value chain development/empowerment provides an excellent framework for such an analysis, as well as the development of activities/interventions, their implementation, monitoring and feedback and adaptation.
4. Once such assessments have been carried out, community members, particularly potential beneficiaries, need to be involved in identifying and choosing which are the most suitable activities/enterprises to develop. Agreement between both men and women (including husbands and wives) should be established at this point in order to try and avoid conflicts later. To do this potential business developers need to understand how markets work, how best to identify an appropriate business, how to develop it etc. As such trainings in business identification and development will be necessary prior to enterprises being planned and designed.
5. Access and proximity to markets is an important factor and will influence to what degree women in particular get involved in income generation activities and how successful they are. It may be the case that younger women get more involved because they have more freedom of movement. Work may also be needed to ensure that women's products are given a central and good selling place, rather than being limited to the outskirts of a market which can be the case. This study has highlighted a number of examples where women have fought for a good and appropriate place to sell their products.
6. Savings and credit stabilize income and consumption for pastoralists, not only minimizing sale of livestock during drought when prices are low but also, savings allow pastoralists to have regular income and consumption patterns. Further they allow people to diversify income and reduce vulnerability to shocks. Women in particular have proved to be excellent borrowers with often high and timely returns. Activities need to be of interest to beneficiaries as well as provide good profits; adequate and appropriate pre-training is required together with follow-up support including monitoring; a good trusting relationship between beneficiaries and extension agents.
7. Some development organizations have supported 'mentors' going from one community with much experience in credit and savings, to another where there is little experience. These local women stay with the community members, teaching them about credit and savings from their experiences and lessons learnt. It proves to be a highly effective forum for information exchange and a good learning process.
8. Care needs to be taken that women are able to control the processes that they are responsible for such as credit and its repayments, and/or income raised. Credit should respond to clients' needs and their social and cultural values. Social behaviour and traditional rules of men and women have to be well considered and credit adapted to their special needs. To ensure that men do not interfere it is important to include them in the planning of activities and gain their support. The contribution that women will make to the household as a whole should be highlighted, rather than individual gain. The provision of credit should not be seen as an end in itself, but rather as a step in a process of continuing economic empowerment. For example strategies should be established on how to build on the credit provided so that women can access mainstream financial institutions rather than relying on NGOs whose support may be short-lived. It has been shown that the longer a woman is a member of a scheme the more 'empowered' she will become.
9. It is often assumed that improving a woman's economic status will lead to her empowerment. Having appraised the documentation of many projects for this study the conclusion is that indeed, improving women's access to income, capital and financial institutions, it provides women with greater economic independence, greater bargaining power, self-confidence, self-esteem and the possibilities of upward socio-economic movement and increased respect. This has meant that they are taking a more central role in both household and community decision making processes, so having their needs, priorities and perspectives heard. Knock-on positive impacts include having more money for education of children and investment in natural resource management activities. However it is necessary for women to have control not only over income but the way that it is spent.
10. There can be dangers of commercialisation in that more powerful players are in a better position to exploit a situation than less powerful players. A number of complex interrelated factors influence whether commercialization will benefit or harm women's (men's) socio-economic status and access to assets. Commercialisation can over-ride and undermine informal means of exchange and transaction, in which women often participate. There can be a conflict between interests, particularly where livestock are concerned. Men are more likely to have the power to push their own agenda and priorities, and take over control of successful enterprises. On the other hand women may be more interested in other aspects of business growth other than financial gain, such as social gain and 'empowerment'. Further once a business has reached a certain level of growth, they may be happy for their husband to play a more central role in it, and for example negotiate with suppliers and traders.

7.0 ENTITLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES: NATURAL RESOURCES

7.1 Women as Natural Resource Users

Women depend heavily on natural resources in pastoral areas for food, water, house building, medicine, animal fodder and the like. Women tend to collect natural resources closer to home, often whilst carrying out other activities, opportunistically, and can be considered to be 'generalists'. In contrast men tend to undertake planned, long-distance, 'collecting trips'. Men are more likely to be 'specialists.' Men tend to be more involved in cultural and commercial activities and less concerned with domestic use. Charcoal making for example tends to be the responsibility of men, though trading can be dominated by women particularly those from nearby towns.

Women can have an intimate relationship with natural resources. For example, Samburu pastoralists make milking bowls out of wood or gourds. "Once made these containers...are regarded almost as human, and their health and vitality is strongly associated with the person who regularly drinks from them" (Straight 2007:14).

Many natural resources, particularly plants, are used as medicines and in rituals. In Tanzania Maasai women know about 300 species of plants that can be used as medicine for both humans and livestock, as insecticides and fumigants, for house building and rituals. Cuts are treated with the sap of certain plants and soups are prepared with various roots and barks depending on the ailment of the patient. Sheep fat mixed with herbs is given to expectant mothers while babies three months old are fed on cow milk with herbs and root extracts to control colic and provide roughage. When a child is about four years old, the mother teaches him/her about poisonous and edible plants (UNCCD 2007). In Namibia perfume is made from plant extracts and widely used by female pastoralists. In Kenya, women are utilizing the aloe plant and with assistance sustainably harvesting and processing for commercialisation (see Box 7.1).

Box 7.1 Reaping the Benefits of Local Plants

Turkana has an abundance of commercial aloe, *aloe turkanensis* and *aloe secundiflora* which have compounds similar to those found in *aloe vera*. Practical Action has been working with people in Turkana to make use of the aloe plant to supplement pastoral livelihoods. A Kenya Aloe Working Group was launched in 2004 to guide the formalisation of aloe production as well as facilitating sustainable harvesting and processing for commercialisation. This paved the way for the Regional Integrated Pastoralists Programme which Practical Action helped to implement the following year, forming groups from different communities. Many of the communities have lost their main assets and livestock due to droughts and conflict. As a result the women have been working together to overcome these problems and make aloe vera production a viable business. Leaves are now sustainably harvested, brought to a makeshift processing centre and through an intricately detailed procedure are made into soaps, shampoo and lotions. There are now 21 aloe plantations in Turkana district and two processing centres. Currently the products are sold locally but there are plans to sell to neighbouring countries.

Source: UNCCD 2007

7.2 Women as Natural Resource Managers

Women play a central role in natural resource management. Pastoral women in particular are intricately interlinked to the environment and are mindful of its needs and variabilities. In Tanzania for example a Maasai woman avoids cutting down live trees and before she cuts a branch from a live tree she has to make a request and give an explanation, for example:

I regret having to dismember your beautiful body, but please allow me to do so because it is the only way my children can survive and at any rate parts of your body have the ability to grow again.

And on sighting an *oreteli* tree, women must never pass it without sheltering under its shade and giving prayers silently to God with blades of grass clutched in their hands. As they finish praying they leave bracelets and other small ornaments as gifts, as a way of establishing a relationship with it (UNCCD 2007).

Women's knowledge is vital for ensuring its sustainable use and the continuation of a pastoral system based on it (see Box 7.2 and 7.3). Traditional knowledge provides social capital and therefore increases women's worth and self-esteem and working together on NRM garners collective action for a common good (Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Box 7.2 Female Sensitivity to the Environment in Jordan

Jordanian female pastoralists are very in tune with the needs of their environment. They take care to graze their goats lightly to protect the sparse vegetative cover and mindful of protecting the desert vegetation due to its healing properties. By tradition, their existence depends upon living with sensitivity to their environment. Bedouin are deeply proud of their hard way of life and trust in the value of their livestock. Bedouin women are famous for their toughness and strength, and the success of the household depends on their skill with the herd, their daily domestic management, and assisting men butchering the meat, the traditional feast and hospitality dish of Jordan, *mensaf*.

Source: UNCCD 2007

Box 7.3 Environmental Managers: the Lotuho Women of Sudan

The Lotuho live in southern Sudan as pastoralists and farmers. As environmental managers the Lotuho women utilise plant species very selectively and will not cut a growing tree for firewood. The Lotuho homestead is always surrounded by a living fence mainly for protection against enemies and wild animals but also to provide firewood during the rainy season. The Lotuho woman is also responsible for the selection and storage of seed for planting in the cropping season. She knows the importance of collecting wild vegetables such as from the Ebongi and Eduti trees without destruction. She also does fishing once a year using a basketlike trap. The fish caught are preserved by smoking and used for food as required. Unfortunately because of the Civil War the Sudanese army, for security reasons, has cleared the once beautiful forests. Any revitalisation of conservation in the area in the future will need to involve the women in planning and implementation. Training programmes, awareness campaigns and information dissemination are all important to empower women to take care of the environment since most of their men are in the frontline at war and those left in the community are mostly young, elderly or disabled.

Source: Wongo 2004

However, due to the pressures on women to provide for their families environmental protection may have to be compromised. For example, poverty has driven many Samburu women to cut mature cedar to sell to men for the new, fashionable wooden houses that have become popular in the last few years (Straight 2007). In the past, institutions existed in pastoral societies that maintained and controlled social, economic and political organisations that played an important role in NRM. In Ethiopia the *Heera* of the Somali, the *Gadaa* of the Borana and the *Finna* of the Afar are some examples. All of these institutions were based on heavily gendered divisions of labour with males dominating public decision making processes (Yacob Arsano 2000). However today such traditional controls and institutions have weakened as 'outsiders' have intervened; social groupings have changed (for example with new migrants); governments have attempted to take over control of resources; and there is less respect for 'tradition' (for example amongst the youth).

Where these institutions still exist, they tend to be managed by the men in the communities, normally the elders. Women gain access through their husbands, brothers and sons, and being a member of the right clan or other socio-economic unit rather than through their own independent right. This can be problematic if the husband has migrated into town to find work for example. Women more often have rights of renewable use (for example harvesting leaves from trees), while men have rights of consumptive use (harvesting the tree itself). Traditional systems of water access control in Tanzania mean that often women have to wait to use a watering hole for domestic use until the men have finished watering livestock (Tukai 2005).

Indeed, where such social institutions are heavily dominated by men they may not prove to be the best vehicle to support women's access, voice and needs. Thus alternatives may need to be found. Where support is given to rejuvenating these institutions it is important to fully understand them and their impact on all resource users: without this any interventions may encourage the inclusion of certain groups and the exclusion of others such as women (Flintan 2007a).

7.2.1 Pastures/Rangeland

Changes in land use and access arrangements to resources have a direct impact on both men and women. "Gender relations are...dynamic and changing as a result of processes of negotiation and bargaining between men and women and as a result of changes in the NR base" (Watson 2005: 15). For example increased production of charcoal in Somalia, Somaliland and Somali region of Ethiopia is having a fundamental impact on open grazing and communal rangeland management for both men and women (Oumer 2007).

Further privatisation encourages the spread of fencing and increasing concentration around population centres. As a result access to areas where women can gather wild plants and wood for fuel, food, fibre, medicine and other purposes becomes increasingly difficult. Spending more time seeking fuel or other plant resources, or having to find the money to purchase fuel means the restructuring of domestic activities. More time is spent on producing items that can be sold to finance alternative purchases. However some women are enclosing areas themselves in order to grow fodder to see livestock through the dry seasons and other purposes (see Box 7.4).

Box 7.4 Managing Land and Resources in Afar region, Ethiopia

In Fentale district of Afar region, Ethiopia, the Kereyou pastoralist women have been enclosing some of the land around their semi-permanent homesteads. Anyone (men or women) can enclose a *kello* once the local government has been informed. Within these *kellos* the women grow grass, cut it and feed it to milking cows, small ruminants and old or weak livestock. When surplus is available and particularly during drier periods, the women sell the grass at a high price rather than they would get from selling their livestock. In times of drought livestock would fetch a low price due to oversupply. Though one may question and even argue against such 'privatisation of the rangelands' it does appear to be having positive impacts on some localised degradation of rangelands in the district allowing more controlled provision of fodder and protection of resources from 'outsiders' such as charcoal makers (a great problem in the Somali region of the country). Such fodder can be particularly useful during times of stress when other sources are likely to be under greater pressure and risk of over use.

Source: UNCCD 2007

Further, women are taking action against degradation in the rangelands. For example, women shepherdesses in Iran reverse the 'tragedy of the commons' by seeding the pastures using a special technique of tying seed bags to the necks of the lead animal which scatters seeds and the following herd then urinate and fertilise the seeds as they move in herds. In Senegal Peulh women

are involved in the preparation and implementation of rangeland management plans and in fighting bush fires, forming groups and hiring the necessary tools to maintain firebreaks in their area (UNCCD 2007). In Bolivia women shepherds in the Andes play a leading role in pasture management, with assistance from SAVIA (the Association for Biodiversity Conservation, Research and Sustainable Development (see Box 7.5).

Box 7.5 Native Shepherd Women of the Upper Andes

In the High Andean wetland ecosystems, raising llamas and alpacas for their highly prized wool and meat has given communities a lifestyle in harmony with their environment. The women of the indigenous families carry out a diversity of tasks with regard to the native animals. It is their duty to improve the quality of the animals by selecting the males and females for mating, and to control the mating times. The processing of animal products such as shearing, spinning and weaving are undertaken by women. In the course of their work as shepherds the women decide which grounds to use for grazing and about rotating the use of hill areas and slopes. They also control the number of animals in the different grazing areas. Their knowledge is essential in guaranteeing the sustainable use of pasture land and avoiding land degradation due to overgrazing. Women also play a leading role in preserving and passing on oral knowledge about watering techniques, water management and construction of water channels and dykes that allow wetlands to expand and lagoons to maintain their volume, especially aquatic wetlands.

Source: UNCCD 2007

7.2.2 Trees and NTFPs (Non-Timber Forest Products)

As discussed in previous chapters (and above) women utilise trees and their products for a wide number of purposes. For example in Uttarakhand state, India pastoral women gain economic security from the sales of herbs and medicinal plants they collect in the alpine ranges when they migrate there with their families, despite their being a government ban on their collection. Sometimes loans or *bayana* are taken in advance in lieu of the plants to be collected (Kelkar and Tshering 1994 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

In order to maintain a continuous supply and the sustainability of the product and its many benefits (direct and indirect) women must carefully monitor and conserve the products. In the Afar region of Ethiopia, women harvest the leaf of wild palms (*aunga*) for use in handicraft production. In order to conserve the resource they have had to put in place rules of use and a temporary ban (see Box 7.6).

Box 7.6 Protection and Utilisation of Wild Palm in Ethiopia

Around the Awash National Park, palm leaf has been a primary source of income for around 500 households. However, increased harvesting was resulting in over-exploitation of the resource, aggravated by the trade being unfairly controlled by five powerful traders. With the help of an NGO, the women formed a group to better control the harvesting of the palm. A storehouse was constructed but the exploitation of the palm continued to increase. As a result the community decided to ban harvesting of the leaves until the palms had recovered to an acceptable degree. What is needed now is the establishment of an agreement between the merchants and the community, particularly the women who harvest, and a proper monitoring system to control sustainable use.

Source: UNCCD 2007

In northern Kenya women have started up a forestry project which protects the environment and provides an income for them (see Box 7.7).

Box 7.7 Al Rahma Forestry Conservation Self-Help Group

Around the town of Mandera, Kenya women have set up the Al Rahma Forestry Conservation Self Help Group. Through this group the women plant trees and flowers free of charge in mosques, schools, children's homes and hospitals. The trees are indigenous and include fruit trees and the neem tree, popular due to its medicinal and shading properties and its ability to withstand the very salty and alkaline soils found in Mandera. The self help group is also involved in waste recycling and income generation. As well as their environmental management the group has gained confidence to speak out on issues of concern such as sexual harassment and insecurities in the area.

Source: UNCCD 2007

7.3 Building Projects on Women's Role

Where women's roles in NRM have been recognized, projects have built on these roles to improve environmental protection and sustainability in the rangelands (see Box 7.8).

Box 7.8 Rehabilitation of the Rangelands in Mauritania

Mauritania is a vast country, mostly covered by the Sahara desert. After two severe and prolonged droughts in the last 20 years, many nomads have been forced to settle where they could get aid. This has resulted in an increased pressure on natural resources. Through a programme supported by UNSO/UNDP women have taken the lead in the stabilisation of sand dunes by organizing themselves into planning committees that provide links between the village and the authorities. In just three years, the women in one small settlement have covered 80 ha. of dune, enclosing it with brushwood fencing that they made themselves. Within the protected enclosures trees have been planted which stabilise the sand dunes. In the very traditional culture, women's involvement in the project has earned them new status. As one woman said "The best part of it is my life today. Before all a woman did was prepare the food her husband brought her. Today I know what's going on. I work, and my work is worth a lot to me and earns me money. My husband doesn't even know where it comes from."

Source: UNSO 2001.

In Namibia IRDNC (Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation) has been working in the north-east and north-west of the country for many years. Working with communities to establish and develop conservancies and NRM strategies, the project has included both men and women (see Box 7.9).

Box 7.9 Women Resource Monitors in Namibia

IRDNC has used a number of strategies to involve women as well as men. The first, and possibly most important, was the appointment and training of local women as community resource monitors or community development activators. These women have become role models in their community. In West Caprivi, up until the war disrupted the area, the CBNRM committee had appointed 16 women to share eight posts. In time the team of 16 became known in their communities as Khoena chapi – "community keys – the people who opened the door to development. Their role included monitoring numerous non-wildlife resources and ensuring sustainable harvesting. West Caprivan resource monitors and their leadership were able to use resource maps to show that neighbouring Kavango people had chopped down a *mangetti* tree grove (*ricinodendron rautanenii*) to use the wood for building purposes. The West Caprivians annually harvest the trees' nuts, and the loss of even one grove of twelve trees affected people's food security. The fact that the women could prove their case with a map they had produced themselves, strongly boosted local confidence, and a complaint was made to the neighbouring leadership (Jacobsohn and Owen-Smith 2003).

Kunene Region has gradually appointed more women in key conservancy positions. At present there is one chairwoman, Lina Kaisuma of Ananbeb Conservancy and three vice chairs. There are also an increasing number of women treasurers and accountants. It is no secret that the women in the region have proved themselves to be more honest and reliable than some of the former male treasurers. "Women are just better at some things" says Janet Matota, the first Community Resource Monitor appointed at the end of 1993 and who now heads the NGO's Caprivan conservancy support programme, "and it seems managing a conservancy's money may be one of them." Women do not have the same pressures on them to show off and prove how successful they are – a trap some male treasurers have fallen into.

Role models – including award-winning Janet herself, and a popular Ministry of Environment and Tourism figure who never lost her feel for the grass roots – Mrs Kapere – have certainly encouraged rural women to step out of their traditional roles but a long-term focus on capacity building of women is also bearing fruit. IRDNC's strategy has also been to avoid any 'quota' approach and rather, to build confidence and skills of women members of conservancies so that they can more meaningfully contribute to decision making and opinion forming (Margie Jacobsohn, personal communication 2008).

And in Sudan PENHA has been working with local communities to promote CBNRM with the State Forestry Department. As a result of the project, a women's community based organization has been created that educates pastoralist women about the importance of halting deforestation and desertification. Moreover the women have succeeded in playing a key role in the community forestry programme. The nursery is producing 10,000 seedlings every year, generating around 10,000 Sudanese pounds (USD 10,000) of income for the CBO (UNCCD 2007).

7.4 Access to Natural Resources¹

However having a role within natural resource management does not necessarily mean that one has access to and control over natural resources. Indeed, gender has been shown to be a key determinant of rights to and benefits from natural resources (Watson 2005). Men and women have different roles, responsibilities, natural assets, access to resources and decision making processes. Both men and women have vital roles in and contributions to make to the continuation and adaptation of pastoral systems. The majority of these are a result of gender differences that find their roots in culture, traditions and perceived views about what women and men should do or not do, have or not have. Often these place a restriction on women, their access and control (Flintan 2007a). As FAO (2003) suggests, despite their multiple roles in dryland management women's access to and control over natural resources are often restricted (FAO 2003).

¹ A separate Chapter is provided on 'sedentarisation' and the issue of land is discussed here.

7.5 Increasing Access and Control

Women's increased access to (and control over) resources helps them gain confidence and participate more actively in decision making and policy making. It assists them in dealing with the impacts of environmental change, especially in poor degraded dryland areas. "It allows women to negotiate their extra work burden and thus attain a more balanced division of labour in a redefinition of roles. Increased access to and control over resources also helps women to make up for detrimental environmental impacts because empowered women can select from a wider range of ways to deal with degradation. In turn women's efforts to combat desertification (land reclamation, reforestation, irrigation systems) lead to increased self-confidence as well as improved NRM, financial management and negotiating skills" (FAO 2003: 17).

7.10 Co-Management of Resources Improves Women's Empowerment

Mongolians have a long tradition of nature conservation. Women have great roles in keeping that tradition as they teach their children how to protect and soundly use nature. Also cleaning campsites, protecting rivers and drinking and washing water areas are usually done by women. But housework tasks hinder women's participation in NRM. Since the introduction of co-management of resources, women's roles and participation in NRM has increased. This has been facilitated through the establishment or formalization of women's groups. Each group has a leader, elected by the members at a community meeting. The group meets once a month to plan activities, discuss problems and issues, and make decisions. The women have got involved in income generation activities, learning from each other, the organization of various trainings, exchange of experiences with other communities, study tours and participatory monitoring and evaluation of the community's co-management efforts. In two communities, Tsagaannuur and Arjargalant, women played a dominant role in the planning and implementation of a pasture rotation plan. As a result of the establishment of women's groups they are more involved in community decision making; they participate more in community meetings, freely express their ideas, and report about women's group activities to other members of the community. They have forced changes in the co-management agreements to better reflect women's roles, needs and priorities.

Source: IDRC 2003.

Gurung et al (undated) highlight the benefits of mobilizing groups of professional women working in forestry or other NRM sectors to support and mentor rural women involved in the field programmes on a long term basis. NGO gender activists can facilitate the networking relationship between government staff and grassroots level promoters in order to build the necessary understanding between these two groups: an example from Nepal shows how (Box 7.11).

Box 7.11 Professional Mentors Assisting Community Women

Given the cultural constraints to gender equality posed by local contexts and the gendered environment of implementing organisations, support is required to build a sustained base for the continuity of efforts like that of the HLFDP (Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project) to twin gender equality with environmental conservation and poverty alleviation. It is felt that without the strong relationship built up between the gender advisors and the rural women, there could not have emerged a vocal and confident group of marginalised women able to organise themselves and find ways to gain entry as a legitimate stakeholder group into government policy making dialogue at the highest levels. This points to a niche that has been so far neglected by development programmes – the mobilisation of groups of professional women working in forestry or other NRM sectors to support and mentor rural women involved in the field programmes on a long term basis. A lesson learned is that a central coordinating group of NGO gender activists needs to facilitate the networking relationship between government staff and grassroots level promoters to build and nurture a healthy understanding between these two groups of implementing agents. Together, both groups of women bring resources and power to the struggle to establish gender in forestry institutions as a legitimate and worthy domain.

Gurung et al undated

7.6 Impacts of Conservation Practices

In general, conservation legislation and protection enforcement measures attempt to restrict use and access; the control of access being with a conservation agency, local (or other) government or perhaps a village based committee/institution. Where women (and men) have traditionally used resources and now find such use restricted if not banned, if no alternatives exist, they will continue to try to access resources by either finding another source or taking high risks (such as verbal and physical abuse or even imprisonment) (Flintan 2005).

In particular this is the case where products are sought to fulfil basic needs such as fuelwood, which can hit women particularly hard. As a result, women may operate under informal arrangements with local law enforcement officers who allow the collection in return for money, goods or services. Though women may recognise that their activities lead to land degradation, usually it is the case that they have no power to change the causes of the activities and therefore will continue using the resource unsustainably (Eskonheim 2006).

At a policy level, gender issues tend to be mainstreamed and there is emphasis on the inclusion of women and ensuring that benefits accrue to them: for an international example see Box 7.12 and for a national example see Ethiopia's Constitution and/or Environment Policy. Further for the 1999 World Desertification Day, the Government of Morocco launched a series of workshop to listen to women's concerns and standpoints and to assess their needs. On the same occasion President Abdou Diouf of Senegal commended the Fédération des Associations Féminines du Sénégal (FAFS) on its pioneering work in promoting the role of women and urged strong coordination in the implementation of the Beijing platform for Action and the Desertification Convention, recognizing the complementarity of the two (Gurung 2006).

However in practice this remains challenging. Men tend to be involved in the development of legislation relating to conservation and management, though it has been shown that women are more likely to obey laws and access resources using official channels such as requesting permission.

Box 7.12 Mainstreaming Gender in UNCCD

In 1997 the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought of the UNDP issued an action plan for enlarging women's position in implementing the Convention. Its goal is to weave gender throughout all forms of implementation, including through decentralized planning, systematic funding mechanisms, responsive partnerships, the participation of women in decision-making, the gender sensitization of representatives and the use of gender-specific criteria and indicators for monitoring. These aim to ensure that women in dryland areas exercise their right to assume full responsibility as managers of natural resources and other livelihood activities.

Source: UNSO/UNDP 2007

In India for example, despite an emphasis on the inclusion of women within JFM (joint forest management) processes and activities since its inception, supported by policy, guidelines and resolutions, women are still missing out. Their husbands remain seen as the household head, representing the interests of the whole family; women fail to fully participate in decision making processes; the rights of widows or deserted women continue to be ignored; women remain passive receivers of information; and fail to equally benefit from JFM (Bandyopadhyay et al 2005; Dasgupta et al 2006).

NGOs and government have realised the importance of NRM and its contribution and relationship to development processes. However, though it has been proven that gender is an important factor to consider (not least for reasons discussed above), it continues to be sidelined and organisations struggle to make any meaningful inclusion. This has resulted in a number of negative impacts for both conservation and the livelihoods of the rural poor: not only do conservation efforts lose out on the knowledge that different gender groups can contribute to new innovations and adaptive capacity within these programmes, but also the evaluation of the impact of conservation and development activities on rural livelihoods will be biased towards men to the detriment of other gender groups. Examples can be found in the establishment of the Khunjerab National Park, Pakistan (Ali and Butz 2003) and the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania (Brockington and Homewood 1999).

An exception to this has been the involvement of local communities including women in the GTZ supported Initiative for People Centred Conservation in and around the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park, Mongolia. Amongst other things it draws on the capacity of women to take the lead in finding and implementing the most effective solutions to the new challenges facing herding families (see Box 7.13).

Box 7.13 Guardians of the Gobi

As a result of the establishment of the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park in 1993 the pastoralist families living there have been in fear of the Park changing their way of life. In order to avoid this, the Initiative for People Centred Conservation was established. It became clear that in order to conserve nature and improve pasture a return to traditional moving with herds was necessary. They formed groups of neighbouring families into *nukhurluls* and began cooperating to find sustainable ways of managing the pastures. In many of these *nukhurluls* women emerged as leaders, as it was they who took the initiative and who felt most strongly the need to participate in decision making. Badmaa, leader of the Yusun-Erdene *nukhurlul* describes one of the initiatives of her group: *We have designed this piping system so that we can use the pasture below these mountains which have no water source. We are piping water eight kilometers across the land to the pasture. We have also provided two stop cocks in different places and can pipe water to grow vegetables and for the animals to drink.*

Source: UNCCD 2007

Further though women initially may be marginalised from conservation processes there are examples of them finding other routes to get involved. For example the establishment of the Khunjerab National Park, Pakistan banned grazing in the Park. However the communities in time set up their own nature trust to take over the stewardship of their natural surroundings, but dominated by the men. The women in the community found an alternative route to entering the conservation processes. They worked with AKRSP to establish women's organisations in the area and used their positions as president, secretary and members to organise environmental-focused events and get involved in NRM activities (Ali and Butz 2003).

7.7 Summary

1. Women should be involved in natural resource management and conservation activities. Not only do women have great knowledge of natural resources and can contribute to new innovations and an adaptive capacity of NRM programmes, but also conservation activities will impact on them and their livelihood practices so their inclusion is necessary to ensure that such impacts are positive.
2. Before project and project activities are planned or designed, it is vital to understand the local context, natural resource management practices and gender relations and ensure that they are taken into account. Pastoral women and men have a close and intimate relationship with nature and often certain resources have cultural and spiritual meanings as well as being functional. Such a relationship can form the basis of very positive resource management and protection. However often the pressures on women to provide for the household such as cooking fuel, can compromise their environmental values.

3. Women's and men's rights to rangeland resources can be complex, overlapping and dynamic. Women's rights may be weaker (e.g. renewable use) than men's rights (e.g. consumptive). Changes in rangeland management practices are having a fundamental impact on men and women. In some instances women are taking the initiative and mitigating some of the negative impacts, often with extra help from NGOs. Increasing women's control over and access to resources helps them gain confidence and to participate actively in decision making, policy making and to deal better with the impacts of environmental change.
4. It has been shown to be beneficial to involve local women and men including through participatory exercises (such as natural resource mapping), in the promotion of land planning and management that increases women's and men's authority over resources, valuation of indigenous knowledge and special attention to local priorities. Where the right support has been given including an emphasis on capacity building, women have proved adept resource managers and monitors. Over time their capacity and confidence has grown to a point where many now take an active part in local decision making NRM committees. Their position is granted on the basis of their knowledge and skills as natural resource managers, and not fill any NGO quota.
5. Raising awareness and providing education with related new tools and techniques for conserving the environment has been beneficial. Study tours, exchange trips and mentoring can also prove useful for sharing and increasing knowledge and experiences. Mentors can not only be community members, but also professional women working in forestry for example who mentor rural women in field programmes on a long term basis.
6. It has been important to encourage conservation through income generation for example the collection and sale of manure, management of trees whose fruit can be used in business development and/or dry season gardening where irrigation water permits.
7. Freeing up rural people, especially women from heavy workloads such as the collection of water and fuelwood can allow more time for natural resource management activities. However this should not be assumed and the promotion of a greater environmental conscience should go hand-in-hand with 'development' oriented activities.
8. Local institutions are usually very capable of managing natural resources, particularly with strengthening and enough time to ensure their continued sustainability. However where these institutions may be traditionally male dominated strengthening them can further marginalize women. It has been suggested that such institutions may not be the right vehicle for promoting women's inclusion and other forum may need to be set up, and which develop means of influencing community decisions. It is vital to work on the linkages between these forum and those at the 'community' decision making level to ensure that communication channels are established. Indeed it has been shown that women are capable of using non-NRM forums and channels to get involved and make decisions over natural resources and the environment.
9. Natural resources can be critical at certain times for people's survival: an important contribution to people's safety-nets. It is more often the poor who might rely on such strategies. As such it is important to recognize that though some natural resources can be to contribute little to people's livelihoods from a quantitative perspective, they might make the critical difference between life and death in certain situations.

