

**PENHA-Uganda**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2004**

**Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods, Development and  
Social Progress in the Cattle Corridor**

**1989-2004**

**PENHA celebrates 15 Years of Working  
with Pastoralists**

## **Forward**

This year marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PENHA's founding. 2004 was a very challenging year for PENHA-Uganda as an organization and for staff members. The organization has suffered from a tight squeeze on funding. Key staff members faced personal hardships and serious illness.

But, thanks to the commitment and determination of staff members, we have been able to keep the organization on track. We have continued to work at both the grassroots and policy levels, further developing our exotic goats project, focused on women's groups, working with the "Abariisa Kweteerana" herders' association in Rwemiyaga (Ssembabule) and at the same time collaborating with the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) of the University of Greenwich (UK) on a research project, funded by DFID and the African Union's CAPE/IBAR, which examined the Pastoralist Parliamentary Groupings of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. This research generated a number of insights into issues surrounding pastoralists, their representatives and policy influence under differing governance systems.

In 2004, national and District NGO forums continued the recent trend of greater attention to pastoralism. While continuing to focus our efforts on women's groups and herders' associations at the sub-county levels, PENHA will in future seek to feed lessons into these forums and contribute to their advocacy and policy efforts.

There are promising signs that things are getting better for pastoralists in the West and in the East. Government is paying more attention to pastoral development, with the development of a new national livestock plan, a big financial commitment to water for production and a renewed disarmament effort in Karamoja that involves community representatives. PENHA will work within the established policy frameworks to promote the participation of pastoralists and the tailoring of programs to take account of the unique conditions of the Cattle Corridor.

We have moved out of our old office, in the ACORD building, to new premises in the city center that give savings in transport costs, and also are more accessible to partner organizations.

As Uganda continues to grow economically and to develop socially, PENHA will continue to work to ensure that pastoralists participate in and benefit from change.

Amsale Shibeshi,  
Program Coordinator

## **1. About PENHA**

### **Local Advisory Board**

PENHA-Uganda has a local advisory board. Its members come from different regions and all have a good understanding of the issues facing Uganda's pastoralist communities and are strongly committed to development.

The advisory board gives PENHA staff guidance on policies and programs, ensuring that the latter are in line with