8.0 MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN: COLLECTIVE ACTION – WOMEN'S NETWORKS AND ORGANISATION

Social support relations, including those based on kinship and networks are key to pastoral society, and particularly for women. As such women tend to form informal groups and relationships that support each other and provide an important safety net in times of need. Women have realised the advantages of 'group power' including mutual support, solidarity, shared skills and better opportunities to access such as credit or land. As a result women have come together in a number of ways, discussed below. Though these groupings may be considered as 'informal' they can have great strength and be based on obligation and important (even life saving) social dynamics.

Often women's involvement in these groups is very important to them and their position and role in them contributes to their self-esteem and identity. As Mitzlaff (1988:162) describes for the Parakuyo of Tanzania, "the acceptance, recognition and criticism they encounter in these groups shape the way they see themselves far more than the opinions men have of them." Indeed "collective action is well known as a positive community-development force. Group formation can build social capital and enhance income generation among the poor" (Coppock et al 2006:1). However in some countries such as Ethiopia for example, collective action has been more common in highland or sedentarised areas and there is far less evidence of it occurring among rangeland inhabitants to date. Alternatively, men may think that group activities are often seen as hopeless activities and for hopeless people. Power struggles often arise among them in a fight for leadership. Additionally they may have little time for groups: they may be traveling away or involved in more 'important' activities (Kilavuku 2003).

8.1 Importance of Kinships

Relationships of kinship are vital for both men and women in pastoral societies. Though much of the literature focuses on male relationships, as the following will reveal kinship is vital for women too. In the Jallube (of Fulbe, Mali) for example, kin groups, defined both through matrilineal and patrilineal ties are of crucial significance. Descent can be defined in different ways, so that one person can be both patrikin and matrikin at the same time. Though the dominant discourse, or ideology, of the Jallube appears patrilineal, in daily reality the Jallube use this ideology very pragmatically, and matrilineal ties are used as frequently as patrilineal ties. This is especially clear within the lower levels of social organization (de Bruijn 1995) (see Box 8.1).

Box 8.1 Marriage and Kinship in Mali

Marriage does not lead to a strong and inseparable bond between husband and wife among the Jallube. Economic and social tasks are clearly defined and interdependent, but can be established very easily in new units. The strongest relationships established through marriage are the relations between children and their mother, between siblings, and between children and their father. They form the core of society and can be established only through the *fayanne* or 'hearthold'. Another important relationship that is established is that between kin and in-laws. This relationship is important for the social security of women and their children. As such, marriage can better be characterised as a new phase in the establishment of the social relations that are so central for the Fulbe. The pastoral Fulbe depend heavily on social relations in order to keep their nomadic life going. Marriage creates the basis for a woman to survive as it creates the relationship through which she gets her rights to milk (cf. Waters-Bayer, 1988; Dupire, 1963). Marriage enables women to establish new social relations and to have children who will ultimately take care of her. With regard to kinship, it appeared that Jallube men and women from the same union in some cases defined each other differently. The men were more inclined to use the patrilineal affiliations, whereas the women used their matrilineal affiliations more often. This lends support to the idea that men seek different things in a marriage from women. Men seem to value the economic aspect and children, and the establishment of a *wuro* (cattle camp), whereas women attach a high value to social security relations, and the independence of the *fayanne*. Thus a woman's position in the marital union and the provision of social care for herself, her kin and the children are important factors in her choice of a marriage partner. Marrying close kin or a neighbour is likely to result in a more secure position for the woman. She may expect more care from her husband's family because there will be more control over her situation by her own family, who also provide her with a fall-back option, resulting in a higher degree of independence for her *fayanne*. Conversely her mother may expect more care from her daughter when she is living in the neighbourhood.

Source: de Bruijn 1997

Matrilineal reckoning is also important amongst the Turkana of Tanzania for "determining eligible marriage partners, inheritance, transmission of herding labour, cross-sexual naming of sons after their mother and succession to chiefships. Among the Turkana, the complementarity and interdependence of matrilineal ties of blood and patrilineal links that are socially constructed through cattle, are marked by two distinct milking vessels, which share the same name. The stereotypical patriarchal family (male head of household with wife and dependent children) is only one stage in the development of family growth and decline: in time the mother-son relationship becomes more important" (Hodgson 2000a:9). Kinship and family are an important source of support. Orphans will be looked after by remaining relatives (see Box 8.2). Further women often receive financial support from their natal kin, especially their brothers (Mitchell, 2003).

Box 8.2 Kinship Ensures Family Commitments Hold Strong

In the Soviet Union reindeer herding is in crisis. With the privatization, the Tuvan government stopped assisting Todzhu's reindeer herders and they were left to fend for themselves. The school in Chazylar closed down, and medical treatment became virtually nonexistent. My host, Vassily has firsthand experience of the authorities' neglect. In 1997 his daughter fell through the ice while crossing a river in the spring. She then developed pneumonia. Despite Vassily's pleas for assistance over the radio, it was ten days before a helicopter was dispatched with a doctor on board. By the time it arrived, she was dead. This tragedy left Vassily and Risha looking after their daughter's three children in their old age.

Source: Alexander 1999

In times of drought family relationships and kinship can be of even more importance (see Box 8.3).

Box 8.3 Support Mechanisms in Times of Drought

In Turkana, Kenya family and kinship relations provide vital support during times of drought. This includes:

- Support from in-laws and other relatives such as siblings, uncles and aunts. However support is only likely to be provided at the beginning of a drought – as effects continue, such support diminishes.
- Polygamous relationships: they tend to cope with drought by dividing duties among themselves to lessen the load. However again this cooperation only tends to occur at the beginning of a drought and because there is often only one breadwinner, the man, it is likely that they will suffer later on. Wives may go back to their family homes during the drought and enmity between wives may grow.
- Relatives working in towns take care of children and elderly and provide money.
- Churches, schools and children's homes.
- Relatives and friends assist by getting employment in farms and on plantations and jobs in the urban centres.
- Age-sets provide moral support as well as teamwork for activities such as catching fish by providing boats to members. It is within the age-sets that men discuss ideas on how to cope with the drought.
- Women's associations/cooperatives: for example by loaning a milking animal or by providing food. Women can work together weaving or making goods. Some young men may belong to youth groups for the same purposes.
- Fishermen work together to ensure security in hostile waters.

Source: Wawire 2003.

8.2 Women Working Together to Improve Access to Resources

Mutual assistance is an engrained part of most pastoral societies, with most having some traditional means of helping and supporting those in need. Both men and women play a role in propagating these supportive networks by providing assistance to others when necessary and ensuring that their own linkages to the network remain intact in case they themselves need help. These networks can be established at various levels and include support provision through activities and goods or 'gifts'. Though the giving of gifts can be an important part of relationship building, the soliciting of gifts can also be central and incorporates power dynamics and issues such as status (for example amongst the Herero of Botswana – Durham 1995). Many women have realized that if they work together they may be better able to access resources, rights to those resources and improve their quality of life (see Box 8.4).

Box 8.4 Collective Action Leads to Local Development

Collective action can be an effective means of local development and risk reduction among rural people, but few examples have been documented in pastoral areas. GL-CRSP PARIMA conducted a study of 16 women's groups in northern Kenya to understand how groups are formed, governed and sustained and what activities they have pursued. The groups interviewed were 10 years old, on average. Membership averaged 24 women, 20 of whom were illiterate. Half of the groups formed after facilitation by a development partner and half formed spontaneously. Groups are governed under detailed constitutional frameworks with elected leaders. Despite a high rate of illiteracy, groups take pride in having detailed memorized knowledge of their constitutions and by-laws that outline leadership structures, personal rights and responsibilities of members, the philosophy in serving the community at-large, and administrative and operational procedures.

Groups primarily form to improve living standards of the members and undertake a wide variety of activities founded on savings and credit schemes, income diversification, small business development, education, health service delivery and NRM. A synergism exists among efforts to build social, human and economic capital in these groups. Groups have evolved means to buffer members from drought and poverty. Membership allows for assistance with home construction and access to group-owned technology as well as employment at group-owned businesses. It gives priority access to training and other capacity-building events. The greatest threats to the sustainability of the group come from internal factors such as unfavourable group dynamics and illiteracy while external challenges include drought, poverty and political incitement. Principles of good group governance and wisdom in business are reportedly the key ingredients for long-term success.

Source: Coppock et al 2006 :1-4

Some pastoral women have formed their own organizations to bring about change, for example MWEDO (see Box 8.5) which is a member based organization promoting access to resources and building capacity.

Box 8.5 MWEDO

Maasai Women Development Organisation (MWEDO) is a community based NGO in Tanzania. It was established with the guiding principle to improve the quality status of disadvantaged Maasai women economically, politically and socially through providing advisory services in advocacy, income generating activities, human and education rights to women groups in the Maasai community. It is a member based organization of individuals and groups. Amongst other things it builds the capacity of women and promotes access to vital resources, enhances recognition of women production and development efforts and equitable sharing of benefits in society. It includes advocating for policy influencing and freedom of expression. MWEDO organizes events of Maasai culture and shows its potential validity and usefulness.

8.2.1 NGOs and GOs

"Many field experiences have found that establishing and supporting women's groups helps women to improve their own livelihoods. Through these groups, women are able to deal with their problems, voice their concerns and increase their confidence. In particular, groups help women to tackle the extreme conditions that derive from drylands degradation, including reforestation and irrigation activities" (FAO 204: 16). In Kotido, Uganda Oxfam GB has been working with local communities to build capacity, improve local development and empower women. As part of this, Oxfam has been supporting the establishment of women's groups (Box 8.6)

Box 8.6 Oxfam Support for Women's Groups in Uganda

Women identify positive impacts in terms of meeting their welfare needs and increasing their access to productive resources, but they have seen little difference in the more strategic aspects of empowerment. However, some women report increased self-esteem as a result of participation in women's groups and such work has also had an impact (albeit small) on men's attitudes towards gender inequalities. Dance and drama are an important achievement of the groups: one woman said that representing the group in a dancing competition in Kampala made her feel so proud that "she was even prepared to die for group."

Source: Oxfam GB Uganda 2004

8.3 Women Working Together to Initiate Economic Change

There are many examples of women working together on income generation activities, credit and savings, and business development. In the Kyrgyz Republic, Kashka Suu women have set up a cooperative relationship to sell dairy products. One woman has a shop and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays drives around the pastures of Chong Alay buying milk, cheese, yoghurt, butter and other dairy products from the pastoral women. In turn they make for her a list of groceries, home goods and clothing. The woman takes the milk products to the nearest town to the village about four hours drive away, sells them and buys the requested goods. These will be distributed to the women when she picks up more dairy products the following week. This cooperative project was set up by the women themselves without any external intervention. Ironically the same area was the recipient of a World Bank project on pasture management and improvement. A Pasture Management Committee was set up to develop a pasture improvement plan and decide on a set of micro projects. Though women were interested in being a member of the Committee they were not elected because they were not well informed about the project, and were misled by the men in the community who told them that this was a pasture infrastructure project. As a result the micro projects focused on road rehabilitation (a man's priority) rather than water improvement or animal health which would have been a priority for the women (Undeland 2008).

Other examples of women working together to ensure milk marketing are given in Boxes 8.7 and 8.8. As these examples show women working together saves time and resources. Further it ensures a more steady supply and better access to markets.

Box 8.7 Milk Marketing in Mali

Amongst the Fulbe, milk gets a better price during the dry season, due to lack of availability. A practice called *maure* functions in some settlements, especially in the rainy season. Under this practice every woman contributes a certain quantity of milk to be sold. The exact quantity contributed is carefully measured in front of all the participating women. The total amount is then marketed by one of them, enabling the others to concentrate on other activities. The revenue is kept by the women who marketed the milk. In the event of losses, it is she who suffers. During the following days, she is expected to return as much milk to each of her associates (who go in turn to the market) as she received from them. Besides being a time saving mechanism, the *maure* provides the participating women with a sum of money to use for larger expenditure such as clothing or kitchen tools, or to invest in the purchase of a goat.

Source: Djedjebi and de Haan, 2001: 234

Box 8.8 Milk Cooperative in Ethiopia

Women in Erder, Borana zone have formed a cooperative to sell milk and butter to traders, restaurant owners and families in Moyale. At least two lorries a day deliver the women's dairy products to the town, and bring back sugar, salt, tea, soap and processed food that the women can sell in Erder. The women have an arrangement with the lorry drivers to transport and barter the goods. Membership in the cooperative brings several benefits, for example being able to access credit. The women use their profits to support their families and to expand their businesses: several have made enough money to open their own shops in Erder. Each woman has a bank account in Moyale. The coop provides training on how to manage a coop, business management, income diversification, marketing and subjects such as HIV/AIDS. Their financial independence has helped these women develop confidence and has added to their status. They are less dependent on their menfolk, and this has helped sustain family relationships and given them a new role in society.

Source: IIRR 2004: 84

In Asia too there are many examples of cooperative marketing of milk by women allowing improved economies of scale for marketing and processing; a saving of transaction costs shared amongst members; and disaster insurance being buffered by the group. In Bangladesh for example, what started as a small collaborative group has grown into the collection of milk from 40,000 farmer members (Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Handicrafts also demand working together to access markets and establish points of sale. In Ethiopia a group of Hamar women established their own women's association in 1993 to bring about change in their community. To raise money for their organization the women work together selling items to tourists (Simpson-Hebert 2005). As described in Box 8.9, the establishment of a centre as a point of sale can also act as a meeting place and space for production.

Box 8.9 Beadmaking Amongst the Bedouin of Egypt

Due to reduced numbers of tourists, which the increasingly sedentarised Bedouin of Egypt had come to rely on, the household is turning to women and their bead making provide income for fulfilling household needs. One woman called the opportunity as a "door of wealth". Experience has shown the need to have one centre for the women to come and deliver their bead work, and one person in charge of keeping track of the beads, the products, the income raised, the pricing of the products, liaising with and taking orders from clients, and organising the women to fulfil the orders. A basic education is needed to provide adequate skills to do this: one woman said that through the support of her family she had been able to attend school and now she can teach others. The skills for beadwork are passed from mother to daughter. The work is often completed during visits to each other's houses, whilst catching up with news etc. Exposure of and interest in the Craft Centre helps to motivate women in their work.

Source: Gardner 2003

8.3.1 Support from NGOs and GOs

Many NGOs and GOs have focused their support on mobilising women, training them and providing grants for business development, some with more success than others. In northern Pakistan NGOs have been supporting women's development for some time. A review carried out by ICIMOD (1999 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008) highlighted four aspects that had been important in empowering women:

1. A dovetailing of the schemes. AKRSP in particular had paid attention to the dovetailing of each step of a programme package such that the timing of each prepared the ground for the next, removing any bottlenecks.
2. Changing emphasis in strategies. Though the projects were livestock focused it was realized that women's lack of literacy was debilitating. Therefore one of the NGOs (Sarhad Rural Support Corporation) established a literacy programme before establishing livestock groups.
3. Using a people-centred approach which was participatory and decentralized.
4. Timing and sequencing of operations was important, allowing one development activity to catalyse another.

In Africa, one project that seems to be taking a better approach than others is Project Boabab which has developed its support and interventions with Maasai women as needs have arisen and integrated business skills development with education, hygiene improvement and other support mechanisms (see Box 6.10).

Box 8.10 Business Development Through Appropriate Training and Mentoring

Project Boabab in Kenya carries out training in life skills (including self-awareness, confidence building, stress/anger management, team building and critical thinking), entrepreneurship (including vision development, identifying businesses, marketing, book keeping, business ethics and regulations) and reproductive health for Maasai girls and women. These have developed over the last five years as needs have arisen. The trainings are given at times convenient to women and after classes for girls. This programme has been running for five years and some of the first graduates started businesses that have been doing well. The community classes were started last year where 46 women from Oloseos area joined, being trained once a week for six months. Training takes approximately 200 hours culminating in a business plan that is presented to a judging panel culminating with a graduation where certificates are awarded. After the trainings take place the women/girls come up with a business plan and compete for \$100 to implement them. Grants are given to 30% of the group that trained. From Oloseos community group 11 women were allocated grants in 2007, though the money has only recently been disbursed due to the conflicts in the country. To assist the women to find resources and time to attend the meetings, the Project provides them with lunch and someone to look after the babies/children brought along. Non-literate means of communication are used as well as literate – though non-literacy amongst the women is a challenge it is not a barrier.

Trainers for this program are from the schools supported by the Project or the communities trained through a Training of Trainers programme. A mentoring programme follows where women are mentored to help their businesses to survive by women from the local group with basic education (college level) and business skills. Staff visit the field once every six months to provide encouragement and support for this. Project Boabab has found a 50% survival of businesses started by the graduates. Some have reached a level of growth where they are recognized by other lending institutions and able to borrow money to develop the business (micro financing is not available for starting up businesses). The women were extremely motivated and even started up their businesses with a little savings before they had graduated including businesses in cereals, paraffin, hotel, petty-trading, bead work and supply, agrovet and dairy cow management. Project Boabab is currently planning for another community group training-Maasai at Olo- Shibor- Ngong area of Kajiado with another organisation called MWEEP(Maasai Women education and Empowerment Program). School programs run through out and each year they expect a class of 15- 30 girls from each school to graduate.

Source: Jane Kuniya, personal communication 2008

The Country Director of Project Boabab Kenya, Jane Kuniya (personal communication 2008), suggests that the project (described in Box 8.10) has contributed to the empowerment of women and girls through:

1. The training that women receive helps them gain skills and knowledge that they did not have – knowledge is power. This has a trickle down effect as they become more practical and proactive in their thinking, thus benefiting their families and communities. Some of the women start playing leadership roles in a small way or become role models for other women enhancing their status.
2. The grants given for business start-ups help the women gain an income to support themselves and their families. This helps them become more independent through improving their economic status. In the long run this helps to reduce poverty and support pastoral livelihoods.
3. The tracking and follow-up of the programme helps to provide further advice, mentoring and support for the women. It creates linkages to other organizations that add value to what the trainees already have and can help the growth of their businesses. The groups are being helped to register and legalise themselves so bringing social change.
4. The trainings not only provide the women with skills but help them become more focused, so having a better handling of what they are doing. The women have confidence now that they can initiate positive activities and implement projects, build well managed businesses.
5. Trainers themselves are from the local communities, as well as the mentors. This has produced personal and lasting relationships between all involved and provides added incentives for the women/girls to work towards. The trainers themselves have started their own businesses.
6. Women trained have found other benefits too:

The training in time management has helped us a lot. Before we used to spend a lot of time chatting, but after the training, we have learned that this was useful time to make a difference to our life. Before we used to oversleep in the morning making the children miss school due to laziness and poor time management. Now we have reorganized our day so that we know what to do at what time and how... We would like another training in a different area. Staying at home is boring and does not add value to our lives (Women speaking at a follow-up meeting in Oloseos, April 2008).

Boabab's Director continues:

Further I have noticed that women's level of hygiene and that of their children has improved with the training as well as their attitudes/ openness/ assertiveness/ confidence....During a follow up meeting in April 2008, the women attested to changes in their lives through better time management, money management, planning, business skills, relationships, positive attitude among others. They asked us to look for organizations that can give them loans at affordable rates that they can pay through their businesses – they also promised to start a savings group....It is a good experience working with these women. I could write a book, my heart radiates when I think of them and their high levels of motivation....The Schools program also works well for the girls though traditions keep pulling them back, but I believe this is the next generation that will bring up their children differently owing to the empowerment programs that we have now.

Food production and marketing has also proved to be an important business activity for many women. Boxes 8.11 and 8.12 provide examples from Lebanon and Ethiopia.

Box 8.11 Establishing Women's Food Cooperatives in Lebanon

A livestock development programme in the Republic of Lebanon facilitated the setting up and establishment of 20 women's food cooperatives. They were the first of their kind in the area and maybe in Lebanon. The cooperatives were permitted to apply for loans from the project which the women 'pooled' and invested jointly. An important impact of the cooperative has been that they provided employment for their members. Over a thousand women have become members of the cooperatives and have described improvements in their social standing and empowerment. They have led to the identification of common concerns and interests, thus diffusing socio-economic barriers and building social capital. Given the difficulties created by 17 years of civil war, the promotion of social cohesion is considered very relevant, and is a major, positive effect of project activities. Today more women are now able to work outside their homes, have demonstrated their self-reliance, and as income-earners, their decision-making role in the household has been strengthened.

Source: IFAD 2004

Box 8.12 The 'Eyes of the Night'

Somali women in Afder and Liban zones in southeastern Ethiopia earn money by selling food and drink along the main road at night. They are known as *elaw* or 'eye of the night'. Business is poor because there are few customers and the food spoils quickly. Women are also selling goats on commission. In 1999 PCAE gave 200 Birr to 20 of these women. The women repaid 10 Birr every week, plus a service charge of 5 Birr. After 20 weeks, when they had repaid their initial loans, they were able to qualify for a second-round loan of 1000 Birr. The group used the accumulated service charge to fund projects for the community. The success of these initial groups mobilised nearly 300 women to start their own businesses. Through teamwork and by involving traditional leaders and elders, these women have coped with various challenges: currency fluctuations, insecurity, drought and lack of transport.

Source: IIRR 2004

8.4 Women Working Together to Initiate Social Change

It has been less common to find examples of pastoral women working together to initiate 'social' change such as changing attitudes towards women and gender equality, and promoting women's rights. Where women have come together, it tends to be on the basis of international links which provide strength and support to women to take their issues and challenges forwards. In North Africa for example, women formed the Sahel Saheline Network in April 2001. It is network of the Tuareg Indigenous Peoples of the Sahel region including Mali, Maritania, Algeria, Burkina Faso and Niger. This network was formed to improve education, advocacy and human rights among the Tuareg (Mulenkei 2002). The women who are a part of the Sahel Saheline Network are now linked to other indigenous groups across the world through the Indigenous Information Network (IIN), founded in 1996 by Lucy Mulenkei, a Maasai woman, and the African Indigenous Women's Organisation, Kenya (AIWO) (see Box 8.13).

Box 8.13 African Movements for Indigenous Women

Both IIN and AIWO work to promote indigenous women's rights as well as the enhancement of the livelihoods of indigenous peoples on the international scene. Through the organisations, for example Lucy and Rebecca Lolosoli, the founder of Umoja women's group in Samburu district, have traveled extensively, participating in United Nations working groups and committees to promote indigenous peoples rights and fighting for their representation at the international level. IIN representatives have participated in major world bodies, including the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the World Conference Against Racism. At the same time, IIN works to raise awareness among indigenous groups about what is happening on the international scene. For instance, IIN organized a workshop for indigenous leaders to raise awareness of the Convention of Biological Diversity and brainstorm ways in which indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge can contribute to and benefit from its implementation.

Source: Women's Earth Alliance (undated)

Without these international connections women trying to promote social change are vulnerable and risk intimidation, if not worse. Often it is difficult to separate 'social' change from other types of change, for as this volume has shown many activities that women take part in not only contribute to their practical/basic needs but also their strategic needs and indeed social change. One example

where women have come together specifically to assist particularly vulnerable women and bring about social change including ensuring women's 'rights' is found in Samburu (described in Box 8.14).

Box 8.14 Umoja Women's Village

Ten years ago in Umoja (meaning 'unity' in Swahili), Kenya, a group of Samburu women established a village for women who had been raped by British soldiers in the 1980-90s, and as a result, abandoned by their husbands who claimed that they had shamed their community. In an act of spite the men of the tribe started their own village across the way, often monitoring activities in Umoja. In 2005 about three dozen women lived there and run a cultural centre and camping site for tourists visiting the adjacent Samburu National Reserve. Umoja has flourished, eventually attracting so many women seeking help that they even hired men to haul firewood, traditionally women's work. The men in the rival village also attempted to build a tourist and cultural centre, but were not very successful. The women were able to send their children to school for the first time, eat well and reject male demands for their daughter's circumcision and marriage. They became so respected that troubled women, some beaten, some trying to get divorced or escaping early marriage started showing up at the village. However some of the women have been threatened with death by jealous local men. The chief of the male village laughs at the division between the men and the women. "The man is the head" he said. "The lady is the neck. A man cannot take, let's call it advice, from his neck". But lately, the residents of the men's village have been admitting defeat. They are no longer trying to attract tourists. Some have moved elsewhere. Others have had trouble getting married because other women in the area are gaining strength from the example of the women in the village. "She's been successful, it's true" sighed the chief "...Maybe we can learn from our necks. Maybe just a little bit."

As the group's members have prospered, more and more women have joined now having 48 members. Recently Umoja cooperated with a UK human rights lawyer to have the rape cases investigated and brought to trial. These investigations are ongoing.

Source: Wax, 2005: 27; www.umojawomen.org/index.htm

8.4.1 Support from NGOs and GOs

Supporting women's organisations is one broad approach to promoting women's empowerment. However women's organisations which are empowering to women should be accountable to their membership rather than an external agency: this may not always be the case. When organisations accept funding from an external source they can become more accountable to the donor, sometimes leading to changes in structures and procedures or tensions over how to allocate new resources. "Women's organizations are very varied and do not always serve the interests of poor women, or work in ways which should support empowerment" (Oxaal 1997: 11).

Sahel Eco's project "Strengthening Capacity for Pastoralist Participation" (SCPP) works in the Mopti region of Mali. The goal of SCPP is to contribute to establishing and protecting equitable rights of access to natural resources and to local government by marginalized groups. Its objective is to strengthen the capacities of pastoralist communities and civil society organisations so that they can play an active part in decentralised government and the local development process and thus make sustainable improvements to their lives. The key areas of activity include civic education and literacy training; rehabilitation of livestock migration corridors; information and training on pastoral production system and animal health; community management of forests; support for development education centres; improvement of village water supplies; and organisational strengthening and institutional development of pastoralist communities (see Box 8.15)

Box 8.15 Supporting Social Change Amongst Mali Women

Sahel Eco has been training paralegals in the Mopti region of Mali. Of 60 trained paralegals who are active, 16 are women. The paralegals hold information sessions in their respective communities on subjects such as conflict prevention and resolution; land tenure; and the roles and responsibilities of a village chief. In October 2007, researchers from IIED visited Mopti and the Koubaie area in particular, as part of a study into gender and land rights which they are carrying out in four areas of Mali in collaboration with Sahel ECO and other organisations. Their findings highlighted the low levels of general knowledge about the provisions of recent agricultural and pastoral legislation and, as a result, the project has scheduled activities to improve access to information on these topics, in 2008.

Source: Mary Allen, Sahel ECO, personal communication 2008

8.5 Women Working Together to Initiate Political Change

Women's Councils exist in some pastoral areas, which enforce the rights of women and uphold moral codes of behaviour (Hodgson 2000a). In Tanzania for example there exists the Pastoral Women's Council (PWC): the only women-led pastoralist NGO in the country. PWC runs community centres which provide adult education, and primary and secondary school preparation for children. Training is also given in human and women's rights awareness, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS awareness, and NRM. The Council is developing a secure home (or "boma") for the most vulnerable women and their children to live in, which offer access to land and where the women receive credit and training to rear their own livestock, diversify their economic activities and secure independent ways to earn a living. The increased security that the PWC provides are a prerequisite base from which women can start asserting and claiming their rights to local institutions, the government, donors and other NGOs. An international NGO, African Initiatives, provide information and briefing on important issues, training on advocacy strategies and media skills, and lobbies on behalf of PWC's interest in the UK and Europe. Recently a member of the PWC was elected District Councillor for the area where PWC is established (Wawire 2003).

The Chairperson of PWC reflects on the visible improvements brought by PWC:

"Historically Maasai women were not allowed to participate in meetings with men, hence they could not influence the decisions affecting their livelihood. Gradually women's roles are changing; Maasai women have found themselves challenging the marginalisation and oppression of their gender. Women are in the position to own properties generated from their own initiatives. Education is the key to women's liberation - a process that will only occur when women join efforts".

NGOs can provide the opportunity for the articulation of women's interests independently of party politics and government. For example the UN Decade for Women encouraged the growth of a wide range of women's organizations and their ability to network at international levels. It created an important political space for the proliferation of both formal and informal lobbies, grassroots associations and nation-wide movements for women that have forged world-wide networks and have acquired skills, self-confidence and the capacity to organize for change (Kabeer 1994).

8.6 Challenges of Working as a Group

There are many challenges to working as a group both mixed and one sex only.

8.6.1 Pros and cons of mixed groups

The disparity in power between men and women, and the reluctance of women to become members of the cooperatives where the majority of members are men, mean it is difficult to form a mixed-gender group or cooperative (IIRR 2004: 83). Women often find it difficult to express themselves lacking confidence and self-value. Other weaknesses of mixed groups include a lack of commitment: there would appear to be more irregular attendance especially where both members of a family have membership in one group. Additionally problems may arise if both members are borrowing/paying back money: conflicts start if one does not do so. Other problems have included a fear of unfaithfulness amongst the husband or wife attending a meeting which could lead to further household conflicts.

However, a study shows that in general, members of groups prefer mixed sex groups, and when men and women do work together, the output is greater. This is said to be because of:

- Financial stability – men tend to have greater access to resources such as land.
- Security – men provide security to women and against cultural inhibitions.
- More variety of activities/projects and opportunities to get involved in them.
- Discipline – members exhibited a higher degree of discipline in time-keeping, higher percentage of accomplished projects and reduction in cases of rumour mongering.
- Decision making – promotion of longer term goals/visions. Wider scope of understanding and addressing issues.
- Stability – stability in leadership as both men and women are elected to leadership positions.
- Competitive spirit – there is promotion of hard work amongst members and specific project committees.
- Increased productivity – diversity in education and skills help reduce consequences that accompany groups that are homogeneous in sex, skills, literacy levels and status.

8.6.2 Pros and cons of women only groups

An IFAD project has shown that women's groups and organisations have proved very effective in giving women collective power and influence. "When women's and men's groups are compared, women's groups are usually the best-performing of community-level organizations. Adequate training in leadership and management has resulted in significant improvements in the effectiveness and sustainability of groups even after project completion. Many IFAD projects have found non-governmental organisations to be committed allies in enhancing women's community leadership and political participation. However, experience has highlighted the need to ensure that partnerships with civil-society organizations help to address women's rights holistically and contribute to building the self-reliance of women's groups and community-based organizations" (IFAD 2003c: 13).

Often 'women-only' groups have some male members. For example they may be enlisted as patrons or advisors and run the projects which are physically strenuous and traditionally male jobs e.g. bee keeping, masonry, fishing and lumbering. Other things being constant/equal, groups composed of members having diverse abilities that are relevant to the task and perform more effectively than groups composed of members having similar abilities (Kilavuka 2003: 14).

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote confidential discussions. In the process the members guide and counsel one another; • Provide a forum for women to exercise leadership skills; • Exposed to new ideas to develop society and new skills which enable them to supplement family resources; • During bereavement, women-only groups have exhibited behaviour of consolation and emotional support; • Donors prefer working with and supporting women-only groups; • Women have an understanding amongst themselves because of the nature of their roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rates of self-centredness; • Lack independence of property and other valuable resources; • Traditional beliefs and cultures stop them from carrying out some activities; • Illiteracy is a drawback; • Limited time to spend on activities meaning low rates of commitment; • Lack of personality instilled in women by the patriarchal systems that determine the order of the day; • Malice can be high which causes conflict; • Can be used by politicians for campaigning to political office, after which they are neglected.

Strengths and weaknesses of women-only groups (Kilavuku 2003):

It is important to identify problems within associations early. For example a trainer working with women's groups in Mali noticed that the women lacked enthusiasm and he began to suspect that there was a problem. He recommended that the NGO supporting the groups (Sahel ECO) should investigate the issue before giving any more enterprise development support. The project facilitated a participatory self assessment of the association by its members to enable them to bring issues into the open in a constructive way. Following this assessment the association members decided to renew all their management structures and in the process, the President and her management committee were replaced (Sahel ECO 2008).

8.6.3 Leadership

It may be difficult to find skilled and confident leaders. Kilavuka (2003) describes some of the challenges women in particular face in group leadership (see Box 8.16). Further a study of women's groups in Kenya showed that failures of women as leaders have been due to them not liking each other, not being unified but selfish; the mismanagement of funds and resources, and problems due to illiteracy; and the fact that women like to gossip which in many cases has torn the group apart.

Box 8.16 Challenges to women in group leadership

1. In some areas, administrations negatively influence women-only group activities (politicizes them); for example, NGOs are blocked by politicians/administration if they try to assist groups directly.
2. Some duties require stamina, long distance travels which are risky and strenuous to birth-giving women. This is a challenge to women leaders because it limits their vision.
3. Women feel inferior to come out strongly due to upbringing where men seem to make decisions that carry the day.
4. Women are also economically weak and can do very little since they are dependent on men.
5. Women are too busy to spare time for group work.

Source: Kilavuka 2003

8.7 Summary

1. Social support relations, including those based on kinship (including mother and child) and networks are key to pastoral society, and particularly for women. However men and women may seek different things from such relationships. Women tend to form informal groups and relationships that support each other and provide an important safety-net in times of need. Women have realised the advantages of 'group power' including mutual support, solidarity, shared skills and better opportunities to access such as credit or land. Women may keep stronger links with the own family as well as their husband's in case for example she has to return to them if the marriage goes wrong. Though such groupings and network may be considered 'informal' they are usually based on important and obligatory social dynamics and commitments.
2. Indeed, women can benefit from forming groups and collective action in many ways. As a result commonly women work together to improve access to resources and living standards; economic change; social change; and political change. Their role within them can contribute to heightened self-esteem, satisfaction, pride and identity as their status rises, they become more self-reliant and they are able to provide for the families and perhaps, save. Women enjoy working together, sharing experiences and ideas, and taking part in a range of activities (including such as dancing competitions). This cuts through feelings of isolation and loneliness which can occur, particularly amongst less mobile women.

3. Principles of good group governance and wisdom in business are reportedly the key ingredients for long-term success of women's groups. Further it has been shown through the case studies included in this report that income generation groups in particular tend to be more sustainable when set up by the women themselves rather than with outside intervention. A major factor in this is that women tend to form a group when there is the demand (e.g. for joint marketing or the like) rather than a 'demand' being artificially created. Additionally organizations will be more successful if they are accountable to their membership rather than an external agency.
4. It is often even more important for women to work together when trying to initiate social or political change, as working as an individual for such change can be extremely challenging if not impossible. At an international level there are several networks for pastoralists, indigenous peoples, and women that work to increase awareness and highlight their needs, problems and challenges. At the local level too women are working together to promote a higher degree of equity in their communities and the claiming of their rights. In some pastoralist communities women have established safe places for victimized or vulnerable women to live, where sympathy, caring and solidarity helps the women recover and regain their self-respect and control over their lives. In some instances women from these groups have been elected within local government positions.
5. NGOs have been supporting such endeavours through provision of information, training on advocacy strategies and media skills, and by lobbying on behalf of the groups. Another successful NGO-supported initiative is the training of paralegals, from local communities including women. The paralegals hold information sessions in their respective communities on subjects such as conflict prevention and resolution; land tenure; agricultural and pastoral legislation; other civic education; and the roles and responsibilities of a village chief.
6. Organised collective organization should be based on local initiative, with some help and encouragement from external sources. Such organization will only succeed if participants are convinced that through common activities benefits for all will result and solutions for common problems found. In order to be sustainable the organization must be able to adapt itself to changing circumstances and needs.
7. Training and/or sharing of information on life skills (including stress/anger management, team building and critical thinking); entrepreneurship (including vision development, identifying businesses, marketing, business ethics etc.) and leadership have proved extremely useful for group mobilization and sustainability. Knowledge is power. Women become more practical and proactive in their thinking. Though women may have had experience working together informally, working together in a formal group with rules and regulations, deadlines and a need for transparency and accountability, may be very different and alien. Time is needed for women to adjust to this different way of working together.
8. Follow up support for groups is vital for a period of time including the provision of further advice, mentoring and support as required. It may be necessary for an external advisor to act as a mediator in initial disputes, whilst the experience of the group in dealing with such matters may be low. Additionally linkages can be facilitated with other groups.
9. It should not be assumed that men and women have to belong to separate groups. In general people prefer mixed groups and when men and women do work together it has been shown that their output is greater due to financial stability; better security and stability of the group; more variety of activities/opportunities to get involved in; longer-term benefits of decisions though the decision-making may take longer for consensus to be reached; and increased productivity. However where in public men and women are separated, it may be necessary to create a woman's organization. If not, women may be less likely to contribute and participate in meetings and decision making processes, and there are more likely to be conflicts at home. The pros and cons of both separate and mixed groups are discussed above.
10. Well organized groups also have the function of channeling the interests of their members and making these known in political circles. They may influence agriculture politics, extension services and project development. By doing so, capacity building and decision making power, as well as self confidence of men and women increase. Group formation has been shown to diffuse socio-economic barriers and social divides, whilst building social capital. The building of social cohesion is particularly relevant in communities who have experienced recent conflict.
11. It is important to identify problems within groups early and act upon them. It is advantageous if members themselves can assess the problems, bring issues into the open, discuss and find solutions. Self-assessments should be carried out on a regular basis, not only to identify and solve problems but also to take time out to reflect on progress and how this could be improved.

9.0 PARTICIPATION: THE POWER OF CHOICE AND VOICE

9.1 Introduction to Different Levels of 'Participation'

Participation, like development, means vastly different things to different people depending on who defines it and uses it, and to what end, where, when and how: see Box 9.1 below for a 'continuum of participation'. Past experience suggests that participatory development can bring about both negative and positive change. Much depends on the relation of power embedded in the broader social context as well as in the participatory process itself.

Box 9.1: A Continuum of Participation

<u>Passive</u>	<u>Information giving</u>	<u>Consultation</u>	<u>Functional</u>	<u>Interactive</u>	<u>Self mobilisation</u>
<u>Passive participation</u>	Decisions made by powerful 'external' stakeholders only; communities participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened.				
<u>Participation by information giving</u>	Communities participate by answering questions posed by external stakeholders or project staff; they do not have opportunity to influence decision making as findings are not shared.				
<u>Participation by consultation</u>	Communities participate by being consulted, and external stakeholders consider their knowledge and interests; outsiders define both problems and solutions but may modify these based on local people's responses; process does not concede any share in decision-making and outsiders are under no obligation to take on board local people's views.				
<u>Functional participation</u>	Communities participate by forming groups to meet pre-determined objectives of a programme driven by external stakeholders; such involvement does not tend to be at the planning stage but after major decisions have been made; such institutions may be dependent on external initiators but can also become self-dependent.				
<u>Interactive participation</u>	Communities participate in joint analysis, leading to action, formation of new local groups or strengthening of existing ones; local stakeholders take control over local decisions, giving them an incentive in maintaining structures or practices.				
<u>Self-mobilisation</u>	Communities participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems; external agents may play a facilitating or catalytic role.				

Adapted from Pimbert and Pretty 1996

"For participation to promote empowerment it needs to be more than a process of consultation over decisions already made elsewhere. Strategies to support women's empowerment should encourage women's participation at all stages of projects, including evaluation....In this way the process of participation should itself be empowering" (Oxaal 1997: 11). PRA (participatory rural appraisal) and other approaches of action research can increase female participation and control over knowledge (Mosse 1994; Ridgewell et al 2007).

However Oxfam GB Uganda (2004) suggest that in particular there is a need for greater visibility of women in leadership positions. It is particularly important to avoid over-reliance on participation for achieving empowerment as this presents opportunities for manipulation and can be seen to have the perverse impact of entrenching customary roles. Participation needs to look beyond

mere numbers and examine the *quality* of women's inputs. Indeed Chakravarty-Kaul (2008) suggests that women are psychologically empowered when they perceive themselves capable of problem solving through hearing the voices of others or interacting with others similarly placed. Further when women gain self-confidence in a group which solves problems sequentially, each step being a small step forward gives confidence for the next steps.

Indeed men and women participate in different ways. Kilavu (2003:14) suggests that "men are more verbose and more influential and proactively involved in performing the task while women encourage a high degree of participation in management process, share information and power, attempt to enhance the self-worth of those with whom they work and attempt to excite people about their work....Recognizing that there are individual differences and that groups and their activities vary widely, women generally do participate less in the presence of men than men do with men." As a result it is important to take into account the different ways that men and women do participate, build on the positive aspects of this and where thought appropriate encourage men and women to participate in different ways.

9.2 How Women Get to Know What is Happening

Before being able to participate in activities and/or such as decision making processes women and men need to know what is happening, where and when. Additionally they need to be able to access information networks in order to share their own experiences, needs, problems and solutions. Pastoral communities often have traditional means of communication often based on the verbal rather than the written word (see Box 9.2).

Box 9.2 Sharing Information Through *Dagu*

Living as they do in remote areas, communication is vital to the Afar. Their traditional communication system is called *dagu*. This system enables information to be passed from one person to another via either acquaintances or strangers. A conversation begins with the traditional Arabic greeting, *salaam aleikum*. The person with the information introduces him- or herself, says where he or she is from, and what his or her clan is. Only then is the news shared. During the *dagu* the person with the information is obliged to pass all of it to others. There are no secrets in Afar society once information has been passed to another person. A person who withholds information will become an outcast (*areokelle*). The process of passing on the information is slow, and the listener must be patient. *Dagu* can take place between people of any age and sex. Elders and clan leaders speak first. However, there can be no exchange of information between women and men who are not related (IIRR 2004:91).

Though women may not be as mobile as men they are able to meet other women on a regular basis to exchange information, news and experiences. Often trips to collect firewood and water are a time to chat and share news. Other opportunities to meet include down at the river when washing clothes, at the market and/or when preparing food including grinding, cooking and making such as coffee. Therefore if only one woman attends a meeting she is able to pass on the information to others at a number of times and places. By supporting the stronger women in the community to take part in meetings, women not attending the meetings will have information passed onto them.

Amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania, informal gatherings of women take place every day such as meeting under a tree or in a house to discuss current matters to plan their common undertakings. More formal gatherings include such as 'enkigwena' which bring women together to talk about issues, reprimands and fines. Rituals also bring women together (Mitzlaff 1988).

In Mali radio broadcasts have been used by Sahel ECO to promote an understanding of different topics. One such broadcast focussed on the place of literacy in the political emergence of women: broadcast in three language versions: two local and French. Other topics have focussed on NRM and pastoral systems and production (Mary Allen personal communication 2008). And in Tanzania a Maasai man set up a radio station after a visit to Ireland, with help from SIDA, which provides information to between 600,000 and 800,000 listeners who gather around those 35-40% who have radios. Amongst other things they broadcast educational programmes on education, the environment, human rights especially of women and children, health and water; cultural programmes; religious programmes including Maasai and Muslim traditions; and children's programmes including a programme in which community elders tell traditional stories to children on air (Rouleau and Nerland 2006).

9.3 Getting One's Voice Heard

Cultural practices can promote the respect of and protection of women, plus ensure that their voices are heard. For example, in Borana, if a woman appears at a *kora* (a community meeting), all will stop to listen to her and act on her complaint before moving on with their meeting. Additionally Oromo women carrying their *siiqqee* sticks as symbols of womanhood may also intervene in a dispute and refer it to the elders (IIRR 2004). Communities in the Karamajong cluster (Uganda, Kenya, Sudan) also have their own traditional response mechanisms including *alokita*, the traditional right of women to air grievances (EU/UNDP 2004).

Interventions that aim to strengthen women's voice may be less effective unless women know and understand why and for what their voice is being strengthened (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004). One can not force a woman to stand up and speak in a meeting, and if one should she is likely to lack confidence, speak badly and perhaps risk opportunities for future contribution.

In Wajir, Kenya, Oxfam experienced difficulties in convincing male dominated pastoral associations of the value of including women. When women attended meetings they were not encouraged to speak. Often only a small number of women would attend (Birch and Shuria 2002). However Dekha Ibrahim, a well respected community worker and activist in Wajir notes:

Even one woman joining the committee of a pastoral association is a really big step, given traditional Somali culture. And she is often worth five men, because other women will be making their voices heard through her. For some women, the older they get, the more liberating it can be. They feel that they have finished delivering children and can now realise their potential. It is these women who tend to participate in the pastoral associations.

One approach taken by IRDNC in Namibia to build the capacity and willingness of women taking part, has been training women in public speaking. This has had dramatic results (see Box 9.3). Indeed increasingly women are growing confident to speak out against injustices and an abuse of their rights. One such example is a group of Bedouin women in Israel who protested against the burning of their women's centre (see Box 9.4).

Box 9.3 Building Women's Capacity for Public Speaking

Women are taking a higher profile at meetings compared to even a few years ago. It is believed that this is a direct result of the public speaking and communications workshops held for hundreds of women in these conservancies. The two-day public-speaking course like all IRDNC training, is fully participatory and the women taking part are required to give a number of talks, starting with a simple two-minute description of a magazine picture. Different aspects of effective public speaking – posture, body language, eye-contact, voice tone, content etc. are tackled one by one, with each woman practicing in front of the group and receiving feedback. By the end of the two days all participants have given at least 10 'speeches' and their final talk – usually a practice run about what they would like their conservancy to spend its income on, is the grand finale.

Margie Jacobsohn, one of IRDNC's founders said: "I assisted Karen with the first course, in Sesfontein Conservancy several years ago, and watched 25 rural women, most of whom had never spoken in public before grow into accomplished speakers. The simpering, wriggling, giggling, hand in front of mouth, eyes on the ground and whispering voices that marred the women's communication on the first day steadily evolved into confident, clear and effective communication. A few women with obvious oratory talents stood out above the rest but all transformed into effective speakers."

Source: Margie Jacobsohn personal communication 2008

Box 9.4 Pastoral Protests

The Association for the Improvement of the Status of Women: Laqiya was established in 1992 by women of the village in order to lead social change through the empowerment of Israeli Arab-Bedouin women and the advancement of their status in their own community in particular and in Israeli society in general. The activities of the Association are concentrated in the Desert Embroidery Project, a project that employs and provides a living for 165 women. In May 2005 their Centre was set on fire. However this did not stop the women. First they wrote a letter of protest highlighting that as a result of this "contemptible incident" 165 women lose their livelihood and approximately 600 children that benefit from the activities of the Association will have to wait until the Association can return to full operation. "This incident is one of the many incidents against social change in general and against activities for women in particular, that have occurred in the village." In their letter they called for everyone to come to their village for a march of protest and support that will begin at the burnt building and continue to the local Municipality Building (Laqiya 2005).

In fact the women did rebuild their Centre and continue to work (Allen Degen 2008 personal communication).

Box 9.5 Things Are Getting "Worse"

Ahmed is deeply suspicious of women's empowerment in his village in Afar region. "It is true. Women are part of the community, but they are weak people" says Ahmed, a pastoralist in this poor, remote region. "Their minds hang down just like their breasts. But now things are changing with the help of outsiders. Nowadays women are free to speak as they wish. Things are getting worse"

Source: Fitzgibbon undated (b)

Indeed men may not be entirely supportive of women getting their voices heard and taking part in decision making processes (see Box 9.5) In order to avoid this type of attitude, men need to understand the benefits of including women, their knowledge and experiences. This reiterates the need for a gender sensitive approach that includes both men and women from planning to implementation.

9.3.1 National gatherings

National and international gatherings for pastoralists have increased in number and volume of the last few years. Many are organised by NGOs and/or governments. They offer a platform for pastoral voices to be heard, including those of women.

Pastoralist Days or Pastoralist Weeks are now common in many pastoralist dominated countries. In Kenya for example CEMIRIDE (Centre for Minority Rights Development) organises the Pastoralist Week. During this time a pastoralist's fashion show is held, a newsletter had been developed, the "Great Trek Road Campaign" and "Peace Marathon" has taken place, radio and television interviews are held, together with a children's symposium, an art exhibition, thematic workshop, a pastoralists' products exhibition, the Greater Horn Africa Regional Forum and a Gala Night (Pastoralist Post 2005). It is usual that cabinet ministers, MPs and other government representatives attend. Often these celebrations will have a part dedicated to pastoral women. For example in 2004 the Kenya Pastoralist Week saw the launch of the Pastoralists Women Consortium, an agency that would promote women's rights within pastoralist areas and a Gender Forum was held.

In Europe too, as movements in rural areas have been revitalised and increased in profile and strength, remaining shepherds and pastoralists have also mobilised themselves in order to highlight their needs and concerns. In Spain for example, an annual festival is held which highlights pastoral concerns and calls on authorities to protect 120,000 km of paths used for seasonal movement of livestock, from cool, highland pastures in summer to lower-lying ones in winter. Some of them are 800 years old. The festival which includes herding hundreds of sheep down the streets is held in Madrid which lies along two of the north-south routes. One of these dates back to 1372. In 2007 the protest coincided with a global gathering held in the country. A number of pastoralists attending the gathering also attended the protest. This included a pastoral woman from the Samburu who assisted the Spanish shepherds in their protest.



Photo: An African woman at the Segovia Gathering helps guide a flock of sheep through the streets of in Madrid, Sunday Sept. 9, 2007. Harold Heckle, Associated Press

9.3.2 International gatherings

International movements, days, years and gatherings are increasingly offering opportunities for pastoral women to take part and get their voices heard too. For example World Women's Day in 2007 was organized in Isiolo, Kenya and included women from Turkana, Borana, Somali and Rendille communities. Government commissioners attended and the women were able to voice their concerns, problems and recommendations in front of them (IIN 2007).

PCI (Pastoralist Communication Initiative) based in Ethiopia has been organising gatherings for pastoralists from around the world over the last four years. At the first meeting held in Turmi, Ethiopia, the women complained that they had no space to speak or voice their concerns within the male dominated discussion that were organised. As a result a 'women-only' meeting was held under a big shade tree. A Karo woman rose and spoke to the dozen or so foreign women in the meeting saying that she was glad to know that they were women because she and others had been saying they were not sure. "You wear trousers and you speak like men...you are the equal of the men and you speak in front of men, but we Karo and Hamar and Mursi women, we are not the equal of men – we are much lower – the men think we are dirt. They say you women are dirt". An elderly Mursi woman then speaks "The men say our job is to clean the house, cook, collect water and firewood and have children. They say we should not have education. But I want change. I want education for our girls. I want our lives to improve from learning new things, from foreigners like you." One woman who defended the meeting against concerns raised that the gathering was only highlighting the negative side of gender relations, said: "We are not saying they are weak women; we are saying they are oppressed" (Simpson-Hebert 2005).

Further a number of pastoralist women from Kenya including representatives from the Network of Pastoralist Women, IIN, and Maasai Women for Education and Economic Development, Kenya attended the first Global Women's Assembly on the Environment: Women as the Voice for the Environment (WAVE) held at UNEP, Nairobi in 2004. As a result of the Assembly a Manifesto for WAVE was established and recommendations were made to UNEP. However it did not appear that the particular needs or challenges of pastoralist women were highlighted during the meeting (UNEP 2004).

In Asia too, international gatherings have served to provide women including pastoral women a voice. This has been shown to increase their self-confidence and self-esteem whilst encouraging feelings of solidarity, rapport and the realisation that others are facing similar challenges which can be overcome. For example, ICIMOD (International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development) hosted a conference in Thimpu, Bhutan in 2002 at which a number of pastoral women from more mountainous areas attended. The event was given international media coverage and women's voices were provided a forum for expression in the publication and CD: *Celebrating Mountain Women – A Collection of Papers*.

9.3.3 Alternative Media

Films on pastoralism have also proven to be a successful way of providing pastoral women and men a space to air their view, perspectives and stories. Not only do these offer opportunities to educate non-pastoralists in the pastoral way of life, but also provides a useful resource to share with other pastoralists for exchange of ideas and experiences. For example, as part of an action research project on gender and pastoralism, SOS Sahel Ethiopia commissioned the making of a film called *The Unsung*

Heroines. This film provided a forum for pastoral women from three pastoralist regions in Ethiopia to describe how they contributed to pastoralist livelihoods and systems. The film highlighted three roles of women in particular: as livestock managers and income generators; natural resource managers; and household and society providers. Women from Afar, Borana and Somali regions spoke with confidence and pride as they described their lives, their challenges and their hopes for the future.

Increasingly the internet is proving to be a place for providing information, experiences and campaigns for and of pastoral women. Though many pastoral women do not have access to electricity, let alone the internet, this method of communication will increasingly become available and opens up opportunities for pastoral communities to communicate with the world. To date, most websites describing pastoral women's groups, their work and the like have been set up by 'outsiders' with skills and resources to do so. As a result there is the danger of such websites being alienated from the people they are supposed to represent, and without adequate monitoring by the pastoralists concerned there is the risk that they could be wrongly represented. As much as possible ways should be found to ensure that communities understand and approve of such representation on the internet and have the means to adequately influence it.

9.4 Influencing and Taking Part in Decision Making Processes of Household

Women have a variety of means at their disposal to influence decision making processes of the household. This includes 'pillow talk' (influencing their husband during private times such as in bed); withholding food or services; and influencing male relatives including elder sons with whom mother's often have a very close relationship. Raika women of Rajasthan, India for example, do not come forward or speak in the presence of their men. However generally, Raika women are acknowledged as the ones pulling the strings behind the scenes. This is reflected in the proverb:

Raika men are as straight as a cow, but Raika women are as cunning as a fox (Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, 2007).

It is suggested that what is often described as the clear separation of the male and female 'worlds' (everyday activities and life, rituals and the like) has assumed greater significance because it is only this separation which can create space for women, which men can neither control nor determine and use to influence the domains outside their control. Adult women often have their own tent, hut or home in which she exercises complete control over who enters, sleeps and eats there; controls all the property and possessions kept within; and nurtures and nourishes her children (Hodgson 2000a) (see also Box 9.7). And amongst several groups in Tanzania, one of the most dishonourable acts that a husband can perform is to enter his wife's bedroom, where the milk calabashes are stored, in order to determine how much milk she has; "for this not only involves an infringement of her domestic right to distribute milk as she sees fit, but it strikes at the very heart of the mutual respect (eng'anyit) and service on which their economic unity as a household must depend..." (Jacobs 1965:164 in Mitzlaff 1988).

Box 9.8 Women's Household Property Rights

In the social organisation of the pastoral communities of the Jallube, women have a very central role as head of the fayanne or "hearthold". The fayanne is dominated by the woman and her suudu yaaya (herd), in fact it is the domain of a woman's family in her husband's wuro. It relates to both social groups. The hut and its contents which symbolise the fayanne are the property of the woman and it is built by the female members only of her suudu yaaya. In all these roles it is the control over milk (breast milk as well as cows' milk), around which the social role of women is centred. The formation of a fayanne may be temporary, owing to the high rate of divorce, but that does not mean that established relations will vanish. On the contrary this flexibility of the fayanne may even be an advantage for women, because it enlarges their social networks and gives them freedom of choice (cf. Riesman, 1977; Stenning, 1958). Land is, in this regard, of no importance at all to women. In fact if a woman worked on the land it would lower her status to that of a slave.

Source: de Bruijn 1997

9.5 Influencing and Taking Part in Decision Making Processes at Community Levels

Some suggest that mainly, women are excluded from public decision making processes (Hamilton and Dama 2003). However, even here this need not always be the case. Indeed others have suggested that women have developed non-public more subtle forms of influencing decision making and will use the domestic arena to influence public decisions. "For example within the village, Larim [in Sudan] women help one another in all their tasks from hut-building to weeding to childbearing. This cooperation gives them solidarity and dignity which improves their power in the village decision-making. As Langton (undated: 9) describes: "Men may beat their wives and force daughters to marry unwanted old rich men. Yet the Larim women, like most women in Africa, demonstrate great spirit and physical and mental strength. They are not cowed, and they are heard. The women use group pressure on husbands and fathers. Failing that, they can ridicule, refuse to cook, or especially, refuse to prepare the beer and refuse sexual services. They can also use influential male relatives, or make public accusations. As they get older, women acquire status for being good wives and mothers and advisers." In all these ways women can influence family decisions, decisions about cattle, marriage and community. Men can listen to the opinions of their wives and make decisions based on their suggestions (see for example Box 9.9).

Box 9.9 Unrecognised Power of Women

In a study carried out in Samburu and Rendille, northern Kenya roughly 99% of all male informants stated that they always listened to their wives' advice and that the advice given by their mothers, sisters and other female relatives influenced their decision-making. It was felt by the researcher that women have a tremendous amount of unrecognised power in their hands, which some women are aware of and some are not. Samburu and Ariaal men freely admitted that they do not want to acknowledge this power since they fear what women would do if men actually lifted this veil of secrecy and openly recognised it. In summary it appeared that many women have a great deal of influential power in their societies but their authoritative power is crippled due to male-biased traditions and therefore is less than had been originally anticipated.

Source: Mitchell 2003:3.

Though many organisations try to increase women's participation in public decision making processes this tends to more often result in women attending meetings, but not taking an active part. This is because social and cultural barriers to women's full participation tend to be complex and embedded, needing more to change than the quotas of an NGO and not least a long term perspective. Indeed it is argued that "issues of sustainability hinder the scaling up of successful instances of women's participation in community affairs. The challenge is to ensure that efforts to strengthen women's groups result in lasting and viable local institutions representing the evolving interests of women and benefiting from an enabling local environment. Once grass-roots organizations representing women's groups have sufficient solidarity, constituency and experience, their extra-community and even political influence can be encouraged through the formation of intergroup clusters and hierarchical structures" (IFAD 2003c: 13). However often this requires sustained efforts beyond the usual lifespan of a typical development project, as well as engagement with other partners in support of new women's movements, and a conducive policy for women's organisation and self-expression.

Some organisations have attempted to influence change through such as training women in public speaking, leadership, and how to take a more active part in decision making structures. A study of women's participation in and influence of economic decision making structures in Kajiado, Kenya showed that it was "minimal" with only two women serving on the land board and women lacking exposure to economic development processes, knowledge about their rights and little awareness of the avenues open to them to exert influence on development planning. Lack of leadership, advocacy and analytical skills further constrained women's involvement. As a follow up to the study a training programme was designed to increase the number of women in economic decision making processes (see Box 9.10) (Kinuthia-Njenga, undated)

Box 9.10 Training Women to Participate in Decision Making Processes

A programme of training was designed in Kajiado, Kenya, as pastoral dominated district. The first stage created a pool of local trainers. Approximately 20 women were trained to train others to advocate for economic empowerment, to encourage a gender perspective in decision making and to promote a gender-responsive planning framework. The second stage provided training for women leaders already involved in local decision making structures at the grassroots level or with the potential to become involved. Though positive impacts of a similar training carried out were found in a more sedentarised training (i.e. more women taking up positions in local decision making forums) it was not stated what impact was found in Kajiado.

Source: Kinuthia-Njenga non datés.

Indeed it is suggested that even minor gains in women's representation can actually be highly significant (Birch and Shuria 2002). What has been read as servility and submission e.g. towards elders, should rather be interpreted more as silence and respect (Mitzlaff 1988). Indeed, codes of morality and respect can strongly prescribe behaviour amongst men and women. Whether the *pulaaka* of Fulani (Buhl and Homewood 2000) or *enkanyit* of Maasai (Hodgson 2000b), such codes structure the greetings, actions and interactions of both men and women and therefore also provide sites for the mediation and negotiation of their relative positions (Hodgson 2000a).

The HLFFDP (Hills Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project) in Nepal managed to improve women's bargaining power within communities and government institutions through a focus on changing attitudes of men to women and their capacities in livestock production and in their role as community leaders. Working with local women's organisations and the local forestry service, encouraging women to become female extension agents, assisted this (Gurung and Lama 2008).

9.6 Women Influencing and Taking Part in Government

It is not common to find pastoral women involved in politics and local or national government. For example although Somali women have had the right to vote in Islam for over 1400 years, in Somalia since 1958 in the south and since 1961 in the north, yet they are not permitted to take part in the tribal or assembly of elder where the real clan decision making process takes place (Affi 1995). Some suggest that this is because in political life, it is generally the male styles of leadership and concepts of power and authority that are valued and that inform the culture of both formal and informal political institutions (IFAD 2003c). Others would argue that women do not take part because they do not have the time, their work burdens meaning they cannot commit to the attending of meetings and other events.

Political empowerment is said to be a key priority for pastoral women – “strengthening decision-making power in household and community” (Dorothy Hodgson personal communication 2008). It is suggested that an important approach to supporting women's empowerment is the promotion of participation of women in formal politics, alongside support to broad programmes of democratisation and good governance. This includes promoting women in government and national and local party politics as well as supporting women's involvement in NGOs and women's movements (Oxaal 1997).

Positive action, such as reserving places for women in government can be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for their increased participation. Further it can result token women being appointed who in actual fact have little power and lack appropriate skills, and ‘reserved seats’ may be interpreted as a ceiling for the number of women in parliament (IFAD 2003c; Oxaal 1997). It is interesting to note that in Kenya and Ethiopia there are two and three female parliamentarians (respectively) who come from a pastoral background. In Tanzania there is one pastoral women parliamentarian and in Uganda none (though the local governance act means that one woman from each district should be nominated for the Parliament). The two countries with reservations for women (Tanzania and Uganda) have the least number of pastoralist women, as compared to Ethiopia and Kenya who have fewer women overall but more pastoralists. This would suggest that adopting party quotas rather than reservations is a preferable mechanism to encourage pastoral women's representation (Andrew Ridgewell, consultant for Minority Rights Group, London, personal communication 2008). In IFAD's experience “negotiating with communities an agreed level of representation of women on committees and establishing quotas in local political bodies...have sometimes worked to increase women's *presence* in such structures. However, before rural women can actively participate in such bodies – or even assume leadership roles – considerable time and efforts are required” (IFAD 2003c: 13). In Pakistan for example, through IFAD-supported projects the value of women's greater participation in public life has been demonstrated and this has encouraged local governments to reserve 33% of local council seats for women. “The process can be sped up, for instance through literacy campaigns in areas with low literacy levels. Support from husbands, other family members and local leaders is essential, and they need to be made aware of the importance of women being involved in such activities” (ibid). Other measures to increase the quality of women's political participation include awareness raising, training programme for female candidates, leadership training, the cultivation of links and networks, and the timing of meetings and the provision of childcare to fit with women's work responsibilities (Oxaal 1997).

A small number of NGOs have been supporting pastoral women and advocating for their greater participation in politics and government processes. Nairobi-based NGO IIN for example works to develop connections between indigenous groups, strengthen indigenous demands for human rights and enhance the political participation of indigenous groups, including women in Kenya. It strives to empower indigenous women's groups, helping them to organize to meet the needs of women in their communities and providing them with educational programs on topics such as HIV/AIDS and human rights. In Mali too, Sahel ECO is trying to bring about political change and organised a conference in 2007 to debate the topic “The place of literacy in the political emergence of women”. In front of an audience of about 200 people, mostly women, two beneficiaries of the project, a female REFLECT circle moderator from Konna and a male paralegal from Bankass, presented oral testimonies based on their experiences (Sahel ECO 2008).

Some organisations have supported women and trained them how to vote. For example during Ethiopia's 2005 federal and regional elections, SOS Sahel Ethiopia assisted British-based Electoral Reform International Services in providing Somali women (including pastoralists) who were leaders of women's groups, with pre-election awareness training. Using pictorial techniques the women were taught about their rights to vote, how to consider different candidates, the electoral process and how to vote. These women leaders were then expected to take the information back to their women's groups and share it with them. In all about 150 leaders of women's groups were trained.

Other NGOs have created opportunities for pastoral women to meet and speak to political parties, government department heads and even State Ministers. Further exposure trips to other communities, cities and/or other countries can increase women's confidence and ‘worldliness’ as well as their knowledge. An example from India is provided in Box 9.11.

Box 9.11 Dailibai Raika Speaks Out to a State Minister

Although Dailibai Raika dons traditional dress, she is a modern woman in all respects balancing earning a living with raising a family. Her husband rarely makes an appearance at home being absorbed with his work at a temple. She works part-time in a government sponsored pre-school programme where she prepares lunch for the children. Dailibai is also known for her skills as a traditional animal healer, and her small herd of livestock consisting of two goats and a cow is composed of animals that were discarded by their owners because they had broken legs.

Known for her outspokenness, she was invited to join the board of Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan (LPPS) a local NGO supporting pastoralists in Rajasthan. The position provided her with the opportunity to travel to several places in Rajasthan and even to Delhi. There she participated in a national-level meeting of pastoralists organized by the LIFE-initiative. During a meeting with a Minister of State who heads the Prime Minister's Office she cast off her traditional female role of keeping quiet when men speak and proceeded to articulate the problems of her community in accessing grazing land much to the delight of LPPS but to the chagrin of many of the pastoralist men.

As a result of her outspokenness and non-stereotypical behaviour Dailibai has been ridiculed and berated by the men in her community, and all sorts of rumours have circulated about her. However, the League for Pastoral Peoples took her “on a trip to Europe where she managed brilliantly. Upon her return, she was given a lot more respect by her community, and now feels more empowered” (Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, personal communication 2008).

Source: Köhler-Rollefson 2007; Ilse Köhler-Rollefson personal communication 2008.

In Uganda although there are statutory provisions for women's participation within the local council structure, there are practical and cultural limitations on women's public role in pastoral societies (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004). Of the five aspects of empowerment (see Longwe 1990) the most difficult one for women to articulate and find good examples of seemed to be the one on participation. Most of the women felt that you needed to be a very strong and courageous woman to stand up and address meetings in mixed gatherings and that women did have something to contribute to leadership in the community, but whilst they showed a personal interest in all the other levels of empowerment, it was difficult for them to pin down any particular advantages to being "strong" in this way. Nevertheless, women have been actively involved in the different levels of the local councils, though the quality of this participation can be questioned.

9.7 Women Influencing Policy Change

A few examples were identified of individual women from pastoral or livestock-based backgrounds having positions where they could influence both international and national policies. These included Dr Jacqueline Sultan – a cattle breeder from Guinea – who is a member of the AU Specialist Task Force on the Pastoral Policy Framework for Africa. She will be aiming to ensure that women's issues are central to pastoral policies being developed. She believes that prioritising women's issues will entail "as a start, bringing women into pastoral policy formulation processes to voice out their needs" (Pastoralist Voices 2008). Secondly there is the example of Lucy Mulenkei who heads IIN and AIWO based in Kenya (mentioned previously). She is a common participant in many policy making (international and national) forums including the Africa Regional Expert Meeting, Indigenous Rights in the Commonwealth Project in Cape Town 2002. Amongst other things she called for "indigenous women to have some level of assertiveness and empowerment to be able to pursue judicial remedies and be brave in fighting for their rights...a lot has been done...There is need for political will, of policy makers at the highest levels to make progress" (Mulenkei 2002).

A few NGOs have also focused on increasing women's involvement in local policy and planning development (see Box 9.13).

Box 9.13 Women Influencing Policy Makers in Nepal

The HLFFDP in Nepal has been providing local female Group Promoters (GPs) with continual gender and leadership training. Assisted by an all-women Gender Team the GPs have been inspired to build a sense of solidarity, and to encourage and depend on one another for support - a behaviour modeled by the Gender Team themselves. The GP's developed a high degree of trust in the Gender Team, as they gained a sense that "we had a mission, we were willing to take risks, even to lose our jobs." The GPs felt proud to be associated with such a group of women, and they themselves gained in status through linkages to high level Project staff and government officials. These strong, outspoken women spoke frankly and even with a sense of familiarity with Department of Forestry rangers. They succeeded in securing resources such as literacy classes from other agencies. Staff of some agencies were said to be intimidated by them, as their reputation for persistence was well known.

The GPs' association, named AASTHA, has now expanded to seven districts and has an executive body, 59 members and seven advisory members that include women from other forestry projects as well. One special characteristic of this group is their leadership abilities, which has allowed them to voice their concerns in meetings with high level policy makers and the National Planning Commission to advocate for leasehold forestry for livelihood management by women in conflict situations and in general. Advised by SPD staff, this association continues to promote women's role in forestry and livestock development at all levels.

Source: Gurung et al undated

9.8 Summary

1. It is important to understand that there are different levels of participation from 'passive' to 'self-mobilisation'. A number of women can attend a meeting and watch the proceedings without taking part (passively), rather than being 'consulted' or organizing themselves into a group, organizing their own meeting and own decisions ('self-mobilisation'). It can be easy to talk about 'participation' without considering which level has been achieved. It is common to consider the higher levels of participation to be the goal if 'empowerment' is to be achieved, however some women may be content with the achievement of a lower level. For example women can feel psychologically empowered when they perceive themselves capable of problem solving through hearing the voices of others or interacting with others similarly placed. Small steps forward provide confidence for the next step. An over-reliance on 'participation' for achieving empowerment can risk manipulation and in fact can entrench customary roles.
2. Women are good amongst themselves in encouraging a high participation of their contemporaries, sharing information and power, encouraging and enhancing the self-worth of those with whom they work. However women generally do participate less in the presence of men than men do with men. As a result it can often prove the case that it is better to create a new space for women's involvement, participation and representation rather than trying to open up an old one. When men have seen that their own 'power' is not threatened and have learnt to take pride in their wives' involvement and contribution, they can prove more than willing to assist them.
3. Women use a variety of ways to exchange, send and receive information. Pastoral groups will often have their own indigenous system (normally verbal) that carries information across regions at surprising speed. Further informal gatherings happening in certain places (e.g. under a tree, or around the fire) at certain times, throughout the day to drink coffee or eat together, wash clothes, make handicrafts, or just to discuss and talk. These gatherings provide important times for discussion and information exchange. Some NGOs have encouraged the spread of information through radio or through informal women's gatherings.

4. There are customary mechanisms for women (and men) to have their voices heard, air grievances and complaints, and offer opinions. Though women may not attend all large 'community' meetings, there are many different ways that they can influence decisions and get their opinions across. Additionally women are more likely to rely on those women who can get access to meetings to take forward their views and suggestions, as such even one woman joining the committee of a pastoral association is a big step.
5. Women use a number of different mechanisms to influence decision making at the household level. Such mechanisms may be subtle and hidden from an 'outsider'. This influence will directly impact on the decisions made by their husbands and other kin. Women may have their own area of domain in the household, their own hut or tent, or at the very least part of a hut over which she exercises complete control, plus all property kept within. If women feel that their decision making power is being infringed then there are a variety of means that can be used by them to show displeasure even protest.
6. It should not be assumed that silence of women in the public arena is servility or submission to men, but rather can be interpreted as respect. As above, women can use a variety of methods to influence decision making in the public arena too. Though men may not readily admit it, they often discuss many things with their wives first before making any decisions in public. Women increasingly are becoming more confident to directly take part and are demanding a place and room to voice their opinions at public meetings. Because this arena has been male dominated in the past, minor gains in women's representation can be highly significant. However it remains the case that currently women do not take part in public gatherings, meetings and decision making processes as much as men do.
7. Indigenous groups and networks boosted by international support such as the UN, have greatly strengthened in recent years: this includes pastoralists. 'Decades' or 'Years' or 'Days' such as UN Decade for Women, FAO's Year of the Mountains, or World Desertification Day offer opportunities for women from pastoral and other groups to meet, share experiences, ideas, skills and build solidarity. Networks such as the Indigenous Information Network led by a Maasai-born woman offer many different forums for pastoral women (and men) to get their voices heard and 'represent' their communities at meetings, conventions, in publications and the media as well as raising awareness on important issues.
8. International and national pastoral gatherings tend to be proactive in encouraging women to take a central role. Though such participation might make little difference on decision making processes at home, the opportunity is likely to increase the respect given to them, together with their confidence and self-esteem. However the amount of women who benefit from such experiences is small, and as such they may have little impact on a wider movement of social change. The production of films highlighting the role that women play may well have opportunities to reach a wider audience and can have a positive impact on the interventions and activities of NGOs for example, but again it is likely to have little impact on social change within communities beyond boosting the self-value of women who took part in the production of the film. Another media that is growing even in pastoralists areas is the use of the internet as a vehicle for information exchange, lobbying and advocacy. Many organizations representing pastoral communities, including women, have sites on the internet and increasingly individuals are gaining access to the internet and email.
9. Encouraging women to take up positions on local NGOs and committees has proved beneficial in boosting their confidence and skills in such as public speaking. Often such positions allow women to travel and be exposed to people, places and situations beyond the confines of their settlement or household. This can further increase women's own self-esteem as well as increase the respect that others give to them. Some NGOs have established 'scholarship' or 'internship' schemes that provide funds for girls/women to study and build up their skills before working for a period of time for the NGO where further on-the-job training is provided and the opportunity for further employment a possibility.
10. As women become more vocal and confident to take part in meetings and decision making processes, men can feel increasingly threatened as their domination is challenged. To try and avoid such a situation the support of men for women's 'empowerment' must be worked on from the very beginning and achieved as much as possible. Ways to encourage this include a) Having open discussions about the social change occurring and why women feel that they want to see such change; b) Encouraging men to talk to their relatives other than their wife, as this can perhaps prove to be a less threatening dialogue and one for which they might have more sympathy; c) Supporting discussions on how women's empowerment can benefit the household and community as a whole, rather than seeing it as a way of taking away men's power. This should be facilitated by someone that the male members of the community know and trust.
11. In time there has grown an increasing emphasis on women gaining more political power, particularly in mainstream government. To date, there is still a poor representation of pastoralist men (and/or with pastoralist roots), in government let alone pastoralist women. However there are examples of women taking up political positions at local, regional and national levels. NGOs and governments will often provide support for this alongside broad programmes of 'democratisation' and 'good governance'. Reserved seats can be held for women, however this may encourage tokenism, unless a great deal of work is done on the ground to ensure that women candidates are representative, capable and willing. Ways to support women include training (including leadership training), the establishment of links and networks (supporting group power) and the provision of childcare to assist women in their domestic responsibilities.
12. To assist women in gaining the skills and confidence to take a greater part in decision making processes, women need to gain the relevant skills and information to participate. Leadership training has proved to be an important resource for this. The focus should be shifted from token participation to genuine representation and inclusion, if not as leaders. Lifting women's social status by valuing their knowledge, roles and skills can give them confidence to take up leadership roles. Religious and cultural change may be necessary to facilitate this.

10. CONTROL IN PERSONAL AND PUBLIC DOMAINS

There tends to be a clear distinction drawn between the public and private roles of women and men. It is suggested that men tend to have a much more distinct and visible public role, while women are more contained to the private sphere or discussing with other women behind doors. This does not mean to say that they do not have an influence on public decision making processes – many do (as described in previous chapters). Further often, they have large control over the household and increasingly influence on public domains too.

10.1 Women Controlling the Household



Women across the world tend to have a reasonable if not dominant level of control over the household and related decision making processes (Geerlings 2004; de Bruijn 1997). The household's hut can be completely dominated by the wife, if not sectioned into male and female domains. Many pastoral women own not land but jewellery (an investment and saving for times of stress) and household equipment. A woman may also own her own hut, which often she will have built herself. A man may even be kept away from the hut. For example, when a woman has a baby it is custom that the husband does not sleep in the house of his wife for the first few months. This is not a ban or a taboo but the house is always full of women, who visit and help the new mother. The presence of a man is seen as a nuisance (Mitzlaff 1988).

Photo: Afar men take care of babies (Sagawa 2006).

In Mali the hut, its equipment and particularly the bed symbolise the 'hearthold' or *fayannde*. Each married woman has her own *fayannde*. The *fayannde* is the basic unit of reproduction, and it is the unit of female production. It has a central role in society (see Box 10.1).

Box 10.1 Women's Control of the Fayannde, Mali

In central Mali the Jallube spend the rainy season in cattle camps at some distance from the fields which they cultivate. The cattle camps may consist of several families and are called *wuro* (pl. ngure). The *wuro* is defined by the joint management of a herd of cattle. It is a male-headed (extended) family which also co-resides in small clusters of huts within the cattle camps. A *wuro* consists of *fayannde*, or 'heartholds', symbolised by the huts and their equipment, the main part of which is the bed. In most cases a *wuro* contains only one hut, although polygamous households are not exceptional. A *fayannde* consists of a woman and the people living with her for whom she is responsible. Among the Jallube it is in most cases a woman and her children. Each married woman has her own *fayannde*. For the Jallube the link between milk and the *fayannde* means that the *fayannde* has a central place in society. This is reflected in several ways: the children within a *fayannde* share their mother's milk, which is the basis of brother-sister care relations; the sharing of milk creates a bond of solidarity for their whole life. The relations between them imply an obligation towards each other of mutual help and support. In the *fayannde* the division of cows' milk and its redistribution is controlled by the woman, who is the head of the hearthhold. As such, a woman plays a central role in the establishment of social networks for the *fayannde* as well as for the *wuro*. Both the *fayannde* and the *wuro* have their own part of the herd, which they exploit together.

Source: de Bruijn 1997

In some pastoral societies, men are increasingly absent from pastoral households. Not only might they have to migrate further to find grazing, but also to towns to find alternative employment opportunities (as in Marsabit or Larim societies, Kenya) (Bee et al 2000; Langton undated). This means that women are often in a position of complete control over day to day activities and events in the household. This can empower women who feel good about being able to manage the household, and ensure that livelihoods are maintained in order to provide for the family. They can feel powerful when making decisions about livestock and other productive assets particularly when success is achieved in their development. This may be particularly the case in times of stress or crisis. Additionally women can take advantage of the absence of their husbands and use the household as a place to reassert themselves, adjust to changes that are facing them, and plan for the future. Shauna Latosky an anthropologist working with the Mursi of Ethiopia explains in Box 10.2.

Box 10.2 Celebrating Mursi Women and Their Female Role

When we speak of 'women's empowerment' in pastoral and nomadic societies, there is a tendency to focus on women's achievements and on the success stories of NGO-sponsored gender projects, rather than the everyday persistence, strength and adaptive abilities of women living on the periphery of a rapidly changing world. I would like to highlight 'the household' as a place where such persistence and adaptation occurs. It is a place where women in many marginalized societies have been able to insulate themselves from the devastation of rapid social change. For example, when speaking about social change among the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic, Billson and Mancini (2006: 209) argue that, despite the growing presence of Inuit women in the public sphere, their longstanding domestic role serves as a buffer for women against the negative impacts of rapid social change and marginality. The household is thus a place for coping with new lifestyles.

The same is true for the Mursi, agro-pastoralists of southern Ethiopia. Motivated by their deep-rooted role as females (which includes responsibilities such as cultivating, healing, home building, processing food and skins and teaching children) the strength of Mursi women is tied to the households in which they live. For the Mursi, the household or "women's place" is called the "olman" and consists primarily of women and children. It is a place which neither men nor visitors may enter without first being invited. It is a place where women give and preserve life, nurture and sustain family. It is also a place where women seek refuge from abusive husbands and where sons seek protection from the wrath of their elders. But, above all, the *olman* (or women's household) is a place in which women more readily adjust to the impacts of change and development. It is here where women discuss how the position of men is being undermined by occasional wage-labour, how the elderly are mistreated by tourists and how pills are replacing their powers to heal. It is in the *olman* that the position of women is consolidated and their courage is felt. And it is here that we should celebrate the everyday achievements of Mursi women and learn that their role as females should not be underestimated.

Source: Shauna LaTosky, personal communication, 2008



Photo: A Mursi woman preparing a new leather skirt. Shauna LaTosky 2007

In Asia too, it is women who control the "domestic sphere" taking responsibility for the work, order and economic productivity (see Box 10.2).

10.2 Taking Order of the Domestic Sphere in Tibet

This valorisation of male anger and aggression is reflected in the habitus within the tent, where there is an emphasis on individual wishes and inclinations. Men are frequently found ostentatiously lying around on carpets, playing cards and demanding food and drink while the women cater to their needs. The appearance of industry and responsibility is minimised as they ride around on their horses or motorbikes, never looking busy or hurried, and there is a carelessness with the burdens they place on their friends and relatives, especially women. The public face of the male nomad is self-centred, careless and indolent. It is the women who are the guardians of domestic order, taking responsibility for the vast bulk of the work around the tent. Even the herding will be delegated to them if a man feels like making a trip into town. Only religious activities, from which women are excluded because of pollution concerns, are the men's sole prerogative. Ekvall (1964: 1135) also describes a taboo on women carrying weapons and I never saw or heard of any instance of women fighting. Anger and aggression is very much male behaviour. An ethic of individuality and irresponsibility therefore characterises the behaviour of the male nomads, while it is the women who take responsibility for the order and economic productivity of the domestic sphere.

Source: Pirie 2005

Indeed, the household can be seen as a site of both cooperation and conflict. Men and women may cooperate if it benefits all but not if it benefits one more than the other. Conflict may be limited by social norms. In a study in Kenya, Wangui (2003) found that cooperation more than conflict was found. Some men for example said they would take up previously female dominated activities such as weeding as a failure to help would result in losing crops. Cooperation breaks down when individuals fail to see the benefits of their labour. Women may withhold labour from the family farm and hire it out. This increases their economic power and thus their ability to negotiate within the household. In some communities women may run away from their husbands if they feel they are being unfairly treated: often returning to their parents' homes.

Further as food providers (see Section 2.1), women can hold a degree of control and power. Holtzman (2002) described the women's domestic food distribution with "the realms of female-centred social action" and analysed the "gastropolitics" between men and women in the household among the Samburu and the Nuer. He showed that the social status of men was fundamentally defined through their relationship with women as food-providers in the space of a meal, and wives controlled the daily distribution and consumption of food to exert influence upon the political spheres of men.

Women can use other means to maintain some control for example, withholding information from their husbands. As Kassie McIlvaine of CARE Burundi explains: "One woman told us that she hides some of her goats at her mother's house without her husband's knowledge, just in case something happens." And contrary to the original belief that men in Burundi do not recognize the benefits of sharing power with women, it has been shown that husbands who share decision-making with their wives report improved economic well-being in the household (Fitzgibbon 2006c). And as Enorok Obin of CARE Somalia states: "Somali women are powerful... People often think that Muslim women are not strong but in fact in Somalia they control the households and are increasingly involved in clan issues" (Spadacini 2006).

10.1.1 Hosting guests

Feeding of guests is an important activity and falls to the women of the household, whether in the reindeer herders of Siberia (Alexander 1999) to the Hamar of Ethiopia (Lydall 2006). Toru Sagawa (2006) describes the space of coffee-drinking in the house, one of the most daily and communal spaces among the Dassanetch (see Box 10.3). The wife controls the serving of coffee to guests and can refuse to do so if she is unhappy with her husband. This is very shameful for the husband: a wife who always serves coffee for guests is said to reflect a man who is not only affluent and hospitable, but also a man of fine character who keeps a good relationship with his wife. As such a husband's prestige relies on him always taking good care of his wife. The guest must show respect to the wife and bring welfare to the house by conducting blessing ceremonies with coffee.

Box 10.3 Coffee-Drinking Defines Daily and Communal Spaces

The handling of coffee is up under the wife's discretion, and only she can brew and allocate it, so that the space of coffee drinking fundamentally depends on her work. Further she can refuse to brew coffee if she has complaints against her husband, such as drinking alcohol too much, going only to the younger wife's house, and physically abusing her. Even if her husband is annoyed by her refusal, she simply ignores him, starting to talk to her baby, or going outside silently and visiting a neighbouring wife to drink coffee. This space has a political importance such as to entertain guests, to bless the society with peace and affluence, and to conduct many *rites de passage*. This space is for gathering and discussion by people of all social categories on private and public topics. The wife always participates in the activities of this space not only as a labourer but as an active participant in the rituals and discussions. Distinctions of public/private domains and political/domestic activities are almost meaningless in the Dasannetch space of coffee drinking. While the wife brews and allocates coffee as domestic worker in her private house, she participates in the political discussion to settle public issues. The space is both private and public, and the wife is domestic and political simultaneously.

Source: Sagawa 2006

10.1.2 Marriage

In the past it is common that pastoral women have little choice or control over whom they marry (Sanou and Aikman 2005). As suggested in Chapter 9, kinship, networks and relations between individuals, families and clans are of great importance and often women find that they are married off to ensure such relations continue, and/or to ensure that assets or property remain 'within the family'. For example, the Hawawir of northern Sudan, prefer marriage between a man and his father's brother's daughter (i.e. cousins). This distributes and redistributes alliances as well as rights to basic resources whether land for living, grazing or agriculture within a select 'family' group. Marriages across sub-tribes also take place (Larsen and Hassan 2003).

However, in practice often women and girls have several ways to influence processes. Amongst the Jie of Uganda for example, girls clearly play an active role in the search for a husband by paying a lot of attention to their own appearance, by performing virtues and skills designed to impress a potential candidate and by flirting openly although carefully, with young men passing by. Amongst the Turkana, the husband of a girl is chosen by her father from those men who have made a proposal, though usually she has a degree of influence on this. However, with the weakening of livelihood security in many families, girls receive increasing pressures in matters concerning their marriage. As herds have become smaller men's dependence on woman's labour diminishes and consequently women lose most of their negotiating power with their husbands and fathers. Smaller herds also means that the family becomes heavily dependent on bridewealth for survival and for reproduction: sometimes a brother can not get married until his sister has and the bridewealth has been received (Kratli 2001: 35).

In most cases newly wed brides will leave their family home and move to their husband's area to live. However this may not always be the case. Amongst the Baggara pastoralists of Sudan for example, it has been shown that "although newly married couples may briefly live with the husband's family initially, after that, residence patterns are extremely fluid. In fact, links through women prevail over links through men...disproving any claims about 'patrilocality' (Hodgson 2000a: 7).

Increasingly women are standing up against traditional customs and calling for their rights to choose their own husband and/or not to marry. For example Kratti (2001:29) talks about a Turkana woman who decided to remain unmarried, "a condition socially very difficult to bear amongst the Turkana and that is known to 'harden people's hearts.'" Women may go to extremes to ensure such rights including running away, public denouncing their husband-to-be or even trying to kill him.

One such example is given in Box 10.4. Another can be found in the example of a Mursi girl who tried to kill the old man that she was being sold off to and did not want to marry. She had told her father that she only wanted to marry her boyfriend, but her father refused and insisted that she marry the old man. The only way she could think of getting out of the marriage was to kill the old man so one night she went to his house to strangle him. However she failed and ran away in the forest to hide. Her father and brothers came after her and beat her. She ran away again and stayed at a foreigner's house who was a friend of hers. She and her boyfriend earned money through working at the anthropology museum in Jinka, letting tourists take her picture and selling Mursi lip-plates, to save money to buy cattle (Shauna Latosky personal communication 2006).

Box 10.4 Now I am very happy to be marrying my lover.....

Fatima² is 21. She lives in Afar Region, Mille woreda. Two years ago she was in love with her boy friend and they were planning to get married. She told her parents about their intentions but her family disagreed. She pleaded with her family to allow them to marry but they rejected her. Instead they decided amongst themselves that she should marry her uncle's son so following the tradition of "absuma". When she heard about their plans she ran away with her boyfriend. Her parents searched for them, sending out warnings that if they did not return, when they found them they would kill the boy. Because they had no safe place to hide for long, the couple returned and immediately Fatima was married off to her cousin.

Cross-cousin marriage or "absuma" is common in the Afar culture and in Mille district almost every girl is expected to marry her uncle's son, with or without her consent. The benefits of such an arrangement are said to create harmonious relations between the couple: as relatives they should be more tolerant and sympathetic towards each other than 'strangers' might be. It is also said to strengthen relations between clan members and retain property within a clan. Within such a marriage no dowry is exchanged, however if an 'outsider' wants to marry an Afar girl he must pay 12 heads of cattle to her family. Finally it is said to provide for the marriage of all girls including disabled and/or unattractive ones.

However for Fatima this was only the beginning of a nightmare. For immediately after her marriage and following tradition her new husband took her to the forest to take her virginity. A newly married girl is taken to such an isolated place to prevent her from running away and so that neighbours will not hear her screams when her husband penetrates her for the first time. After many attempts to penetrate her over a matter of weeks, her husband cut her open with a razor blade and left her there to be rescued by relatives. Fatima bled for weeks afterwards and she spent one month in a clinic receiving treatment during which time her husband did not visit her once. After she had recovered she wanted to report the situation to the local police. However her clan warned her not to involve the police, rather they would deal with the situation internally. And indeed eventually Fatima was able to divorce her husband through the clan system. Finally she was free to marry her boyfriend.

However though Fatima is much happier now she still experiences great pain when urinating or menstruating and any enjoyment of sexual intercourse has been severed from her. Fatima closed her testimony with the following:

Now I am very happy for marrying my lover. I forgot the pain and the hardships, because I could marry the man whom I loved very much. But, what I feel bad about is the clans. They are obstacles for the women's right. Because either they don't allow women to go to the law enforcement bodies or they themselves can't defend the rights of women. When I told them what he did to me, they said to me that since he is your husband he has the right to do what ever he wants. Finally, what I want to say is that in Afar the traditions are for men and completely against the women. We need these to be changed urgently by the help of Allah. We need governmental and non-governmental organisations to help us in changing this condition.

Source: Mohamed and Flintan 2008 forthcoming

Socio-economic and political changes in communities are also changing cultural practices and norms. Though often this may be to the advantage of women, this is not always the case. For example, amongst the Fulbe of Mali the impacts of a drought included a reduction in resources available for weddings – an important event particularly for women. As a result women stood up against the changes that were happening within their community and insisted that a wedding ceremony was held (see Box 10.5).

² Fatima's name has been changed to preserve her anonymity.

Box 10.5 Importance of Weddings for Women in Mali

As drought continued in Mali, there was an increasing absence of wedding ceremonies. It appeared that wedding ceremonies and even marriage itself were being postponed as a consequence of material poverty: the ceremonies simply could not be held. Many women married without a ceremony and without the required exchange of gifts, but were worried and concerned about this phenomenon. A wedding ceremony that was finally held at the end of our stay in December 1991 was dominated by women, and it was mainly women who had insisted on it being held. For them a wedding ceremony is confirmation of their position in society, of the establishment of their unit in society, where rights on milk and milk preparation are centred.

Source: de Bruijn 1997:1

The status of a woman tends to increase with age, as well as her economic situation and individual ability. Sagawa (2006) describes further how a wife's influence increases more when her first child marries and has a child, because to become a grandmother is one of the important indexes of becoming a social elder. Those wives who belong to the same generation-set of women sometimes form a clique under the leadership of elderly wives and demand the slaughter of livestock for them to an elderly man, although it is not always accepted. On the other hand, people cannot easily reject the demands of a young widow as it is believed that she has a strong power of curse by crying. For example, she may slaughter livestock of other people without their permission to feed herself and her children. The owner of the livestock cannot make her return another livestock, but should wait until her children are adults.

Somali women also gain status with age: as she grows older and her experience grows (through listening to meetings held in her house and being invited to other homes), she gains more say. At about the age of forty she may suggest to her husband to marry a young wife who will take care of the livestock and she moves to the nearest town centre with school-going children and in most cases will start a small business. "Depending on the woman's intelligence, you will find many elders coming to her house to ask for her views on different aspects of life from political to business. The same woman when in a meeting held by outsiders – which includes organisations – may not speak in the meeting. This is not that she is not respected but she does not want to contradict the men in front of outsiders. She may still contradict the men if they are misleading the guests and may be taking something in their name but only on a very few occasions. A young however, can not dare stand and say something contradicting the men, she has to gain that respect over time" (Halima Shuria personal communication 2008).

10.1.3 Widowhood and divorce

Indeed, depending upon the society, women may have better or poorer rights after widowhood or divorce. For some divorce may be impossible, for others it may be easier. On the death of husband the woman may be left to restart her own life, or may be married off to another relative through the custom of levirate. For example, amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania, when a man dies one of his younger brothers will take over the role of the husband. If one of the widow's sons has already been circumcised, levirate cannot come into force but the women will found a household of her own with her son. All her subsequent children will be seen as descendants of her deceased husband (Mitzlaff, 1988).

In some cases a woman may marry another woman which helps to safeguard their property. "In the event that an older widow has never borne a son, or if her son(s) has died, in rare cases, she may choose to marry a younger woman and select a lover to impregnate her. If the widow's "wife" gives birth to a son, the latter will inherit all the property of a widow when she dies. Woman-woman marriage seems to be a strategy that some women have devised to safeguard property from being taken from them by their dead husbands' brothers" (Mitchell, 2003:2). Mitchell here is talking about northern Kenya (Rendille and Samburu), but this can also be found in some of the groups in South Omo, Ethiopia.

Women's inheritance rights vary among groups. "The best that can be said is that nowhere are they equal to men's and in some groups, such as the Pokot, women do not have any rights. In case of divorce, husbands keep all of the children except babes in arms, husbands keep all home with few possessions. Among the Afar, a divorced woman takes with her only the livestock given to her as presents by her husband during their marriage" (Markakis 2004: 6).

In many countries however, women's rights to property after divorce or death of a husband are protected by law. As a result they have to face the challenges of maintaining a household and in most cases looking after the children. Many women prove more than capable of achieving this (see Box 10.6).

Box 10.6 Taking on the Family Herd

Chos Malal is a small town in the province of Neuquén (Patagonia) in Argentina. It is situated at the foot of the Andes. Mirella Rivera is the only daughter of a couple of livestock keepers. They spend the winter in Chos Malal and move to the Andes during the summer. Mirella works with her parents now, but soon will take over the herd of 350 goats, 60 sheep, 80 cattle and 20 horses with her brothers. She is the one spending most of the time with the herd, being all year round with the animals. She lives with her herd during the whole transhumance, herding her animals on horseback. There is small house close to the summering area, but most of the nights are spent with the herd. When she can, she goes to Chos Malal to be with her son, and also takes him along with her during his holidays. Mirella has completed primary school and learnt all about her pastoralist activities from her parents then. She is divorced, and has a six year old son alone. The son goes to school in Chos Malal and lives with an aunt when his mother is with the animals. She sells kids and lambs to local merchants. She also sells goat skins and sheep wool on the local market.

Source: Jean-Pierre Biber, personal communication 2008

10.1.4 Sexual relations

Sexual relations in many pastoral communities can be read as 'free' and 'easy'. Often the woman has a large amount of choice over who she has sex with, and it may be quite normal to have several lovers. However as Mitzlaff describes in Box 10.7 this may not necessarily be considered as 'empowering'.

Box 10.7 Sexual Relations amongst the Parakuyo of Tanzania

The Parakuyo of Tanzania believe that the breasts of a girl can only develop when a man has had sex with her – he makes her a woman who is able to breast-feed children. The growing-up of women is thus subjected to the control of men, and her status of being able to reproduce is made dependent on men. Circumcision takes place as a necessary preparation for marriage, "because [it is said] an uncircumcised girl cannot give birth". The circumcision event is well celebrated and will take place over a number of days. Amongst adults, sexual relations between men and women are varied and complex: some are considered legitimate (eg pre-marital relationships between unmarried girls and ilmuran - warriors) or illegitimate (relationships between women and men who do not belong to the husband's age-set). Women will be extremely selective about who they sleep with – it is more likely than not that they will be the ones to decide on a sexual relationship, though a man may indicate his interest. Women will talk about their lovers with the other women: this helps them to become a part of the closely knit group. Women build up solidarity between themselves and will not reveal secrets. Men often feel powerless against the solidarity of women and if they suspect wrongdoings may beat their wives in anger at the lack of respect and frustration that they may be making fun of them behind their backs. If a woman did betray another woman then she would exclude herself from the community of women and potential lovers. The isolation resulting from this would be the worst thing that could happen to a member of the Parakuyo society of whatever sex. Though this freedom of choice could be viewed as relatively empowering for women, it should be recognised that in a society in which virginity, sexual fidelity and physical fatherhood (rather than social fatherhood) are of little importance, the rules of behaviour in such gendered relations are only a relative criterion for the freedoms and limitations of women.

Source: Mitzlaff 1988.

10.2 Women Controlling Public Domains

It is commonly suggested that women have little input to and control over public domains (Markakis 2004). However in the past it was certainly not the case, as stories from pastoral communities in Somalia support (see Box 10.8).

Box 10.8 Queen Arraweelo of 'Somalia'

Once upon a time, there was a famous queen named Arraweelo, who ruled most of what is now Somalia. When she was younger, Arraweelo had witnessed many wars and conflicts between Somalis. She had also seen how the council of elders had, on many occasions, made some unwise decisions. She felt that these were due to the fact that some of the men on the council were not intelligent and capable enough to be in a position of leadership. Her recommendation was that these men should be replaced by women who were intelligent and competent to make decisions that would be of benefit to the community. However, Arraweelo's husband disagreed with her and felt that that kind of work belonged to men and that women were better left to do what they did best housework and childcare. The steps that Arraweelo took to get power are very well known to most Somalis and especially to Somali men. She organized the women into striking from doing household chores, so that the men were kept busy with the cooking and looking after the children. While they were preoccupied with that, Arraweelo took over the leadership, declaring herself queen. From then on, there was peace and prosperity in the land.

Source: Affi 1995

However though such stories can be seen to highlight the role of women in the past, they can also serve to ridicule women and point to their inability to manage livestock and pastoral systems. As such they can serve as an excuse for excluding women from decision making processes (as this example from Ethiopia shows).

Box 10.9 The Story of Ako (Halko) Menoye

Once there came to power in the Gada political structure a terrible lady by the name of Ako (some called her Halko) Menoye. She troubled the people by giving impossible commandments. At one time, she ordered them to build her a house hanging in the air between the ground and the sky. At another time, she wanted a mule with two necks. Later she ordered for the construction of the house with pillars from a 'kussaye' plant (a small succulent plant – *lantana trifolia*). Finally, she asked for an extra-ordinary strong horse for herself. The people were fed up with this lady, and wanted to get rid of her. So when, she asked for the unusual horse, they brought her a zebra, put her on its back and let the animal go. The zebra ran to the jungles with her and knocking her against the woods killed Ako Menoye. From then on the story goes, it was decided that women should never again hold political power in the otherwise quite democratic traditional government of the Oromos. This is a clear rationale for the Gada patriarchy, which had been presumably not patriarchal before that time.

Indeed the Gada system is still controlled by men. And though development NGOs have tried to instill a greater degree of gender equality in participation of the Gada meetings by requesting, even requiring that women should be present, they rarely actively participate. A study of the Gada institutions concluded that rather than focusing on women's participation in the traditional gatherings and institutions as members, the focus of efforts should be on developing skills that enable effective communication between those institutions, women and other local institutions (Muir 2007).

In Kenya too, though women have been encouraged to attend meetings organized by Oxfam in their intervention areas in the north of the country, there is still a sense "that some male leaders do little more than tolerate Oxfam's concerns on this issue. Moreover, although women have clearly benefited from the restocking and credit programmes supported by the project, the pastoral

associations have until now made little attempt to consider in greater depth the more specific and strategic interests of different parts of their membership, including women" (Birch and Shuria 2002: 16).

However, though "men tend to exploit their material and organizational power to represent a claim that it is they, not women, who have the power to sustain the community and to make it prosper" (Meeker et al. 1986:19), most communities can not survive without help, care and love: which, though they shouldn't be assumed to be female attributes, do tend to be found more commonly in women due to the normative tasks of the women, sister, daughter and wife. Indeed in women's relations to men, "women know that their powers to birth, to nurse, and to nurture challenge men's management and distribution of communal food resources" for example (ibid: 29). Further women can feel empowered by creating space in public for themselves and gaining strength not as leaders but from recognition as supporters of community action. Self-initiative and success of action taking through self-initiative can also be empowering (Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Increasingly however, women are becoming more confident and keen to take part in public affairs and even try to change traditional power structures, though not all may approve (see Box 10.10).

Box 10.10 Women and Men Changing Power Structures

Increasingly the Maasai are being involved in mining as middlemen, retail and wholesale business, restaurant operators, trading livestock and livestock products, and selling of veterinary drugs and vaccines. This group, which is mainly composed of young men, is locally known as *Landis*. Both men and women are involved in one way or another in business undertakings. Furthermore, these young "*Landiis*" are encouraging education among their people and they get married to those better educated women locally known as "*Ormekii*". *Ormekii* are schooled women who said to provoke a negative attitude in the community. In turn, they are settled with their husbands conducting their own independent business like involvement in food stuffs vending, making and selling beads, tobacco, and milk especially in growing towns and market centers. The *landiis* and *Ormekiis* are involved in bringing changes in power structure and authority in their communities (Marsabit, Tanzania).

Source: Bee et al 2000

Women in Senegal and Burkina Faso have managed to rise above the usual constraints that Sahel women face and have become local leaders recognized by men and women alike. An action-research programme led by IED (Innovations Environnement Développement) Afrique in Senegal and Burkina Faso wanted to know how they did it. The main conclusions of the research were:

- In rural areas an individual's influence is still largely determined by their family lineage and group. Belonging to a family of noble origin assisted women in dealing with the officials who determine who has access to and control of resources.
- However family background was not a determining factor in gaining access to local institutions. These bodies combine elements of tradition and modernity and tend to function on the basis of skills and effectiveness rather than social ties.
- A husband's approval and support was a determining factor.
- In the beginning it was difficult to juggle childcare, household responsibilities and marital obligations with the mobility demanded of those in public life. Today most leaders do not have very young children.
- To gain recognition and become effective leaders the women took account of other people's sensibilities in their efforts to break into a predominantly male environment and when taking a stand on sensitive issues like land.
- Normally women would gain access to land and other resources through the family head, however increasingly women in positions of authority have used that authority to access land and other resources for women's group members.
- The women are aware that their economic power is an important instrument in negotiating relationships that will further their leadership.
- Communication and interaction with the outside world are of vital importance in rural areas including mobile phones; provision of information through radio; and sharing of transport.
- None of the women interviewed had a formal education during their childhood, but now all can read and write in their own language. These women have a reputation as effective leaders capable of negotiating with decision-makers. In this respect, development partners have played an important role by supporting training programmes as a means of assisting potential leaders.
- In summary the key factors determining a women's ability to develop leadership skills were:
 - the importance of training especially in literacy and numeracy;
 - support from their families;
 - a certain level of economic power; and
 - access to communication enabling them to build links with external actors to secure access to resources for their communities (Haramata 2006).

It is often the case that women are not only controlling the household but also the camp or settlement too. For example, Kratli (2001) describes a cattle camp in Turkana:

In the camp, women were in charge of almost everything, from shelter building to food storing, from water fetching to milking. As men are supposed to keep away from most of these 'women's tasks' they are very dependent on women for basic daily needs. For example, warriors may help water the animals at the water points if necessary, but are never seen fetching water to the camp or cooking (apart from roasting meat). A man contravening these rules would incur endless and merciless teasing by the women.

Box 10.11 In Charge of the Cattle Camps

A. is a bright woman, extremely assertive and outspoken, very strong but not harsh, actually with some inner tenderness and a sharp sense of humour. She is in her early forties, the second of perhaps third wife of the kraal leader in Loteere, with four children, the eldest of whom is a herd boy of about sixteen. We met her in Lokiriama during the food distribution: A. is a member of the community committee that takes care that there is no cheating and that every family gets its share. We asked her whether it was alright for us to spend some weeks in her camp, and she accepted, making the decision on the spot, by herself. When we arrived at the camp, she took care of us.

Source: Kratli 2001.

10.2.1 Festivals and community events

Though it is more often the case that the role of men in cultural and religious events is highlighted, women too play a central role in many of the rituals and events that make up pastoral society. As Mitzlaff (1988:127) describes: "rituals and ceremonies contribute significantly to the way women and men perceive themselves as individuals and social beings. The women's rituals are an opportunity for the self determination of the women's 'cultural space'. They serve to reaffirm, time and again, the position within society and the significance of their lives." The different cultural events experienced by Parakuyo women for example are summarised in Box 10.12.

Box 10.12 Women's Roles in Rituals and Ceremonies, Tanzania

The significant events in the lives of Parakuyo women in Tanzania are mapped out and inevitable: after childhood follows the time of love affairs with warriors, the circumcision ceremony, then the marriage ritual. These are followed by the move into the houses of their mothers-in-law, the construction of their own houses and births. Later they take part in various ceremonies of their sons, in the circumcision and marriage rituals of their daughters as well as in the two rituals of the age-classes of their husbands: oing'eshher and lorbaak. Some are discreet and inconspicuous, such as celebrations of young girls, others are spectacular and take place in a large circle of people, such as circumcision. A woman with three daughters and three sons has to celebrate more than fifty ceremonies and rituals just for herself and her own children and daughters-in-law, celebrations in which she is either the principle person or at least plays an important role. Additionally she will also be a guest on numerous occasions. Women play a role, if only a secondary one, in the celebrations of the whole age-classes of their sons and husbands

Source: Mitzlaff 1988.

Indeed, pastoralist women can exercise significant ritual and religious powers. They may be credited with privileged relationships with their god and perform certain roles in rituals of transition (birth, naming, circumcision, age-set promotion, death) and cultural reproduction. Borana women, for example perform a daily ritual called 'sacrifice of the coffee bean.' At least once, if not twice a day, Borana households gather to share cups of milk with coffee beans fried in butter by married women. Prayers are offered by the women and other members of the household, and those present talk about Borana traditions, history and absent family members. Women may also get involved in spirit possession sessions – women become possessed and serve as mediums, communicating with spirits to seek explanations for guidance and healing times of intensified social and economic dislocations (Aguilar 2000). Indeed, though women may not be allowed to participate in some rituals and communal meetings ruled by men, even these male-centred activities can be constructed through a series of practices and discussions "in the realms of female-centred social action" as the space used for coffee making described in Section 10.1 (Sagawa 2006).

10.3 Women, Conflict and Peacemaking

Pastoral women can play a dominant role in conflict and peacemaking, influencing and controlling them. For example, in struggles for independence women, including pastoral women have played a significant part, though in many cases their contribution was not recognized nor praised (see Box 10.13).

Box 10.13 Somali Women's Contribution to Somalia Independence

During the struggle for independence, many Somali women took part. Many contributed financially by selling their jewelry, others took part in the demonstrations. Many hid the freedom fighters against the colonial powers at a great personal cost, some were jailed and beaten, all for the sake of achieving freedom for the Somali people. One well known woman was Timiro Ukash who was jailed while pregnant by the Italian colonial powers. She gave birth to a baby girl while in jail. When independence was finally achieved and British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland joined together to form the Somali Democratic Republic on July 1st, 1960, Somali women were nowhere to be seen. There were no women representatives in the Cabinet or in Parliament. Their services were no longer required in achieving independence.

Source: Affi 1995

10.3.1 Fuelling conflict between communities

Pastoral women can play a dominant role in fuelling conflicts. Women will sing songs to praise the accomplishments of a certain warrior, chide others for cowardice and record dramatic events. When a conflict starts, the women have the power to accelerate it by supporting men with making poems and other courageous speeches that push men for fight and defense for the tribe honor and pride (Abdella and Mahmood 2003). Others will recite poetry or urge men to continue fighting or once the conflict is resolved, to reinforce peace (Kipuri 1983; Elmi et al 2000). Amongst the Tuareg the women perform a ceremony called *ilugan*, in which the women relate stories of the riders' bravery and heroism, and their beauty and elegance (Butler 2007). And in Mali women's influence over family members through their advice and support is largely recognised as an informal means of guiding the protagonists of conflict (Hamilton and Dama 2003).

10.3.2 Women as peacemakers

However, in general pastoral women tend to play a greater role in peacemaking. For example mothers can act as a mediator between quarrelling sons (Mitzlaff 1988). To maintain peace, women within households apply a variety of mechanisms. They engage household members in time consuming activities, making them busy so that they have no time to go out and fight. They teach their families the importance of peace, forgiveness and respect for life. Household heads deny their household members access to weapons and restrict the herders to specific places where chances of getting into conflict with others are low (Omosa 2005).

In Uganda women share their stories on the impact of conflict on their families and communities, highlighting the negative aspects; and 'whistle blowing' of those instigating conflict is common. Partners also report that women have stopped instigating and celebrating conquests over other communities and a number of the women have attended training courses in peace building. One of the most striking findings to emerge from discussions carried out with the women has been the extent to which insecurity has had an impact on women's lives. All three groups talked about how concerned they are about insecurity and their children's lives, especially their son's chances of survival and education. As a result of this, a number of the women have been active in peace and reconciliation groups and women are speaking out more on the subject of peace during community meetings. This may also explain why the discussion on empowerment focussed so much on the ability to keep your family alive and safe (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004).

Women carry out practices between themselves to encourage peace between communities. This may be in the public view (see Box 10.14) or behind closed doors (Hamilton and Dama 2003). Maasai women from two different groups may exchange an unweaned child with one another, briefly nurse the infant and then return him or her (Hodgson 1999).

Box 10.14 Maintaining Peace Between Pastoralists and Agro-pastoralists

The so-called *kanaka*, the barter of milk for sorghum between Fulbe and Bariba is another important source of income and symbolises the peaceful co-existence of two ethnicities with distinct but interconnected livelihoods. "...a Fulbe woman goes with a calabash filled with milk to a Bariba farmer harvesting his field. He proposes the exchange and, if she accepts, the calabash is emptied and then filled with harvested sorghum (decided by the farmer). It is believed that this transaction will bring the farmer an abundant harvest the following year. The woman tends to keep the sorghum until prices are higher and usually able to realise a considerable profit. However this practice is dying out: today is more likely to be a purely commercial transaction.

Source: Djedjebi and de Haan 2001

Pastoralist women can use various forms of protest to condemn publicly men's actions or infringements of their rights. Somali women may leave their children and stand for an entire day in the desert without shelter to demand the cessation of conflicts. Alternatively they may uncover their hair, or threaten to shave it off or to walk nude through their encampment to demonstrate the seriousness of their concerns (Elmi et al 2000). They can also use the throwing down of their *gambo* which should force men to stop fighting (see Box 10.14). Similarly Maasai women have recourse to *olkishiroto*, whereby they gather to attack men (and women) who violate moral sanctions, beating the perpetrators, damaging their houses and homesteads, and even killing their livestock (Hodgson 2000a: 14).

Box 10.15 Throwing Down the Scarf

When a young Somali girl gets married she then has to cover her head. After she has got married, spent the traditional 7 days in her house she returns home for a day of celebration called *shash saar*. During the celebration a woman who has been married for a long term, known as a good wife and well respected in the community ties the *gambo* or *shaash* on her head. This now moves the girl into the married women's group. The *gambo* therefore has a very big role and status in the Somali community. If a Somali woman removes her *gambo* and throws it on the ground when men are fighting then the men have to stop the fight. The age of the woman is also of essence as a Somali woman gains status with age. A Somali girl is married young usually and therefore has children at an early age. As she grows older and her experience grows (through listening to meetings held in her house and being invited to other homes etc), she gains more say.

Source: Halima Shuria personal communication 2008

But often women may not have a choice about being involved in peacemaking. For example they may serve as "sacrificial lambs" when married off to the clan their father, brothers and uncles have been fighting against in the past (Affi 1995). Usually women will accept this arrangement, understanding it as a means of preserving the peace of the pastoral community as a whole. Further often relatives and other clan members group together to help pay the compensation to an individual who has lost livestock or family

members in a conflict. This practice gives the whole clan an interest in preventing violence, because all clan members must help pay the fine if one of their relatives is found guilty. After a dispute has been solved and the fine paid, the clan of the guilty party may give a woman in marriage to show goodwill. This blood tie helps to maintain peace (IIRR 2004).

Indeed many women understand that there need to be long term solutions including social change such as a higher degree of education, if peace is going to be sustainable. In Samburu District Kenya, conflict is rife within communities and between communities. "Some women feel that there is no solution other than praying to God, while many others adamantly believe that women could play a stronger role in influencing male family members and community and political leaders to stop the violence. On the whole, women felt that education of their daughters and sons and opposition to violence both at home and at school are the keys to creating permanent peace in northern Kenya." (Mitchell 2003: 7).

Many NGOs are working in conflict resolution activities, and increasingly realizing the important role of women and working them too. NGO FAMEC trains the women themselves in conflict resolution techniques and support them to resolve conflicts both in the home and in the community (see Box 10.15). Further it is suggested that one of the most important things that outside organisations can do is to provide a space for dialogue between the traditional structures that are effective across lines of conflict and link them to those of the government. This will improve communication between all parties and lead to a reduction in conflict (Nomadic News 2004).

Box 10.16 Conflict Resolution Support

NGO FAMEC (Family Mediation and Conciliation) organizes human rights and conflict resolution courses for 120 women in Kajiado district, Kenya. Influential women were identified for the course, and their families were consulted to reach a mutual understanding of the importance of their participation. The course gave women knowledge on human rights, particularly the rights of women, and tools with which to encounter human rights abuse and conflict situations. The women who took part in the course went on to form small groups in different parts of the district. The groups advise women in situations of rights abuse, and support conflict resolution in families and communities. Some of the groups have focused on organizing human rights training for other Maasai women, most of whom are illiterate using mediums such as music and drama. "Empowered by the tools they had received...women had been able to prevent a number of young girls from being forced into marriage...genital mutilation was becoming less common....Women spoke of how increased human rights awareness had increased the respect shown to women, and caused women to become more active in different ways.

Source: Kios undated

In many cases elderly women are recognised as having respected skills and status and are looked to for assistance and advice in conflict situations (Hamilton and Dama 2003). And across the world some particular women have been outstanding in their work as peacemakers, one example of this being Kenyan Somali Dekha Ibrahim (see Box 10.16).

Box 10.17 A Pastoral Woman and Global Peace Activist

Dekha Ibrahim was born a Somali pastoralist in Wajir Kenya and amongst other things was instrumental in the setting up of the Wajir Peace Committee (described below). In 1999 Dekha was awarded the Distinguished Medal for Service by the District Commissioner for Wajir on behalf of the Kenyan Government, and in 2005 was named Kenyan Peace Builder of the Year. She was also nominated as one among 1000 women for the Nobel Prize in 2005, now known as 1000 Peace women across the globe. She has worked with numerous NGOs, government bodies and UN agencies. In 2007 she was presented the Right Livelihood Award (otherwise known as the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize) "... for showing in diverse ethnic and cultural situations how religious and other differences can be reconciled, even after violent conflict, and knitted together through a cooperative process that leads to peace and development". Her comprehensive methodology combines grassroots activism, a soft but uncompromising leadership, and a spiritual motivation drawing on the teachings of Islam. Dekha has defined a set of principles that summarise her experience of comprehensive peace building, linking peace theory and policy with pragmatic action, and private lobbying/advocacy with public mobilisation. Sometimes she expresses this through the acronym AFRICA: Analysis, Flexibility, Responsiveness, Innovation, Context-specific and awareness, and Action/learning-orientation. She says:"The participation in a peace process is not about the mathematics of numbers and percentages in relation to who is in majority or minority. It is about plurality, diversity, participation and ownership of all affected by the conflict"

Her story is enlightening and can be found on: <http://www.rightlivelihood.org/abdi.html>

10.3.3 Women's peace movements

In Eastern Kenya women's peace movements have been particularly successful in raising the profile of conflict issues and in promoting peacebuilding. Two movements can be highlighted for their positive work and accomplishments: the Wajir Peace and Development Committees (see Box 10.17) and the Peace Crusades of the Karamajong Cluster (see Box 10.18).

Box 10.18 The Wajir Peace and Development Committees

Wajir is one of the Northern Kenyan districts that was under emergency law from 1963-1990, with government forces fighting an active guerrilla movement (the Shifta war). When the emergency and quasi-occupation ended, the security situation deteriorated even more. There was an open conflict which claimed 1500 lives, and which resulted in a lot of hatred between different clans. In 1992 a number of women (including Dekha Ibrahim – see Box 10.16) as well as concerned men started a grassroots peace initiative, bringing together people from all clans. In June 1993 a conflict broke out in the market place between women traders. This led to the establishment of the Wajir Women's Peace Group and later a Wajir Youth for Peace Group. Despite opposition from the traditional clan leaders (elder men), they began to organise mediation between the warring parties (with representatives of minority groups acting as moderators). When an agreement was in place, in 1995, the Wajir Peace and Development Committee was set up, forming an umbrella for the separate peace groups, with representatives of all parties - clans, government security organs, parliamentarians, civil servants, Muslim and Christian religious leaders, and NGOs including Oxfam GB. Trainings in conflict resolution were carried out including for local government and police; a rapid response team was established; peace festivals were held; prizes were provided to those chiefs who had done the most to promote peace in their area; and the committees have developed into a means of facilitating community development as well as peace.

Sources: Ibrahim and Jenner 1996; Muir and Wekesa 2004; <http://www.rightlivelihood.org/abdi.html>

OAU/IBAR based in Nairobi has been working on livestock issues in the Karamajong cluster. However the conflict in the area constantly hampered the work. The conflicts were mainly due to livestock raiding, particularly amongst the youth. As a result they have been involved in conflict resolution activities with elders, women and youth. One activity they have supported is women's peace crusades or *alokita* made up of women who have suffered from the conflicts, plus elders and youth (Akabwai 2001).

Box 10.19 Women's Peace Crusades

The Women's Peace Crusade is based on the traditional *alokita* of the Karamajong cluster, in which women join together to express their grievances to the wider community, appease evil spirits or praise elders in exchange for animals. It was established during the Women's Border Harmonisation Workshop in Lokichoggio in April 2001, and functions as a means for women to act as ambassadors of peace, bearing messages through songs, poems, dances and speeches performed for neighbouring communities. The women travel along the length of a border area between two communities in conflict. The Turkana-Pokot Women's Peace Crusade traveled through the Pokot grazing areas with nearly 45 participants every two weeks. Key Pokot peace builders were identified through the meetings held at each location and invited to join the group of 'peace ambassadors' and travel ahead to further communities. This strengthened both the relationship between the Pokot and Turkana individuals and enhanced the message of peace in each community. They discussed different means of strengthening trust between their communities. Suggestions included intermarriage, exchange of cattle through trade and marriage, the return of animals stolen in the past as an act of goodwill, commitment of raiders to bring an end to theft, and grazing animals together. Further actions were identified such as creating Village Level Peace Committees, preventing raiders from crossing borders, women cursing their sons who go for raids, and the establishment of resource sharing agreements.

The main role of women in peacemaking is that women have the ability to open a dialogue between two communities in conflict. As they are not directly involved in carrying out raids, women are able to communicate with other women across lines of conflict. They are able to sing songs with women whose husbands have fought their own, and are able to forge bonds because of their common suffering. The crusade pleaded with women to help prevent conflict. Women can often encourage conflicts by encouraging their sons to go on raids. They also play a major role in educating children. Mothers and elders also appealed to the youth to stop their conflicts. Everyone was free to speak. The Women's Peace Crusade brings women's informal roles of persuasion and influence on decision-making men into the public sphere. It is rare for women to have this opportunity but, because of the traditional roots of *alokita*, it is accepted.

Source: Nomadic News 2004.

The commitment of the women involved in these peace movements is highlighted by Halima Shuria, herself a peace activist from Wajir, but now working from Mombassa Kenya (Box 10.19).

Box 10.20 Courage in the Face of Adversity

I would like to give an example of a very courageous, strong, soft spoken and respected mother called Fatuma Mohamed Mire: a woman who stands out in the peace work that was started in Wajir, Kenya. Her story has been told so many times and is also documented on video and probably other papers. She is the only woman elected into the group of elders for peace called Alfatah Elders consisting of 37 persons. Here I will give just one incidence which has fostered my continued respect and love for this very strong woman.

I was in Nairobi and a college friend of mine called me up and told me that mama Fatuma was in Nairobi to bring her son who was very ill and wanted to see us urgently. When we reached the home and greeted her, we were both shocked at how drained and tired she looked. However Fatuma did not want to dwell on herself, but quickly told us why she had wanted to see us: "Before I left Wajir there was this problem that I felt was brewing and I made sure I went to the elders and the police and told them about it. I had to leave and bring my son but I would like you to follow it up and ensure that the incidence does not explode or escalate."

Indeed, even at a time when she had a lot to worry about in terms of her family's health and at her age (she is over sixty years) her town came first and the maintaining of the peace work she had helped in bringing. She is a woman who is not paid a cent to do the work she does that gives her all the sleepless nights and all the walking from one end of the town to the other in the hot scorching sun of Wajir. She always has a smile on her face and a piece of advise and can also be fierce and tough if you trying to destroy the peace or not listening. I pray that I could get just some of the courage, determination and perseverance that she has. God give her strength and long life to continue to do the work she is doing and us the wisdom to learn from her.

Source: Halima Shuria personal communication 2008

10.4 Summary

1. Divisions between "men's and women's worlds (or domains)" should not be assumed. They can be complex, overlapping, dynamic and of varying importance. It is vital to understand these divisions in order to ensure that interventions, activities and support impact on the household including women, in the most effective, equitable and beneficial way. Additionally it should not be assumed that women have little control over the household and community: often women can have complete control over the household/living space if not part of it, as well as have an important role in and control over many community/public activities and events. Men can often be excluded from the home at certain times and only allowed to enter on the invitation of the females of the household.
2. The household, home, hut or tent proves to be much more than a place to live for pastoral women. It is a place and space where they can express their identity, reassert themselves, contemplate and think beyond their struggle to provide for family basic needs, adjust to changes that are facing them and plan for the future. It has been shown to be a place where women can insulate themselves from a changing world, be it due to commercial, tourism, religious or 'modern' influences.
3. Though women may not be seen to control the public arena, they do have important roles to play. Women are heavily involved in festivals and customary events and rituals, and can influence how these are carried out and their knock-on impacts.
4. Though women may not have access to and control over assets such as land, it is likely that they will have control over other important assets including jewellery and household equipment. Jewellery in particular can be converted into cash quickly if the need arises. Often possessions such as jewellery, household equipment and other items under a woman's control have cultural and symbolic meaning as well as economic value: they are part of a woman's identity, relationship building, and celebrating their role in and input to the pastoral household unit.
5. Increasingly pastoral men have to spend periods of time away from the household due to having to travel longer distances for pasture and water, and/or spending times in towns or elsewhere to find work as labourers, guards or other positions. This means that increasingly women are left in control of the household, the camp and part of the herd, if not all of it. Even if men are present, because certain roles are viewed as 'women's roles' it makes men highly dependent on women for certain things such as provision of water, fuel and food. As such they have to ensure that they preserve good relations with the women they are dependent upon.
6. Many women may still have little public choice over whom they marry though in practice there are several ways that they can influence the process. Both men and women are under obligations to ensure that a marriage seals healthy relationships between or across kin and clans, as well as ensures the survival and growth of the pastoral household unit. As the size of herds per household decreases a woman's bridewealth is seen as increasingly important. However due to outside exposure and support, women are finding the strength to deny certain marriages and some will go to great lengths to prevent it including running away, killing their proposed husband or not marrying at all. These can be difficult and challenging decisions to make, and can often result in their being ostracized from their community, if not worse.
7. It is often the case that in pastoral societies a woman has a large degree of choice over whom she has sexual relations with and/or 'affairs'. However though this may be viewed by some as emancipation and freedom of choice, in a society where such choice is given little value and/or importance together with sexual fidelity, virginity and physical fatherhood

(as apposed to social fatherhood) and/or a woman's body is viewed as little more than a child bearer or water/fuelwood carrier are of little importance, others would argue that it has little meaning in relation to women's empowerment. Having said that it is one way that women can get 'one over' their husband, though if he found out there might be serious repercussions. Discussions and secret sharing with female contemporaries can help to build bonding relationships and solidarity between them.

8. Widows or divorcees can often gain status and better rights, though this may not always be the case. Indeed it may be difficult for her to hold onto property, to which her husband's family may try to claim. However again, some women have come up with ingenious strategies to overcome this, including woman-woman marriages. Age also increases a woman's status, as well as lineage: coming from a family of noble origin and standing can make it easier for a woman to approach officials and negotiate access and control over resources.
9. Local institutions are increasingly proving a more neutral ground for gender dynamics to favour women, as they are influenced by government and NGO interventions. It has been shown that women can use their influence in local institutions such as councils and committees to assist the informal women's groups that they belong to. Holding such power can be an important persuasive tool in obtaining the cooperation of relatives. Maintaining communication and networking with the 'outside world' is vital for continual flow of information, ideas, encouragement and for accessing resources, and once women believe strongly in something they will go to great lengths to ensure that it materializes.
10. Where local institutions remain male dominated it may prove more worthwhile to focus less on women's participation in such institutions, but rather effort should be placed on developing skills that enable effective communication between such institutions, women and other local groups.
11. To become a local leader, it requires a woman to be able to juggle her childcare and domestic responsibilities with the public life and to have the support and approval of their husbands. Without a *real* and committed support of men in the community women's representation can become mere tokenism. Additionally a certain level of literacy and numeracy has proved enabling. This can be challenging, and providing assistance can be a worthy form of support. Economic empowerment has been shown to assist this. To gain recognition and become effective leaders women must take account of and be sympathetic towards other people's views and sensibilities when breaking into a predominantly male environment.
12. NGOs and government can prove to be catalysts for women's effective leadership by promoting women to run activities or such as distributing aid. However the impacts of such promotion should be fully recognized as they may result in resentment from men and conflict in the household. Additionally where women have been taking a central role in a development or aid intervention, effort should be made to ensure that women continue to hold a similar position once the project or programme has finished.
13. Pastoral women can play a dominant role in both conflict and peacemaking, influencing and controlling them despite not taking up arms or taking part in the conflict itself. There are numerous ways that women achieve this from praising warriors; to physically protesting against the actions of their menfolk or an infringement of their rights; to educating children in peacemaking; to marrying across clans and building up peace-based reciprocal relationships. One of the most effective ways of influencing peacebuilding has been the highly successful women's peace movements, groups and crusades. Not only have these stopped conflict and negotiated peace, but they have proved to be a sound foundation for social development too.

11. THE IMPACTS OF SEDENTARISATION

An increased level of sedentarisation is occurring in many pastoral communities due to a number of external and internal factors, with both negative and positive impacts for men and women. The sedentarisation of pastoral communities has been and continues to be seen as the way forward by many development agents, particularly government (Abdel Ghaffer Ahmed 2002; Djedjebi and de Haan, 2001). Settlement tends to come from thinking that it is a part of being 'developed' and 'modern' rather than any rational and informed conclusion that it is the most appropriate viable lifestyle for the socio-economic and physical pastoral environment.

Though such sedentarisation is often depicted as 'voluntary', in reality most pastoralists are pushed into situations where they have little choice. This 'forced' sedentarisation can have severe negative impacts on social, political, economic and environmental relations in pastoral communities. Some would suggest that there is *no* clear evidence that forced sedentarisation has worked or 'succeeded' for pastoral people: in general, forced sedentarisation has not improved pastoral livelihoods or livestock production and has in many cases resulted in negative impacts (Larsen and Hassan 2003).

As a result many pastoralists are attempting to live with the reality that agricultural schemes are there to stay and they have to accommodate themselves in the new space left for them to use. This is resulting in a struggle between conserving their way of life, culture and identity yet surviving as a household or community. Gender relations have to be renegotiated as changes occur. Men and women are experiencing the impacts of the changes differently, as new opportunities arise or marginalisation increases. Some of these key impacts are highlighted below.

11.1 Fulfilling Basic Needs

In general the fulfilling of basic needs becomes easier with sedentarisation as communities are more easily serviced with health care, schools, and markets due to easier access, economies of scale and the fact that everyone is staying in one place. This is a common argument amongst service providers such as government, who have generally failed to invest or been willing to invest in service provision that serves nomadic communities.

However although this may be the case several studies report negative consequences of pastoral sedentarisation including poorer nutrition, inadequate housing, and lack of clean drinking water (Larsen and Hassan 2003). The development of water wells may reduce the distance to water sources. However more water may be needed due to dietary/cooking changes. Additionally, what previously was regarded as a common property resource becomes a transactable commodity that can be marketed for cash or in exchange for livestock. Women not only have to access cash for paying for water but may accumulate water debts during the dry season, which they must pay off when milk becomes more abundant (Joeke & Pointing 1991). Once people have reached such a certain level of poverty it is highly difficult to escape a hand-to-mouth situation.

In Kenya for example, settled Rendille children were three times more likely to be malnourished than nomadic children during the drought year of 1992, attributed to the reduction of access to camel's milk amongst settled communities (Nathan et al 1996). A study in Morocco shows that the interruption of long transhumance reduces the access of households to food and medicinal plants, traditionally the responsibility of women. But still today 46% of pastoral households collect medicinal plants and 70% of them collect wild mushroom and truffles (Steinmann 1998). Further women may find it difficult to access 'new foods' so threatening food security (Bee et al 2000) and traditional coping systems for times of stress tend to erode resulting in pastoralists (especially women who are usually those who stay behind in the household) being highly vulnerable to drought and conflicts (Athoo 2002).

Men also have to travel more in order to find work nearer to, or within nearby cities and towns and therefore are less available for working within the home environment. This has also changed the social structures within the household as women become the 'stand-in' heads of the household. This also brings additional complications such as HIV/AIDS as men return to the villages carrying the disease and spread it through the family. This results in members of the household becoming ill, destroying their ability to work.

11.2 Cultural Aspects and Identity

Pastoralism is a living social system that has strong relationships with the environment and a sense of 'place'. Social support relations and networks are key to pastoral society, particularly for women. People's identity and sense of belonging to a place or piece of land goes far beyond physical needs, but also encompasses relationships with ancestors, appreciation for beauty, environmental elements and space, dignity, freedom, and enjoyment of food that they are familiar with. Mobility is vital for maintaining a productive pastoral system. It is also about solidarity building – working together – and visiting family and relatives, getting to know people, and acquiring and sharing of knowledge and information (Hodgson 2000a).

Sedentarisation removes people from the places that they know and thus destroys their sense of belonging, as well as risking the weakening of social relations and support networks as families and kin are split up. While in the past the community had collective responsibilities in many aspects of their livelihood, increasingly now individual interests and needs are dominating and community ties seem to be breaking down. The emerging *landiis* group in Kenya is an example (Bee et al 2000) (see Box 10.10). Evidence suggests that traditional systems of wealth distribution, mutual aid and reciprocity break down and there is an increase in wealth differentiation leading to the emergence of a rich elite minority and a marginalised poor majority among pastoralists. Families must rely on employment opportunities and other impersonal forms of help – often finding it difficult to break away from the poverty cycle (IFAD undated).

Diminishing access to livestock curtails exchange networks which facilitated the exchange of productive resources – milking cows – and food. Though women have expressed loneliness whilst living in and moving through pastoral areas, and sedentarisation is

seen as a way of living in a more concentrated population, once they have moved to a 'village' some have been disappointed to find that community aspects have weakened and they are more lonely than before (Larsen and Hassan 2003).

Access to modern goods etc. also changes identity and culture. For example, there is an increasing reliance on 'modern' replacements for traditional goods such as carrying containers (replaced by plastic) or housing (traditional replaced by heavier structures needing male input): as a result both men's and women's contribution to pastoral culture is reduced risking a further weakening of identity and sense of belonging (Joekes and Pointing 1991). Changes in traditional occupations have contributed to the break-up of pastoralists' institutional set up leading into change in customary norms, beliefs and values. These changes are partly attributed to introduction of western value systems e.g. religion and education. In addition, NGOs activities have equal impact positive and negative (Bee et al 2000).

11.3 Changes in Socio Economics and Income Generation Opportunities

Agro-pastoralism offers opportunities for wage labour and new economic opportunities such as sale of agricultural produce and milk, as well as tourism, handicraft production and sale, and large-scale cereal cultivation (see Box 11.1) (Fratkin and Smith 1994; Nduma et al 2001). Sedentarisation of nomadic pastoralists amongst the Rendille, Marsabit Kenya for example has been widespread over the past thirty years. Studies have shown this has led pastoralists to adapt traditional livelihoods to the modern situation. Small towns have grown rapidly as pastoralists have settled around market centres. Women can adopt new income generation strategies such as milk or vegetables sales however poverty may prevent them from fully taking advantage of the opportunities or may lead to them use environmentally unsustainable methods (Nduma et al 2000).

Box 11.1 Shifting Labour Patterns in Agro-pastoral Communities

In Larim, Sudan a woman on marriage is allotted two fields by the clan head that her husband initially helps to clear. After that she grows a variety of crops and vegetables: all which belong to her. With it she must feed the household. She also makes sorghum beer for her friends and for those of her husband. Beer drinking is an important component of a man's acquisition of state and influence. The woman is also responsible for supervising calves and kids when they are in the village: when she marries she is allocated a cow for milk.

Source: Langton undated

Women in particular benefit from small transactions and petty trading opportunities taken up in local markets or in peri-urban areas where women have traditionally dominated the trade in small stock (IFAD undated). In and close to towns women have greater opportunities to raise small livestock, making the most of better access markets (see Box 11.2). It is speculated that once a herd drops below a certain size, men lose interest: in Kenya some women are more involved in livestock production than before (Wangui 2003). In Morocco women have increasingly made use of truck transportation: older women who are less restricted often negotiate rides with male truck drivers to the town (Steinmann 1998).

Box 11.2 Changing Socio Economics in Sudan

In Sudan, the Beja has seen great out-migration of pastoralists to Port Sudan to find work: though most of these are men, women are also going to look for jobs for example in the informal sector. Due to their lack of illiteracy they usually end up in low paid, labour-dominated jobs. Most households keep a small number of livestock e.g. goats and sheep despite being in the city. The Beja rejected the input of electricity in case this encouraged other groups to come to live there, thus taking up the space that they need. Those living in the city keep up strong linkages with those outside (for example the Beja Women's Society). Women are not allowed to marry a non-Beja, and only a few educated women have been able to challenge this so far. It was found that women preferred to stay in Port Sudan, whilst men wanted to return to the pastoral areas – for men there is little work and what there is, is insecure; whereas women find urban life less demanding and appreciate the opportunity for being exposed to public life, more than they would in rural areas.

Source: Pantuliano 2002

In many cases, new job and labour opportunities in agriculture mean a shift in gender relations that are negotiated between husband and wife. Women tend to be more involved in such as planting and harvesting for example. An explanation given in Kenya was that "they can bend better" and "are very patient" (Wangui 2003). Women will be left to manage the agricultural plots whilst their husbands take the cattle to grazing areas some distance away. Many of these plots rely on seasonal rains and the work must be carried out at times when water is readily available. This is also the time of high malaria incidence, thus putting women at risk of infection (IIRR 2004). Often men will help women weed: failure to help them would result in the loss of part of the crop. But cooperation tends to break down when individuals fail to see the benefits of their labour for example when men fail to meet the financial needs of the family. Indeed increased access to money may not result in greater money available for household needs particularly if in the hands of men: often the money may be spent on more easily accessed alcohol and such as quat/chat.

Others argue that the significance of women's work to pastoral enterprise is being lost as "land becomes bounded and a mixed system of pastoralism with cultivation has emerged: effectively women's rights are being eroded" (Joekes & Pointing 1991; see also Bruggeman 1994 for examples in Uganda and Chad). As market pressures grow beyond social obligations, this can make it increasingly common for livestock to be disposed of by men without consulting their wives (Talle 1988). This can extend to the management and sale of milk, an item conventionally associated with women. Increased sedentarisation means that herds tend to be kept at cattle posts in remote areas, away from homesteads (difficult for women to access). Women's rights change to 'secondary rights', which are more vulnerable to erosion and marginalisation (Joekes & Pointing 1991).

Sedentarisation may directly increase poverty as pastoralists struggle to adjust to a changed lifestyle and compete with those already well settled in sedentarised communities for jobs and access to resources. Many sedentarised and commercial practices are alien to pastoral communities, and thus time is needed for adjustment. Declining herds and increased reliance on non-pastoral economy usually means an increased reliance on women in the subsistence economy (Oba 2001). The trend toward large-scale ranching in Latin America for example, resulted in unemployment, impoverishment and, because the ranches absorb very little labour, and the workers they do employ tend to be men rather than women, the migration of countless people into boom towns and shanties around urban areas (Hecht 1983). Those who migrate to towns are often the more young, fit and healthy in the community (Laswai et al, undated).

The act of settling allows Islamic and other religious institutions to be adhered to more rigidly: this can negatively impact women when it further curtails their participation in decision making processes, restricts their movement and reduces their livelihood and personal choices. Amongst the Bedouin of Israel, for example, though men have moved from pastoralism into the wage labour market, women have been kept in the homes: men insist they cannot leave as they will bring dishonour to the household. They have lost the majority of their traditional activities such as milk production. Though increasingly girls are attending school, it is the women aged between 20 and 60 who find it most difficult – being uneducated and unable to adjust to modern living (Degan 2003). However even here, women are adapting to their confinement and getting more involved in urban livestock production (see Box 11.3).

Box 11.3 Livestock Production Among Urban Bedouin Women

Traditionally, Negev Bedouin depended on nomadic pastoralism for their lifestyle and livelihood. Sheep, goats and camels provided them with milk and milk products, wool and hair for weaving carpets and tents, and animals for traditional slaughter. Today, there are more than 150,000 Bedouin in the Negev Desert of southern Israel; about half of these Bedouin live in planned urban communities and half in rural, spontaneous, non-recognized settlements. Many of these rural and urban Bedouin families raise some livestock, mainly sheep but also goats, camels and cattle. Many urban Bedouin families maintain some livestock penned near the home; either sheep and/or goats and, to a lesser extent, a cow or two or a camel or two. In addition, they maintain chickens for meat and eggs, other fowl and rabbits. In fact, urban livestock production appears to be increasing in Bedouin settlements.

With urbanization, women no longer need to carry out many of their traditional tasks such as herding livestock, milking sheep and goats and processing milk, gathering firewood and supplying water for the household. However, they have maintained their traditional dress and generally stay at home, as it is not acceptable for women to work outside the house. Consequently, women have lost their traditional roles in the family and have yet to define their new roles. Although more Bedouin women are attending institutions of higher education, it is believed that women are more confined in urban settings than in rural settings.

The main role of the women is taking care of the home and raising children, which are readily accepted by both men and women. However, women are becoming important actors in urban livestock production. They are taking on a larger role in livestock management because men, as wage earners, have less time to attend the livestock. In fact, livestock raising is handled largely by women, including milking of the animals and the processing of milk (*haleeb*) into butter (*zibde*), ghee (*samneh*) and hard, curd cheese (*afiq*). Furthermore, poultry and eggs are solely in the hands of women.

Why is livestock production increasing among urban Bedouin? Economic difficulties and high unemployment in the wage labour market may provide some of the answer of why urban livestock production is increasing among the Bedouin. Retention of some livestock may be a rational choice as a supplement for those Bedouin who are financially stressed, providing families with milk and other dairy products. Furthermore, maintaining some sheep acts as a hedge against the risk of unemployment and, if sheep raising does become more profitable, it would be easy to start this enterprise. Women maintain this option without leaving the confines of their home.

Source: Allan Degan, personal communication 2008

In Ethiopia too, though not directly linked to sedentarisation processes, urban livestock production has increased greatly in the last few years, with women playing a dominant role within it (see Box 11.4).

Box 11.4 Urban Livestock Production in Ethiopia

Urban livestock production constitutes an important subsector of the agricultural production system in Ethiopia. There are about 40,000 crossbred and pure exotic cows in urban and periurban areas of the country. In Addis Ababa alone there are about 5200 dairy farms with some 58,500 cattle. If one takes an average of six persons per family household, this means that about 30,000 persons directly depend on incomes earned from the dairy subsector. Total annual milk production is estimated at 44 million litres and 83% is marketed while the difference is used for household consumption. About 79% of that comes from urban producers. The major players in the production, processing and marketing of these products are women. In Addis Ababa about 33% of the livestock keeper households are headed by women and about 45% of livestock owners are women. The average age of women livestock owners is 55. Women own about 43% of dairy cattle, 81% of chickens, 47% of sheep and 33% of goats. The average number of cattle owned is 7 animals per household. The role of women managing animals that are confined during most of the year is substantial and they are critically involved in removing and managing manure, which is often made into cakes and used or sold as fuel. Constraints frequently mentioned by livestock keepers are the high cost of inputs (feed and drugs), availability, cost and quality of concentrated feed and grass hay, the absence of a market for fluid milk and low prices of milk and milk products especially during the fasting period, poor reproductive performance of dairy cows, poor availability of AI technician and a shortage of semen. Disease was reported by 45% of households and access credit was reported as a constraint by 45% of households (33% of women and 67% of men livestock keepers).

Source: MEI 2004

However in Mongolia the transition from rural, pastoral lifestyles has resulted in economic upheaval and poverty is widespread among women as a consequence of privatisation and other factors linked to the transition to a market economy. As a result of this feminist organisations are thriving and making the most of improved communication channels and access to resources to highlight women's cause and problems (see Box 11.5).

Box 11.5 Economic Upheaval and Poverty

Traditional Mongolian society was largely nomadic "where equal division of labour has reigned...women in Mongolia have always been equal to men, since their participation in livestock breeding and related livelihood activities was as essential as that of men's" (UNESCO 2004:317). Even in the Constitution of Mongolia, ratified in 1925, "women were proclaimed to enjoy the same rights with men in social, political and economic lives" (ibid). "However labour market conditions deteriorated disproportionately for women in the 1990s as the government reduced the public sector employment. Legal requirements to provide maternity benefit discouraged private entrepreneurs from hiring women and the privatization of property has led to male household members acquiring (sole) ownership of property, thus loosening women's stake in family prosperity. Violence against women increased and was not being adequately address in laws, policies and programmes. Though many of the women wanted the violence to stop, they did not want their husbands to be prosecuted" (Jones 2006: 429). As a result of this Mongolian NGOs have been mobilising themselves and women to fight against these inequities. Feminist organisations in Mongolia are thriving and taking advantage of the development and spread of information and communications technology, engaging in information exchange and connecting with international networks for support to achieve their goals of empowerment for women. "In collaboration with transnational feminist networks they are securing platforms to reach out and raise the voices of women in Mongolia...While the reality and outcomes remain to be seen, the fact that violence against women is on the agenda is a positive development."

Source: Jones 2006

11.4 Access to Land and Natural Resources

As pastoralists become more sedentarised, rights to land become more privatised rather than communal in nature. As a result there is an impact on the access and rights to land of both men and women. Formalization of land rights has been promoted for a number of reasons: documented land ownership may contribute to access to credit, agricultural resources and services. However, the private property system and particularly the privatisation process does not offer all persons in a community the same opportunities to acquire rights to land and to participate in the market system (Lastarria-Cornhiel 2001).

It is suggested that "security of land tenure is the key to having control over major decisions in agriculture and livestock production" (Bravo-Baumann 2000: 12). Land tenure can both empower and disable women herders because tenure determines rights of access to forage and other resources both in agropastoral and transhumance systems. In almost all large livestock-based countries in Asia land reform of both the socialist and non-socialist kind has induced shrinkage of common lands both inside and outside of forests. Thus land reform should not be taken as an all round panacea for lack of property rights in land or for users in grazing of the commons.

A move from collectivized land to privatised holdings in the name of 'getting back to traditional systems,' may even make the situation worse as in Tibet and Mongolia. Similarly rules of inheritance even if matriarchy is the rule of inheritance as in Tibet, does not necessarily empower women in herding communities. For example in Eastern Europe and Russia lands that were previously collective cooperatives or state farms have been privatised into private corporate farms. As this became the dominant form of ownership, new property owners have been mostly men. As in rural communities where customary tenure and patriarchal values are still strong, de facto property rights in land and inheritance practices will conform to patriarchal custom, regardless of formal legislation that espouses gender equality of rights (Lastarria-Cornhiel 2001). Land reforms in India have done significant damage to

the commons as it allowed privatization and partitions of the commons against the norms of customary law which had a built-in protection for the common grazing resources both within the village and forest land (Chakravarty-Kaul 1996).

In many cultures women's access to land involves right of use, but not ownership. When common land is converted into state ownership and then to private land, women often lose their traditional rights and are often not considered when new laws are introduced. In addition women are rarely aware of their rights (Bravo-Baumann 2000). Though land titling could be carried out in a gender equitable manner (such as through certification schemes) western-style land tenure systems have been introduced, where often title deeds have been given to men marginalising women from decision making and access to resources (IFAD 1994; Larsen & Hassen 2003). As a result privatisation can have a number of different impacts as documented by Lastarria-Cornhiel (2001) (see Box 11.6).

Box 11.6 Impacts of the Privatisation of Land Rights

Differences in property rights of women and men, and lack of direct access to and control of land may place constraints on women's productive roles as well as on their power and influence in the household and the community. In many societies property rights reflect, if not determine a person's status or degree of inclusion within the group. Since women often do not have direct access or control over resources they tend to lose their indirect rights when societal changes occur because those who have traditionally controlled resources are able to increase their own rights at the expense of others. Agrarian reform programs have often granted land to household heads under the assumption that the whole household will benefit. Contributing to this assumption is the patriarchal norm that men are heads of households and are better at managing household's assets. In sub-Saharan Africa, reform has often sought to transform customary tenure land into state property or individualized private property. During the transition men have acquired complete and legal ownership of land. Individualized and private ownership transfers the few rights that women and minority groups had under customary rules (such as cultivation rights) to those men who are then able to claim all rights to the land. Whilst different persons may have held different rights to a piece of land, titling usually gives just one of these persons absolute and exclusive rights to that land. Women particularly find themselves at a disadvantage because of their inability claim ownership rights to land during the time of transition; because their access rights are generally indirect and dependent on a male relative they often find themselves stripped of the few rights they had before privatization. The increasing proportion of female headed households in rural communities means that many families are left landless. What will it mean for women once the land market opens up? Richer women may be able to purchase land on their own which means the divide will grow between the rich and the poor. This is a common feature of the privatization process.

Source: Lastarria-Cornhiel 2001

Privatisation encourages the spread of fencing and increasing concentration around population centres: as a result access to areas where women can gather wild plants and wood for fuel, food, fibre, medicine and other purposes becomes increasingly difficult (Sullivan, S. and R. Rohde, 2002). Spending more time seeking fuel or other plant resources or having to find the money to purchase fuel or water, means restructuring domestic activities by spending more time on producing items that can be sold to finance alternative purchases and the like.

However, in some countries though women may be given rights to access land as women, there may be other cultural barriers preventing them from doing so. For example in India women of lower caste levels have been excluded from accessing common property resources in Himanchal Pradesh. Their access to land could only be through a process of making them visible and including them in the political arena above that where caste matters. The first step towards this was by being organised into self-help finance groups by an NGO SAHARA or Society for Scientific Advancement of Hill and Rural Areas. Many took out loans which assisted them in becoming financially independent. They were then made visible through a government survey of 2000. Several of these women then chose to stand for ward elections and seven of them were elected (Kelkar and Tshering 2004 in Chakravarty-Kaul 2008).

Within Ethiopia security of land rights is being promoted through developments such as land certification. Though so far this has focussed on highland areas, increasingly some pastoral drylands are being included. In some instances land committees have been set up to oversee the distribution of land, for example around Harshin in Somali Region. These committees are made up of male elders with young men overseeing the implementation. Indeed, though 'modern' systems of land allocation and certification can strengthen women's rights to land on paper, it still remains the case that their security is very much dependent on good relations with their husbands, their male in-laws and/or the men in their natal families (Mitchell 2003). Land certification can also reduce women's access to land and other resources that is, where they had access and rights (albeit loose usufruct rights) before and certification has been made in the name of the household head (considered the man) (see Seno & Shaw 2002).

But in some cases women have been able to access and secure land. Indeed, for many women, having access to land has a value that goes beyond the immediate economic and food security benefits. Even a small piece of land can give security and status and increase women's power at family and community levels. However securing women's entitlement to productive assets does not automatically imply that women will maintain this entitlement. Indeed, "in some societies, women forego their legal inheritance rights in the name of tradition and social custom, and in exchange for security and welfare from their extended families.....In IFAD's experience, moreover women's access to productive resources has not necessarily been equitable or sustainable. Often when land is allocated to women, plots are too small, of poor quality and difficult to access...." (IFAD 2003c: 12).

Indeed, men are less likely to contest the giving of degraded land to women's groups. To overcome this ICRISAT (International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics) is promoting work focussing on the bioreclamation of degraded lands, working with women. This could provide a means of ensuring land rights for women although it would require civil society to assist the women to negotiate their claims with village leaders and local government authorities (New Agriculturalist 2008).

In Kenya, rights to land have been influenced by a process of division into groups such as group ranches and more recently into individual landholdings. More than 99 per cent of the members of group ranches are men (Joekes & Pointing 1991). During the division women had no forum within the structures of the group ranch system to pursue and articulate their interests and claims. During the setting up of ranches, women were not taken into account or consulted: the ranch committees were all male. Division of ranches into individual holdings has also advantaged men (Athoo 2002). They did not attempt to challenge the basis of their exclusion. However this did not mean that they did not have an opinion on the issue. Though some married women favoured subdivision on several grounds: inheritance for children, land ownership and freedom to conduct independent decisions, others were aware of how subdivision restricted access to grazing and a break down of shared life patterns (Mwangi 2005).

Today, these women are said to be even more resentful of subdivision, not only have the conflicts over trespassing increased, but inconvenience to their daily lives has grown. Women's usufruct rights under traditional systems have been curtailed and they remain unable to access land and secure loans (Athoo 2002). Now women are forced to obtain fuelwood from a finite source within the confines of her 'parcel' and longer routes have to be taken around fenced off areas to collect water. Further land registration has highlighted males as heads of the household and land titles sit with them. On the other hand widows have been able to obtain some independence through inheriting from their husband (Mwangi 2005). NGOs are urging ranch group members to register daughters, single mothers and widows as ranch members. Though the idea of women inheriting and owning property is a very recent and challenging trend (Tiampati 2001).

Box 11.7 Working on Women's Land Rights

MPIDO (Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organisation) works on land rights and natural resources, women's empowerment, and a Maasai indigenous people's human rights initiative, amongst others. Within their land rights work where they support Maasai to take cases of injustice through the courts, they mainly work with the men. However also they do provide community training to women on land rights, use, control and management as well as train paralegals (men and women) from the community. These paralegals facilitate the formation of Community Land Ownership Associations; create awareness on developments in rights issues; act as lobbyists for communities' problems from grassroot level; and advocate for administration of justice on issues of human rights, natural resource ownership and management. They have also set up a community-based resource centre which holds information on a variety of land, environmental and indigenous issues.

Source: MPIDO Website 2008

It is suggested that one way forward for securing common property resources for pastoralists is corporate tenure in the hands of well-defined, usually kin-based, associations of herders, who negotiate among themselves stocking rates, rules, responsibilities and management objectives. The state can retain overall ownership of such resources, while granting long (50 year) renewable leases to pastoralist groups under well-defined conditions about the quality of use, and providing an accepted legal framework to settle disputes which cannot be resolved by the herders themselves. It will be important to ensure that women in general, and women-headed households in particular, are able to participate in such leases on terms of equality with men (Global Drylands Imperative 2004).

11.5 Impact on Natural Resource Management

Sedentarisation has had both negative and positive impacts on the environment and natural resource use. Box 11.8 describes the impacts of sedentarisation on natural resource use and management in Morocco. Both negative and positive impacts occurred, and differently for different groups of men and women. Though many suggest that sedentarisation and commercialisation can diminish women's control over natural resources and increase their dependence on male income earners, in Morocco this was not the case as women used new opportunities such as truck transportation to assist them in their collection.

Box 11.8 The Impacts of Sedentarisation on Natural Resources and their Use in Morocco

In Morocco as pastoralist groups have become more sedentarised:

- Male and female resource management tasks increasingly became more shared;
- Sedentarisation and female seclusion reduced women's opportunity to collect NR and thus their collection reduced;
- The gender ratio for who collected wild mushrooms, truffles, medicinal plants and fuelwood was most equal in villages (as opposed to more mobile communities). This suggests that control shifted from women to men. In towns truck transportation (to collection sites) and the weekly market provided alternative opportunities that women used to regain control over resources that contributed to their household responsibilities – women in towns used regular truck transportation to go to mushroom picking areas, whereas those in villages did not have access to this. Both well off and poor women collected resources.
- Younger women in towns were most active making the most of commercial opportunities: older women were less accustomed to the cash economy and collected primarily for consumption.
- Increased collection of mushrooms caused environmental damage.
- Medicinal plant collection reduced as sedentarisation increased which suggests that land-users now relied on alternative resources to meet family health needs. Also the plants were less easily accessed, had been affected by environmental change and there was less knowledge in younger generations. However women in towns increased their knowledge due to improved availability in the markets.
- Fuelwood collection on the rangeland was women's responsibility. However availability decreased around villages and because of women's seclusion men became more involved in the collection. In towns people began turning to alternative fuels. Despite this the views of a local conservation project manager indicated a continuation of the perception that fuelwood collection was women's work. Men had not been identified as a 'user group' and thus were not included in educational efforts that encouraged conservation of fuelwood resources.
- In villages, women accepted the cultural norm of female seclusion, which encouraged overexploitation of fuelwood resources close to home, suggesting a greater affinity with culture than with nature.

Source: Steinman 1998

It is said that there is a direct link between increased sedentarisation and increased rangeland degradation (IFAD 1994; Steinmann 1998). This is likely to mean reduced livestock and milk production, meaning increased poverty. Degradation of pasture also affects women's livestock-related activities by increasing the amount of time that has to be spent in collecting water and fodder for animals. In turn, as time and labour or energy is limited, corners may be cut in animal and rangeland management strategies: anything that requires a lot of labour for example taking animals to distant pastures or splitting herds, will be cut back. Livestock is more likely to be grazed nearer to home overexploiting these resources (see Box 11.9).

Box 11.9 Increased Over-Exploitation of the Rangeland

In Morocco, the government installed motor-driven deep wells in drought prone rangelands. The increased access to water and greater availability of truck transportation meant the hauling of water, by men, to remote villages encouraging rural households to support more cattle on smaller parcels of land. Animal feed was sold at markets, made increasingly accessible due to more trucks. This meant increased sedentarisation and over-exploitation of the rangeland. Since men spent more time in town securing feed resources, women increasingly assumed men's herding responsibilities. But women only herded close to home, meaning further denudation of vegetation cover near fixed settlements.

Source: Steinmann undated

11.6 Women's Representation

Nomadic pastoral households can be isolating, particularly for women and children. Sedentarisation can increase the opportunities for people to interact, exchange and be exposed to new ideas and information, if these are available due to presence of schools, markets, transport and communication linkages. Increased exposure to new ideas and different ways of doing things, learning from others and being pressured by both 'internal' and 'external' influences to initiate change (such as on women's rights) has meant that in some circumstances women are finding new and positive opportunities for more equal social relations and greater involvement in decision making processes with increased status and power. Both women and men will have better access to information on their rights and have better opportunities to apply pressure for them through group solidarity and access to supporting organisations such as NGOs, government offices and courts.

A less mobile lifestyle offers opportunities for women to increase their participation in women's groups and local institutions, as they are more regularly able to attend meetings which tend to be held within a settlement or close by (Ouédraogo 2003). Such organisations may be highly important in re-establishing communal relations and vital (agro-)pastoral support networks. Being able to work and meet in groups is likely to increase women's confidence, strength and power.

Acting outside of the family context, women leaders have played an important role in establishing an interface between women's groups and institutions like rural councils and village chiefs to negotiate access to cultivable land for their groups. In northern Senegal one woman leader used her influence as chair of the council's Land Commission to get three hectares of land allocated to her women's group: an unprecedented and life-changing decision. It not only helped to secure their livelihoods but also proved to be one of the most persuasive tools in obtaining the co-operation of their relatives and establishing their economic power and status (Haramata 2006).

It is suggested however that such positive opportunities tend to occur more often in cases where the traditional systems already accord relatively high status and economic independence to women (IFAD undated). Recent research in Oman for example, has showed that women have utilised a variety of informal institutions and networks to reclaim their interests within the realm of male decision making, including adoption and use of new technologies (Chatty 1996).

However, sedentarisation has also been shown to result in a general loss of autonomy and status among formerly nomadic, now sedentary female Ju/hoansi (!Kung) Baswara (San or Bushmen) from Ngamiland, Botswana. Prior to this loss Ju/hoansi women were noted for the voice in political matters, which now is in the hands of men. Studies indicate a reduction in gender equality even among children in settled camps when compared to their nomadic counterparts. Initially they settled in order to work for neighbouring agro-pastoralists, to maintain cattle and small livestock and to farm. Other factors contributing to a new loss of female empowerment are the adoption of neighbouring people's patriarchal attitudes, and the implementation of development schemes that promote one sex over the other through access to or restriction from resources. (Kent 1995).

11.7 Women's Views About Sedentarisation

In general the literature suggests that women are keen to have a more sedentarised lifestyle though not excluding livestock completely. In Afghanistan (Davis 2005) it was found that many women would prefer to have both land and livestock, rather than revert to a totally nomadic lifestyle, as one woman expressed:

I am tired of moving and tired of camels. Just like you I want an easy life.

In Africa too, there is debate amongst women as to the benefits of a more sedentarised lifestyle (see Brockington 1999) and whether it is wise to keep such large herds. For example amongst a Maasai woman, Agnes Kiner who leads a women's group thinks not, saying:

It would be wise for the Maasai community to abandon the system of keeping unmanageable herds of livestock and proposing instead to keep one or two dairy cows and goats" (Nanzala 2008).

However, though the opportunity of leaving the pastoral context may be appealing, women as well as men still have great ties to their livestock and livestock systems. For example in Kenya owning livestock is still seen to be of central importance and there are examples of girls who have boldly refused proposals from graduated men with very good jobs in town, simply on the basis that they had no livestock (Kratli 2001).

11.8 Way Forward for Positive Change

Though many argue quite rightly that nomadic pastoralism makes the most optimum use of pastoral environments, increasingly, rangelands are becoming over crowded (due to numerous factors) and unless substantial diversification of livelihoods does take place then crises (food insecurity, environmental degradation and conflict) will continue to develop. Indeed, although groups of pastoralists have traditionally made long-distance migrations, it is suggested that in recent years movement is likely to be more by individual households in an unplanned fashion, and accompanied by some kind of settlement (IFAD undated). 'External' pressures from government, commercial ventures, national parks and well meaning NGOs and/or missionaries on pastoralists to settle down have increased the moves to do so and increased numbers of crises such as drought or conflict, have encouraged this further.

However, rather than integrating immediately into settled and agricultural environments, pastoralists do have problems adapting and/or seek to at the very least keep some livestock. Indeed, it is often assumed that when pastoralists settle, they will remain so, however many pastoralists see settlement as temporary and would wish to return to their nomadic lifestyle once the particular crisis etc had been resolved and they have built up some capital (livestock).

Indeed, today, often pastoral and agro-pastoral societies are highly complex with a mixture of livestock and agricultural practices. Amongst the Hawawir of northern Sudan, for example, it is common for part of a family to take up a more sedentarised lifestyle (women, elderly and children) whilst others (the men) continue to be nomadic. Alternatively whole household units could sedentarise and, for example, grow crops, whilst relations living in pastoral lands would look after stock for them (Laren and Hassan 2003). Such complexities need to be understood together with the impacts of change on gender relations: some of the negative and positive aspects of which have been highlighted above.

It should be realised that though these impacts may occur across a range of pastoral/agropastoral communities, they do not impact on all women and men in the same way. Intensification of socio-economic stratification has increased the differences between women in many ways for example – the wealthier women are able to develop economic and social opportunities more effectively having capital or being better educated and so more able to make the most of new opportunities. Though workloads may increase, for example, wealthier women may be able to pay poor women to carry out these time-consuming tasks (Joeques and Pointing 1991).

Change is certainly occurring and it is important that development actors do their utmost to ensure that such change is as positive as possible. Livelihood diversification is of great importance and women can play a dominant role in this, however their continuing commitment to and role in livestock production should not be forgotten.

11.9 Summary

1. In general the fulfilling of basic needs becomes easier within sedentarised communities. However there can also be negative consequences including poorer nutrition, inadequate housing and poor and unsafe water supply. The privatisation of such as water means that money needs to be accessed to pay for water and debts can accumulate. Additionally traditional coping mechanisms for times of stress tend to erode, and reciprocal support systems weaken.
2. Men may have to migrate to nearby towns and cities to find work leaving women as 'stand in' household heads. Unless they have been given full authority over resources it can become difficult to make decisions and take action on livelihood aspects in the absence of their husbands.
3. A pastoral system has strong relationships with the environment and a sense of place. People's identity and sense of belonging goes far beyond a physical relationship. Sedentarisation removes people from the places that they know, destroys a sense of belonging as well as risking the weakening of social relations and support networks as families and kin are split up. Individual interests and needs dominate and community ties break down. Traditional systems of wealth distribution, mutual aid and reciprocity falter and there is an increase in wealth differentiation leading to the emergence of a rich elite minority and a marginalised poor majority among pastoralists. Though sedentarisation means living in a more concentrated population, when community aspects breakdown women can be lonelier than ever before.
4. Sedentarisation opens up opportunities for increased livelihood diversification and new income generation activities, more easily accessing markets. Women in particular are keen to take up and benefit from small transactions and petty trading opportunities taken up in local markets or in peri-urban areas. As livestock numbers reduce man may be less interested in their production. New job and labour opportunities mean a shift in gender relations that are negotiated between husband and wife. Cooperation tends to break down when individuals fail to see the benefits of their labour for example when men fail to meet the financial needs of the family. This can lead to problems between husband and wife.
5. Some argue that increased commoditisation and commercialisation of livelihoods brought about by sedentarisation can erode women's rights over livestock. They may be pushed more into the subsistence economy as reliance on their labour in the non-pastoral economy increases. And in some cases sedentarisation has led to economic upheaval and poverty on a large scale.
6. The act of settling allows Islamic and other religious institutions to be adhered to more rigidly: this can negatively impact women when it further curtails their participation in decision making processes, restricts their movement and reduces their livelihood and personal choices.
7. Sedentarisation has increased the opportunities for women to mobilise themselves into groups and take part in decision making processes. It has made it easier for NGOs to highlight the concerns of women and fight for a greater degree of gender equity and women's rights. Such organisations may be highly important in re-establishing communal relations and vital (agro-)pastoral support networks. Being able to work and meet in groups is likely to increase women's confidence, strength and power. It can often prove the case that it is better to create a new space for women's involvement and representation than trying to open up an old one.
8. Sedentarisation can increase the opportunities for people to interact, exchange and be exposed to new ideas and information, if these are available due to the presence of schools, markets, transport and communication linkages. Increased exposure to new ideas and different ways of doing things, learning from others and being pressured by both 'internal' and 'external' influences to initiate change (such as on women's rights) has meant that in some circumstances women are finding new and positive opportunities for more equal social relations and greater involvement in decision making processes with increased status and power.
9. However, sedentarisation has also been shown to result in a general loss of autonomy and status among formerly nomadic, now sedentary pastoralists. Studies indicate a reduction in gender equality even among children in settled camps when compared to their nomadic counterparts.
10. Less mobility results in increased access to individual land holding, private in nature rather than communal. This can both empower and disempower women depending on the means of their access before. Land rights for women through such as land certification can benefit women and their security to land. And for many women, having access to land has a value that goes beyond the immediate economic and food security benefits. Even a small piece of land can give security and status and increase women's power at family and community levels. However land reform may not be beneficial particularly where it erodes access to common property resources and undermines customary institutions and access arrangements.
11. Privatisation of land usually means increased fencing which curtails free passage of people and livestock and thus access to other resources. This can increase women's workload and have further negative knock-on impacts.

12. In some countries land tenure systems particularly those in pastoral areas have not been fully developed or defined: it is important to ensure that any further debate and development of these include the needs and rights of women and must ensure that both men and women benefit. The progression of the scheme and its impacts need to be closely monitored.
13. Sedentarisation has had both negative and positive impacts on the environment and natural resource use with different effects on men and women. Though men and women may work more together, often men may take over women's collection and reliance on natural resources if opportunities to make money from them increase. Increased restriction to the home may increase environmental degradation around it. Changing roles and responsibilities may not be recognised and taken into account in NRM activities supported by outsiders. However, despite challenges and threats to their autonomy, some women have been able to turn a difficult situation to their advantage through innovation and adaptation.
14. Many women appreciate the benefits of sedentarisation and such as access to better services, however in general they do not want to lose total connections with livestock and livestock-based livelihood systems.
15. Rather than integrating immediately into settled and agricultural environments, pastoralists do have problems adapting and/or seek to at the very least keep some livestock. Indeed, it is often assumed that when pastoralists settle, they will remain so, however many pastoralists see settlement as temporary and would wish to return to their nomadic lifestyle once the particular crisis had been resolved and they have built up some capital (livestock). As a result often pastoral and agro-pastoral societies are highly complex with a mixture of livestock and agricultural practices. Such complexities need to be understood together with the impacts of change on gender relations: some of the negative and positive aspects of which have been highlighted above.
16. Though these impacts may occur across a range of pastoral/agropastoral communities, they do not impact on all women and men in the same way. Intensification of socio-economic stratification has increased the differences between women in many ways for example and wealthier, more powerful women may be better positioned to take up new opportunities.

12.0 PRINCIPLES OF 'GOOD PRACTICE'

12.1 Understanding Women's Empowerment in a Pastoral Context

Empowerment means different things in different contexts according to individual perception, social norms, legislation and policies. Within a pastoral context it is vital to understand that in general a pastoral 'family' works as a unit with a greater emphasis on benefiting the 'whole' rather than individual gain. This has a great influence on how decisions are made within the family, and often people will sacrifice their own well-being in order that the family unit and its cultural practices survive. Women's empowerment should not be separated out from everyday life and livelihoods: it is interlinked, highly embedded and needs to be addressed so.

12.1.1 Amongst women themselves

The process of empowering women must also include an element of transformation to develop women's own understanding of empowerment and to enable them to understand how to achieve it. Women need to know and understand what empowerment means and why should it be strengthened. Women need to understand why a certain situation or position exists, and how it persists. "If people understand why things are the way they are (why they are poor, why and how inequalities persist, invisible manifestations of power), then they will not only change but they will become agents of that change" (Wendoh 2007). By doing this women will not only be in a better position to change things, but they will also become agents of that change. An exercise to achieve this is described in Box 12.1 (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004).

Box 12.1 Women's Own Perception of Empowerment

Before trying to measure empowerment in Kotido, Uganda, women were asked to share their perceptions of empowerment. This interpretation of empowerment might have been influenced by the fact that in translation, the closest word to empowerment was "strong". However throughout the discussions, it was clear that for all of these women, the ability to meet the family's welfare needs was the most important indicator of empowerment. Briefly, the definition of empowerment from the women's perspective is *a woman who lives in harmony with her husband and children, who is in a position to till and cultivate crops and who can address problems like hunger in the household without referring to her husband.*

An important criteria of empowerment in all three communities visited was a woman's negotiation skills. Among the Ik for example, a woman who was able to get men to till and cultivate her land was considered empowered (women did this by brewing alcohol and inviting men to till land in exchange for some local brew). The women also talked of having a rich husband as a good indicator of an empowered woman, but only if she had a say over the use of resources and especially livestock, and a favoured wife was also seen as being more empowered than her cohorts. A significant characteristic of an empowered woman was one who "could demand and get livestock from her husband." However a woman who could stand up to her husband was not seen as 'empowered' though if she was beaten then she would be viewed as "weak". In general the women felt that taking the initiative was important and everyone admired enterprising women and felt that even husbands admired women who were independent.

Of the five aspects of empowerment identified by this report, the most difficult one for the women to articulate and find good examples of seemed to be the one on participation. Most of the women felt that you needed to be a very strong and courageous woman to stand up and address meetings in mixed gatherings and that women did have something to contribute to leadership in the community, but whilst they showed a personal interest in all the other levels of empowerment, it was difficult for them to pin down any particular advantages to being "strong" in this way. Nevertheless, women have been actively involved in different levels of local councils so they may take participation in community leadership for granted, although there are concerns over the effectiveness of women's participation in the councils.

Source: Oxfam GB Uganda 2004

Indeed, Izzy Birch (Special Advisor to the Ministry of Northern Kenya and Other Arid Lands, Republic of Kenya)(who has worked with pastoralists in East Africa for many years) suggests: one of the most important starting points in work to support empowerment is the need for an "understanding of what 'empowerment' means in the particular socio-cultural context you're working in and giving women the space to define it and deal with it on their terms and in their own way, rather than along the lines of models developed by external NGOs who often use a language/approach which is itself disempowering" (personal communication 2008).

This is confirmed by Dorothy Hodgson when asked how to define "empowerment": "I've always tried to elicit what women themselves (of different ages, class, wealth, etc.) want. My most recent survey in 2005-6 around many Maasai areas in Tanzania suggested that economic and political empowerment were the key priorities – developing independent (i.e. not controlled by men) access to income so as to ensure security of their household; and strengthening decision-making power in household and community. Many are also eager for higher quality education for their children, and better access to/quality of health care services." See also Box 12.2.

Box 12.2 Women's Drive to Empowerment

Women's successful drive towards equality and empowerment very much depends on the level of awareness on the extent of women's discrimination among themselves that is created. This is because awareness provides them with the basic actions to overcome and dismantle the obstacles which are holding them back. At the level of participation, women should be able to take part or have a share in both resource and power allocation. This will lead to the level of control where they are able to direct or influence events so that their interests are protected and they are, therefore, empowered at all levels. In fact, empowerment is only real when women have attained control over themselves, resources, factors of production and decision-making, be it at home or in the public arena.

Source: Fongjong 2001

Perceptions also shape and define context. For example, "a married woman in Tanzania and a single woman head of household in the same country are viewed differently by their communities and may value different elements of empowerment to varying degrees" (Spadicini 2006).

12.1.2 Amongst men

As described in this volume, men can resent and prevent moves to empower women. To avoid this it is vital to ensure that the support of men in the community is achieved from the very beginning, and continues to be provided. Men should be persuaded that empowering women is likely to benefit the household and pastoral community as a whole: the wide and varied roles and contributions that women can make once they have more power have been described previously. Empowerment should be seen and understood as a win-win situation (see Box 12.3).

Box 12.3 Men as Allies

Experience has shown that where cultural resistance is strong, and societies are hierarchical, building a strong support system for social and institutional change is essential. It has also shown that *men can become strong allies in supporting women's new social and economic roles when the overall benefits of such social change become evident*. It is also crucial to involve traditional community and religious leaders in order to consolidate and support attitudinal changes...Often *the first empowering change occurs at the household level, and the second at the community level*. It is easier for women to take a leadership role in the community when their husbands support them.

Source: IFAD 2003c: 15

Men need to be given the space to discuss and reflect on gendered attitudes and behaviours, whether they are acceptable and how they can be changed. Ways need to be found to interest men and enlist their support. Champions and supporters can be identified who will lead others to get involved. It is useful to have a male member of staff who is known and trusted by community members who can advocate for women's empowerment and encourage men's assistance. Gender should not be seen as "an issue of mistrust and prejudice, but of creativity, inspiration and positive spirit for men and women" (Bravo-Baumann 2000: 7). Chakravarty-Kaul (2008) summarises the potential contribution of men in Box 12.4 based on research in Asia that contributed to this report.

Box 12.4 Good Practice of Women's Empowerment Through Men

Good practice in women's empowerment occurs:

- When men **recognise** the importance of women's economic contribution of cash income.
- When men **concede** power to women because it is they who generate cash and take part in joint decision-making.
- When men **share** in the work of women and empower them economically.
- When men **support** women, their roles and responsibilities.
- When men **create space** for the women pastoralists to participate in collective action.
- When men take the **initiative** to remove cultural barriers among themselves and thus pave the way for women pastoralists to organize their own associations, from different castes and creeds.
- When men **eschew** social barriers and in so doing dispel gender prejudice and gather together at the instance of a woman leader of an NGO.
- When men **cooperate** with women by doing the heavy work of preparing the land for example.
- When men are **persuaded** by the pragmatic consequences of empowering women's skill which technology brings.
- When men **realize** and **encourage** the future empowerment of women through literacy for their daughters.

Source: Chakravarty-Kaul 2008

12.1.3 Amongst development actors

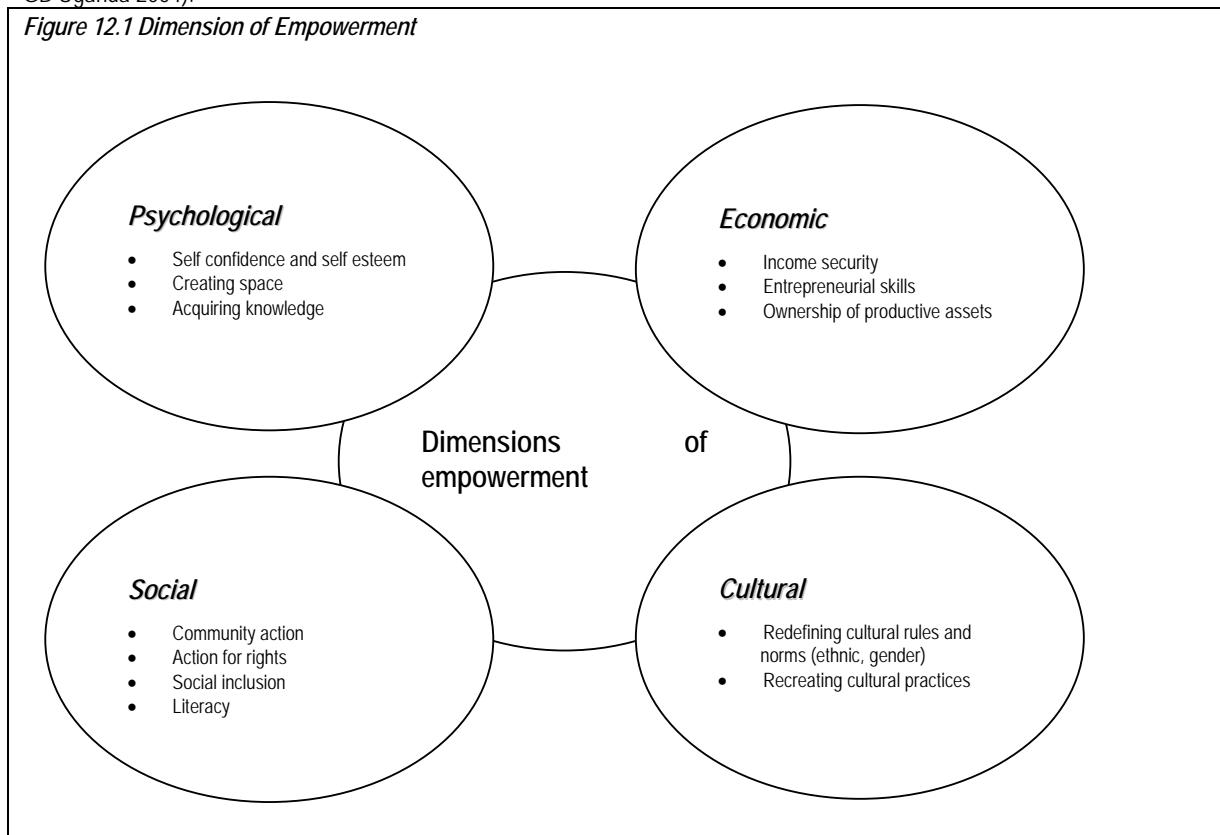
It is also vital that development actors too give space and time to consider and define empowerment, why it matters and ensure a common understanding. Development agencies need to understand and explore the context effectively with communities if they are going to contribute to the empowerment of women (Spadicini 2006).

Few NGOs achieve this as there is more emphasis on getting things done, rather than giving time for thought and reflection. CARE International for example, does give time for this however. And Budden (2006) suggests that that before attempting to define 'empowerment' one should ask oneself the following questions:

- What is empowerment?
- Am I empowered?
- How does empowerment happen?
- Is empowerment a process or a state?
- Who is empowerment for?
- Why does empowerment matter?

Oxfam is also an organisation that works towards a more considerate and reflective approach. For example, Oxfam GB in their work in Uganda (see Figure 12.1) defined 'empowerment' and developed a proposed framework for guiding their capacity building project. Oxfam's work aimed to achieve psychological empowerment particularly through its work with community groups, by providing exposure to new ways of working, by providing education and learning to inform individuals of their rights and enabling sharing of experiences between groups. Social empowerment was targeted by working with community groups, building solidarity and sharing skills and resources. KPDP supported economic empowerment by providing assets to be owned, communally or individually, by the disempowered and by providing the necessary skills to enhance income security and economic independence. Cultural empowerment was tackled through work with marginal groups to challenge perceptions of their position in society (Oxfam GB Uganda 2004).

Figure 12.1 Dimension of Empowerment



Once a common understanding has been defined, it is also important to establish common goals and ways to achieve those goals, as Box 12.4 describes. Promoting empowerment also involves examining organizational culture, structures and processes and identifying where these may conflict with empowerment goals (Oxaal 1997). Strategies for promoting women's empowerment need to be integrated into development programmes. There is no quick "technical fix" to adopting women's empowerment as a goal and a long term thinking is needed.

Box 12.4 Knowing What Is To Be Done and How

The support for Small Producers in the Semi-Arid Zones of Falcon and Lara States in Venezuela was one of the first IFAD projects in the region to be designed to incorporate gender mainstreaming. Project practitioners have been trained to take account of gender issues in the project's management information system and to include gender-disaggregated data in project monthly reports, operational plans, data collection tools and monitoring and evaluation indicators. This was possible because staff had come to realize the advantages of working with women. A lesson from experience is that gender-sensitive evaluation is unlikely to be successfully implemented unless project staff fully appreciate what is to be done and have the tools and know-how to do it. Absence of commitment or know-how is one of the frequent reasons for the gap between design and implementation that is so common in dryland projects.

Source: IFAD 2003b in Gurung 2006.

Further project/programme staff working with pastoralists need to be able to do so with compassion and sensitivity, and be able to properly communicate with and listen to community members: training and discussion may be needed to ensure that staff understand how this can be achieved. "...it is so important to work with staff first to ensure they are aware of their own prejudices and also accept the principle of not just talking, but really listening to communities" says Ann Burden of CARE International. Indeed some people are natural communicators and good listeners, while others need to develop these skills. Sometimes staff members are willing to listen, but aren't asking the right questions (Fitzgibbon 2006c).

Governments, including regional and local governments also need to consider what empowerment means to them, why it is important and how to achieve it. Different departments should work together to ensure a common understanding due to the interdependent nature of the work of the line agency staff. An understanding of the need for women's empowerment must be linked to everyday lives and livelihoods: it can not be separated. Gurung et al (undated) promote this approach for work in community based forestry and livestock production systems within their work in Nepal (Box 12.5).

12.5 Gender Understandings within Local Governments

Within bureaucracies that are mired in their own world views and procedures that go unchallenged by those who represent 'the other' (women, in this case), a lack of attention to issues of gender and social change is perhaps inevitable within forestry institutions. Where an explicit commitment to gender equality or women's empowerment is lacking, there is a real danger that gender initiatives will lose significance in the context of competing accountabilities and imperatives, and fall into a "black hole". There is a need for gender structures to be built into forestry institutions, to establish gender leadership within forestry departments themselves. Within these, there must be an organisational space for advocacy by rural women, especially those from marginalised groups, and their representatives. It is through this group that forest departments should build linkages and accountability to their constituents – the community members engaged in the process. Time and money invested in developing their capabilities will assure sustained and committed energies to achieve the desired results.

Source: Gurung et al undated

12.1.4 Amongst policy makers

Empowerment also needs to be defined by policy makers. "Where women's empowerment is stated as a policy goal it should be defined or explained.... unless empowerment is clearly defined and the strategies or processes whereby it is to be translated from policy to practice specified, empowerment becomes a vague goal or meaningless buzzword. Without clear definition of the term, in the particular contexts in which they are working, development organizations run the danger of merely renaming old top-down approaches as part of an empowerment policy, without altering the content and character of their programmes or examining the need for changes in organizational culture and process required... Empowerment is a useful concept because it emphasizes the idea of women as active agents in, rather than passive recipients of, development strategies. It also draws attention to the fact that lives of poor and marginalized people, and the communities in which they live are shaped by political processes involving power, inequality and oppression. Empowerment should be used to bring these processes of power (and strategies to resist them) into focus, not to obscure as a vague slogan" (Oxaal 1997: 24-25).

12.1.5 Summary

1. Ensure that a common understanding of 'empowerment' is established amongst all involved (policy makers, NGO and government representatives, community members etc.), together with a strong commitment for making change happen. Women themselves need to understand why a situation is how it is, what is influencing it and how is change possible. They need to be able to link their practical needs to the underlying causes and to their social marginalization, and identify means and ways that they themselves can initiate change. Development agencies need to understand and explore the context effectively with communities if they are going to contribute to the empowerment of women.
2. Staff need to work with compassion and sensitivity, whilst ensuring that they have the right listening and communication skills. They should be aware of their own assumptions and prejudice, beliefs and behaviours, plus their own power and inadequacies: they may only be hearing what people want them to hear. Self awareness is required before one can address social change in others.
3. Promoting empowerment involves examining organizational culture, structures and processes and identifying where these may conflict with empowerment goals. Strategies for promoting women's empowerment need to be integrated into development programmes. A long term thinking and approach to empowerment is needed with adequate and appropriate investment of resources.
4. Women need to understand and believe in what they are capable of – this may only come through practice and experimentation (which may result in failure). Space and support needs to be provided to work through this process with women. Learning by doing is much more valuable and progressive than being taught something by a lecturer in a workshop or training.
5. Empowerment efforts need to be linked to people's ambitions, lives and livelihoods. As stressed herewith, empowerment has to come from within and it has to fit with what people want, need and do. Empowerment should not be addressed as a separate movement but be made relevant and inclusive to pastoral systems and the changes taking place within them. Identify positive images of gender equity within communities and build on these. Be prepared to work with cultural barriers towards women's empowerment.
6. It is vital that women themselves support the empowerment process: unless they are committed to change, dealing with it and potential repercussions and their impacts, empowerment can not be fully successful. Husbands, brothers, sons and other male relatives also have to support the process: empowerment should not be seen as a zero-sum game, but as a win-win situation that is likely to benefit the long term sustainability of pastoral systems. Considering this and gaining support should be achieved through a reflective and learning process at the community level.

12.2 Identification of Indicators to Measure Empowerment

Monitoring and evaluation of social change including empowerment is vital. Not only is this important as an ongoing monitoring of changes happening, but it should also allow for reflection, feedback and adaptation to ensure that positive impacts are being maximized and negative repercussions reduced or mitigated.

“Development planners are often searching for easy schedules, quantifiable targets and simplicity while addressing very complex situations (Wierenga 1994). While planners need to be able to distinguish between efficient and inefficient use of limited resources, it is difficult to measure equality-related objectives which do not lend themselves to numerical representation (Kabeer 1994). What constitutes empowerment for women may be very context specific: an activity may be seen to be empowering in one context and not empowering in another. Therefore context and programme specific indicators for empowerment should be developed” (Oxaal 1997: 23). As a result activities need to be evaluated using qualitative indicators as well as quantitative.

There is no standard or agreed-upon method for measuring women’s empowerment. Measuring impact on social change is possible over time. Empowerment happens through a variety of casual relationships and attribution to one agency or activity can be very difficult if not impossible (Fitzgibbon undated). The greater the degree of existing gender inequality, the more subtle changes are likely to be. It is important in this context for indicators to recognise the significance of modest gains and breakthroughs.

Aspects of empowerment can be reflected in numbers (such as an increase in numbers of women in positions of power), but above all, empowerment concerns women’s perceptions of their own lives and experiences. Quantitative approaches to monitoring and evaluation do not necessarily tell us about lasting impact on people’s lives (Fitzgibbon *ibid*). To measure qualitative aspects of empowerment, it is important that it is clearly defined.

12.2.1 Quantitative indicators

Quantitative indicators refer to the numbers and percentages of women and men or organisations involved in or affected by any particular group or activity. Quantitative indicators draw on sex disaggregated data systems and records that have been examined during process of policy or project planning. The availability of quantitative baseline data means that indicators usually include some element of *target setting*. For example:

- women form at least 33% of pastoralist committee members by end of Year 2;
- at least 6 districts have implemented a gender equity plan;
- equality in girls and boys access to primary education by 2007;
- 25% increase in number of women teachers by 2007, from a baseline of x%.

12.2.2 Qualitative indicators

Qualitative information refers to perceptions and experiences. Qualitative information is vital. It is not enough to know that women are participating in an activity; the *quality* of their participation and experience, whether in community meetings, primary school classes or as users of public services, is all-important.

Qualitative indicators (as well as quantitative indicators relating to visible change at the community level) should be developed with beneficiary groups. Sometimes projects will need to do this after the project has started, for example, within the first six months. This creates the space to develop indicators with beneficiary groups once they have fully understood the project (What changes would they like to see? What will the change look like? How can it be measured?). This process should take place using qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and informal interviews.

It is only possible to set targets for qualitative change if baseline data is available. This requires baseline surveys: it is highly unlikely that appropriate baseline data will be available from secondary sources. Where baseline data is available on experiences and perceptions, targets for qualitative change can be set. For example:

- At least 50% of women participating in pastoral committees report active involvement in management and decision-making by the end of Year 2 (from a baseline of 10% at the start of the project).
- At least 70% of women respond positively to evaluation of Elders handling of their complaints by end of Year 3 (from a baseline of 5% average at the start of the project).

Where baseline data is not available, or is not easily changed into numbers and percentages, it is necessary to stick to general statements of improvement. For example:

- Significant improvement in staff knowledge, skills and attitudes on mainstreaming gender equality in participating organisations by end of Year 3 (where each organisation starts with markedly different levels).
- Significant increase in quantity and improvement in quality of media reporting on gender violence.

Information on qualitative indicators should be gathered through evaluation studies. Depending on the indicator, these might be surveys reviewing perceptions and experiences of agreed indicators, or participatory methods such as focus group discussions and case studies.

Box 12.6 Examples of Qualitative Indicators of Empowerment

Qualitative indicators of empowerment are particularly hard to agree upon, in part at least because empowerment itself is a concept that has been defined in different ways. At the present stage of debate perceptions of empowerment are more likely to be identified by indicator questions of the following types rather than by the indicators suggested in the questions. These questions have to be reinforced by others that relate to qualitative analysis.

Indicator questions to assess empowerment:

- To what degree are women aware of local politics, and their legal rights? Are women more or less aware than men? Does this differ by socio-economic grouping, age or ethnicity? Is this changing over time?
- Do women and men perceive that women are becoming more empowered? Why?
- Do women perceive that they now have greater self-respect? Why? How does this relate to men's perceptions?
- Do women/men perceive that they now have greater economic autonomy? Why?
- Are changes taking place in the way in which decisions are made in the household, and what is the perceived impact of this?
- Do women make decisions independently of men in their household? What sort of decisions are made independently?

Key questions for qualitative analysis:

- How have changes in national/local legislation empowered or disempowered women or men (e.g. concerning control over resources such as land)?
- What is the role of local institutions (including women's institutions) in empowering/disempowering women/men?
- Is the part women, as compared to men, are playing in major decisions in their locality/household increasing or decreasing?
- Is there more acknowledgement of the importance of tasks customarily carried out by women, e.g. child care?
- How are women organising to increase their empowerment, for example against violence?
- If employment and education for women are increasing, is this leading to greater empowerment?

Source: Solidarity Center Website undated

Apart from activity indicators, performance indicators should be well defined in line with the objectives and expected results or outputs. Proper monitoring to capture small, but sensible changes in gender relations within and among households should be worked out at all planning stages (Bravo-Baumann 2000). CARE is taking an innovative approach to monitoring using strategic impact inquiry (see Box 12.7)

Box 12.7 Measuring Empowerment Through Strategic Impact Inquiry

CARE through SII (Strategic Impact Inquiry) is trying to establish new ways of measuring success that are based on qualitative indicators. It is about measuring social change, therefore there is a strong focus on listening to communities and creating dialogue. "This is not a tick-box approach" says Kent Glenzer, director of the CARE Impact Measuring Learning Team. "You cannot impose ideas of what empowerment is on women or communities. Such concepts need to be locally defined." Communities in selected countries have been defining 'empowerment' and how it could be measured: empowered in Tanzania is defined by some women as having a tin roof over one's head, but in Somalia it means being able to take care of the family, being patient and tolerant. The challenge is how to measure impact at a regional or global level if empowerment means different things in different places. To assist, CARE has identified 23 aspects or 'dimensions' of empowerment that can be used to monitor change. These include aspects like girls' education and women's ownership of assets, as well as less tangible factors, such as self-esteem and having the skills and confidence to demand basic rights from those in power. "What is truly important is that we move away from seeing issues like women's empowerment as a project goal and view it more as a continuous process of change that can be measured periodically" says Allison Burden, CARE's Regional Programme Coordinator.

Source: Fitzgibbon undated

12.2.3 Use of participatory techniques

Participatory approaches to development including empowerment have proven benefits (Bravo-Baumann 2000). As Oxaal (1997:24) suggests "For those who wish to promote and encourage women's empowerment, participatory forms of monitoring and evaluation, based on analyzing the objectives, successes and problems of a project with those involved, might be a more appropriate or complementary approach to the use of standardized indicators" (Oxaal 1997: 24). Involving communities within monitoring and evaluation is of benefit increasing their ownership over development processes, plus ensuring a sharing of costs and increased sustainability.

A list of examples of participatory tools that can be used to measure empowerment are given in Appendix 1.0 However these should be refined with communities themselves and the most appropriate tools used.

12.2.4 Summary

1. Empowerment is contextual: what is empowerment for one person in one context is different to another in another context. Therefore measuring impact must also be contextual and indicators devised specific to programmes or activities. It is difficult if not impossible to attribute social changes such as empowerment to one particular activity or intervention: this should be recognized and highlighted. Community members are in a better place to identify local and contextual indicators of change than outsiders.
2. As will be discussed further below participatory monitoring and evaluation should take place including supposed beneficiaries. Particularly when measuring qualitative aspects it is necessary to gain people's perceptions and views, which can be encouraged through the facilitation of group discussions and debate. The capacity of communities should be built up to continue monitoring, evaluating and adapting to changes in the long term, as these will continue to occur after a project's lifetime.
3. Baseline data is useful for measuring change, however not mandatory. Where possible data should be collected, written up and shared with other organizations, government departments etc. to ensure that it is accessible and available for contributing to an ongoing and long term monitoring of social change.
4. In all monitoring processes, time and resources should be provided for adequate evaluation, analysis, reflection and adaptation.
5. It is most useful to develop indicators through a participatory process.

12.3 Project Design and Planning

Ideally project or intervention design and planning should be carried out with communities. The perception of project planners of livestock-related priorities may differ from those of the target population and of women in particular. However participatory planning is rarely carried out due to proposal deadlines and/or lack of resources. But today, proposal and funding guidelines/regulations tend to be more flexible and allow for a certain degree of consultation, joint planning and design processes to take part within the initial stages of a funded project. This flexibility should be used by development actors to plan and design the details of the project and activities and should be carried out hand in hand with community members. Both men and women need to be consulted and involved in planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring/evaluation. If one or other is excluded then there is the risk of marginalization, resentment, and lost opportunities.

Social changes including empowerment demand a long term approach. As Izzy Birch (personal communication 2008) confirms: "A long-term approach is necessary. Empowerment can't be done overnight; there are bound to be both steps forward and steps backward; women may not analyse their situation in terms of 'empowerment' until you've been working with them for quite some time." With the integration of gender aspects, a project's scope expands as it is forced to dwell into the social, cultural and economic parts of the targeted communities. "It will no longer be a livestock project, but will also deal with household dynamics and community anthropology...Major attention has to be focused on the fact that gender changes are very slow and, therefore, project goals should not be too ambitious in gender issues" (Bravo-Baumann 2000:7).

Recommendations for designing a project working in pastoral communities on women's empowerment are given in Box 12.8.

Box 12.8 Recommendations for Project Design

These include an emphasis on:

- Understanding the basic needs of pastoral women, the threats they face, their roles in pastoral societies and how these roles are changing;
- Supporting women's empowerment, looking not only at how to enable pastoralists to become more market-oriented, but in particular at how to ensure that women capture the benefits of economic empowerment;
- Supporting women's access to productive resources and main assets (water, land, fuelwood, markets, knowledge), promoting their participation in small-scale dairying and strengthening their role in decision-making processes;
- Understanding how women influence decisions and what resources they have greater control over;
- Incorporating the concerns of pastoralist women in project design and ensuring women's active participation and involvement in the different project phases and activities; and
- Supporting income-generating activities (for instance, processing and selling of livestock, forage, aromatic/medicinal plants and wildlife products) as a way to enhance pastoralist women's socio-economic position in the household and empower them to take a greater role in the community. At the same time, it is important to recognize that, because of their extremely heavy workloads, women have fewer opportunities to diversify or maximize their livelihoods. Time-saving opportunities, therefore, merit special attention.

12.3.1 Summary

1. Ideally the participation of women and men in planning at all stages should be achieved if development programmes are to be empowering. However due to budget and donor deadlines this may not be possible. Therefore flexibility should be written into project proposals to allow for the finer details of project/activity planning and design to be carried out with communities in the start-up period of a project.
2. Both men and women need to be consulted and involved in planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring/evaluation. If one or other is excluded then there is the risk of marginalization, resentment, and lost opportunities.

12.4 Gender Mainstreaming

Empowerment can not be addressed without considering 'gender' – that is the relationships between men and women and why they exist. Not only should different roles and responsibilities be understood, but "the challenge for outside organizations working with pastoral women lies in emphasizing these powerful informal roles in appropriate and effective ways" (Nomadic News 2004).

As such gender, like 'empowerment' needs to be mainstreamed throughout development interventions and activities. This will entail supporting social change that can cause upset and negative, as well as positive impacts. Responsibility need to be taken for this and plans made to mitigate negative effects. This can be challenging and as a result success limited. As CARE describes "Many of CARE's projects do excellent work at the grassroots level, but benefits may be limited if wider power structures are not also targeted as part of social change. There may be limited benefit for women whose income increases if they are still not allowed to legally own property (Fitzgibbon 2006b).

In complex systems, special attention has to be given to the interrelations and the possible consequences of project interventions on gender (Bravo-Baumann 2000). A number of examples have been provided in this report from the work of Heifer International. Heifer International has a gender equity programme and specifically focuses much of its work on women (see Box 12.9).

Box 12.9 Gender Mainstreamed in Heifer's Livestock Interventions

In the 1930s a civil war raged in Spain. Dan West a Midwestern farmer and youth worker ladled out cups of milk to hungry children on both sides of the conflict. It struck him that what these families needed was "not a cup, but a cow". He asked his friends back home to donate heifers, so hungry families could feed themselves. In return, they could help another family become self-reliant by passing on to them one of their gift animal's female calves. The idea caught on and has continued for more than 70 years.

Heifer's Gender Equity programme seeks to ensure that men and women are equal partners in planning, work and benefits of a project. When women are able to receive animals and training, family nutrition improves, and women gain new respect in their communities. Projects with women's groups are called "WILD" or Women in Livestock Development, providing women with the resources and skills they need to overcome hunger, poverty and prejudice and achieve self-reliance and self-respect.

Source: Heifer International China website

Forced promotion of women, gender and women's empowerment rarely lead to sustainable impact or even worse, can create antagonism between groups and could strengthen social imbalance (Bravo-Baumann 2000). As such social changes needs to occur at a pace that women and the community in general are happy with and can cope with. Though it may be relatively easy to increase women's access to resources such as income, credit, education and fulfill women's basic needs, as this volume has shown it proves much more difficult for NGOs to change discrimination against women in decision making, participation and their rights (see Box 12.10). Indeed, as this volume has shown the most success achieved in fulfilling women's strategic needs is where women have mobilized themselves (with some 'outside' assistance perhaps) and fought for their own rights, voice and choice.

Box 12.10 Limited Impact of NGOs In Achieving Strategic Needs

NGOs have been successful in increasing women's access to resources in Cameroon. But a lot remains to be done to try to truly empower the Cameroonian woman. Their interventions have improved women's access to health, credit, training, employment, and family decision-making and they provide opportunities for women to exchange ideas. All these satisfy women's immediate needs such as food, health and water, which are required by everybody, especially children. But NGOs have had little impact in reversing discrimination against and subordination of women. In other words, their strategic gender needs have not yet been met. Women's access to political participation and control, which the UNICEF framework sees as the high point of empowerment, is still inadequate. This apparently requires a more comprehensive approach which goes beyond the purview of development NGOs alone. This is because the provision of strategic gender needs touch on fundamental cultural and institutional changes that might be interpreted as foreign intervention on domestic issues from international NGOs. Local NGOs and civil society are better placed to take the initiative here but, unfortunately, they lack the necessary human and material resources to take the lead. Interventions by the state, local and other international agencies are therefore indispensable for long-term results. Partnerships with the state and other development and traditional institutions that will challenge existing discriminatory laws and policies at all levels are therefore crucial.

Source: Fonjong 2001

As part of a gender mainstreaming approach the NGO, government department etc. needs to consider gender and gender equity within its own organizational structure and how it can be improved. A gender audit may be necessary as a starting point, and from this a consultative process followed to develop a policy and strategy for action.

A study of different livestock-related projects showed that few NGOs have provided gender training to their staff and if training had been provided then it had failed to take all the opportunities to move towards addressing gender issues at the level of the individual person, organization and institutional fields, culture etc. Individuals need an environment and facilitators which will promote open and frank discussions in order to identify certain biases and views they may hold concerning gender. The sensitivity of the gender concept itself calls for participatory, open minded and flexible approaches, so as to involve all participants in the whole process in order to identify their own weakness in terms of behaviour, perception and attitudes, and gradually prepare oneself for a change. Training itself is not a sufficient condition for gender transformation. (Bravo-Baumann 2000: 9).

Ideally NGOs should practice hiring local residents as employees. This reduces the need for relying on importing labour which can be expensive and often is accompanied by a high turnover rate. Furthermore, using local labour and in particular women who have experienced subjugation and poverty and risen above their circumstances, provide the role models necessary to promote behavioural change. However this can be extremely challenging but not impossible. Box 12.11 describes the experiences of an NGO in India that can be applied to other rural NGOs. Other NGOs such as SOS Sahel in Ethiopia have introduced a girl/woman's internship programme where local pastoral women from Borana are trained in the skills necessary for working for the NGO after which a placement is given with them for a period of time to provide working experience and job-shadowing.

Box 12.11 Experience of an NGO in Employing Local Women

The Chinmaya Rural Training Centre (CRTC) was founded by, Swami Chinmayananda, a revered Hindu spiritual leader in one of the most depressed areas of Himachal Pradesh. Sustainable development he believed was only possible if local women, generally belonging to lower castes and tribes, were able to take charge of their own lives and development. CRTC depended on the local population for its employees who were as vulnerable to social pressures and often as marginalized as their clients. Though many challenges existed CRTC succeeded in building the capacity of the local women. By carefully identifying women who had showed leadership potential they were able to train them to take on positions of responsibility. The management style of the NGO was grounded in the reality of the experiences lived by the employees and clientele alike. The regular staff meetings were a venue where time was set aside to celebrate the efforts of those trying to change their own lives and those of others. This practice not only allowed for a sharing of successful indigenous practices with others, but also nurtured an environment that celebrated risk-taking thereby promoting change.

Source: Handy and Kassam 2006

12.4.1 Summary

1. Empowerment and 'gender' are relevant to all programmes/projects and should not be confined to one area of development activity. They need to be mainstreamed throughout all activities with thought and a strategic approach. Different aspects of empowerment (e.g. political, economic, legal, physical) and gender should not be addressed in isolation, but linked to people's lives and livelihoods.
2. Ensure an integration and coordination of projects dealing with rangeland management, agricultural production, poverty alleviation, natural resource management and gender mainstreaming.
3. Time and adequate resources need to be allocated for mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment. This should be flexible allowing for change to occur at a pace that women and the community in general are happy with.
4. NGOs have been shown to have limited impact in achieving women's strategic needs. Greater success appears to be achieved where women mobilize themselves as opportunities arise and change proves a necessity for survival. NGOs should learn from this and women themselves as to how best they can support them and their higher levels of empowerment.
5. The development NGO or government department needs to consider gender mainstreaming within its own staff and organization. This can be an internally or externally facilitated process that can include a gender audit, policy or strategy development process. Reflection, adaptation and further action need to occur on a regular basis to ensure continual working. A gender team or focal person can be established to lead the process but responsibility should be given to all staff members to ensure gender is mainstreamed.
6. It has proved very beneficial for gender advisors (or other professionals) to build up strong relationships with rural women, mentor them, so building up their confidence and encouraging them to organize themselves to take part in decision making processes, even policy development. This may be particularly relevant in sectors that are viewed more as men's 'domain' such as forestry and livestock.
7. Success in supporting women's empowerment has been shown to be linked to the presence and persistence of all women gender teams, giving continual back-up, training and support to women and women staff such as women activators or mobilisers. Not only can they provide direct support, but they act as role models, mentors and catalysts for local women and social (gender) change, often encouraging women to have the strength to initiate change and risk upset.
8. Gender training and for 'women's empowerment' more specifically must be context specific and related to the trainees own needs, work and application. It should be participatory and a shared learning experience. It has to be integrated in a capacity building strategy including follow-ups and action-learning projects on a continued basis. Training should be balanced between the development of technical and methodological skills and creating a social awareness for putting gender strategies into action. Gender training needs to be practical-linked. Constraints need to be taken into account.
9. The employment of local women within NGO projects can be highly beneficial though challenging. Such women experience and face the same realities and problems that NGO clients are facing, so have a better understanding and empathy. A first and important step in this process is the identification of local women who have already shown capability for leadership. These women are better placed for training and employment, and acting as role models for others.

12.5 Elements of Good Practice

The practical application of attempts to empower women have been described in the preceding chapters. Each chapter has ended with a summary of the key issues raised. Here an overall summary of the recommendations from these chapters are provided.

1. **Empowerment must come from within:** without the commitment and understanding of women themselves, as to why it should be achieved (i.e. what its achievement means for them) and how, then it is likely that any progress achieved will be short lived and superficial. Additionally it has been shown that in many cases 'development' is more successful when facilitated by pastoralists themselves either as project staff, educators, community facilitators or as role models or mentors. The capacity of pastoralists needs to be built up so they can lead their own development and change, rather than attempts made by 'outsiders' to lead such change. Some women may be content (initially) with a 'lower level' of empowerment: small steps forward provide confidence for the next step. The home or household can often prove to be an important starting place for women to gain courage and strength to initiate change.
2. **A starting point for working with pastoral women should be an understanding of women as part of a pastoral household unit.** Though women have their own identity, needs and aspirations, they may have to compromise these for the good of the 'whole' and often do. Though it can be suggested that women should focus on their needs as individuals rather than those expressed as a household member, there is the danger then of risking the collapse of the pastoral system as it exists and functions. This can have an impact on women's willingness to initiate change and to fight for more empowerment such as gaining an education and stopping harmful traditional practices. Men can rely on women and their contribution to the pastoral unit, as well as women relying on men.
3. **An understanding is needed of the different roles, responsibilities and needs of both men and women without making predefined assumptions.** Further, an understanding of local issues, rights, access, knowledge and empowerment is vital before any interventions and/or activities take place. Pastoral men and women have differing entitlements and access to resources and command over them. Rights to and command over resources can be very complex, of different types, overlapping and dynamic. Additionally other divisions within women and men as separate groups should be understood and taken into account including age, status and education. An understanding of such gender issues should form that basis of project and activity planning and design of which pastoral men and women are a part.
4. **Interventions and activities should be built on an understanding of the empowerment that many women have already achieved** through their own initiative and/or with support of others. Future interventions and activities should understand these, how such empowerment was achieved, and how best to support further empowerment of women. The positive characteristics and skills of women should be developed to provide more capable and committed community members able to play the roles and take responsibilities that they feel comfortable with and to initiate changes that they want.
5. **Inhibitors to empowerment may exist at different levels and in different contexts, but should not be seen as barriers to women's empowerment but rather as hurdles that need to be overcome.** Empowerment can be long, complex and sensitive process that requires long term commitment, resources and appropriate partnerships and/or facilitation of appropriate partnerships with communities. Innovative (including looking at the opportunities of new technology or communication tools), flexible, reflective and adaptive processes may be needed: problems need to be identified early and acted upon.
6. **Improving a woman's economic status assists her empowerment.** However access to productive resources alone is not enough. At project level, the greatest impact has been achieved when women's improved access to assets has been complemented by relevant training tailored to women's needs, their roles, appropriate extension services, information and group formation. As such interventions and activities need to be interlinked and integrated in order to support this, and carefully thought out, practical and targeted.
7. **Identify the right institutional arrangements in order to strengthen women's access and rights.** Customary and government bodies can be both protective and restrictive towards women's access to and rights over livestock. Assumptions should be avoided but good investigation and clarification leading to planning with and approval from relevant community members. It is often better to create a new space for women's involvement, participation and representation rather than trying to open up on old (male-dominated) one. Emphasis should be placed on developing skills that enable effective communication between such institutions, women and other local groups. Some local institutions can prove to be a more neutral ground for gender dynamics to favour women as they are influenced by government and NGO interventions.
8. **Work with women to build on the small steps they may have made in improving their representation.** Though women might not be seen to influence decision making processes in public, there are a number of ways for them to do so, and many decisions seemingly made by their husbands have involved discussion and the influence of the women. Additionally there may be a number of customary mechanisms for women (and men) to have their voices heard, air grievances and complaints, offer opinions and even protest. Increasingly women are becoming more confident to directly participate in public meetings etc, with international networks and gatherings offering women exposure and opportunities

for such as solidarity-building. Because the 'public arena' has been dominated by men in the past, small steps in women's representation can be highly significant.

9. **It is vital that development actors understand the impacts and potential impacts of interventions on gender relations**, whether targeted at women or not. Wherever possible ways to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits should be supported and ways to mitigate negative impacts identified and put in place.
10. **Livestock related activities and interventions can offer many opportunities for the empowerment of women.** Often livestock related tasks cut through many of the 'normal' divisions found in a household and can mend cultural, caste and gender divides. Commonalities can be identified and built on to encourage solidarity and consensus. Livestock related activities can prove to be a good entry point for supporting a greater level of empowerment and are linked to other aspects of development e.g. marketing and NRM. Further livestock assets tend to be more equitably distributed than other assets so giving a basis on which to build further access and property rights. However it should be recognized that the promotion of one livestock product can have impacts on the use of and access to other livestock products and can lead to conflict.
11. **Understand the complexities of sedentarisation and the impacts of change on gender relations (negative and positive).** Sedentarisation of pastoral communities has been shown to result in a general loss of autonomy and status and studies indicate a reduction in gender equality. However land rights through land certification for example can provide benefits for women. In some countries land tenure systems in pastoral areas have not been fully developed or defined: it is important to ensure that any further debate and development of these include the needs and rights of women, ensuring that both men and women benefit. Many women appreciate the benefits of sedentarisation and such as better services, however in general they do not want to lose total connections with livestock and livestock-based livelihood systems.

12.5 Conclusions

This volume has considered in depth pastoral women's empowerment and provided examples of 'good practice' in supporting it. Each chapter has concluded with its own set of key lessons learnt and recommendations based on them. From these it is difficult to draw some all encompassing conclusions as the issues are many and complex, and often context specific. However, if there is one aspect that emerges above all others from this report, it is that pastoral women themselves are the most successful in achieving 'empowerment' and particularly the 'higher levels' of empowerment including decision making and control. Indeed, though development actors have had some success in assisting women to fulfill basic needs and ensure access and security to resources, they have struggled with promoting women's active participation in decision making processes for example.

Therefore, if there is one over-riding recommendation for the way forward, it is to build on these 'good practices' particularly those achievements that pastoral women have made themselves. As development actors we need to understand them and identify with women the right ways to support them. The strength and commitment of pastoral women to the pastoral household unit and the survival of pastoral systems should be celebrated, but their voices and choices for change should be heard and supported.

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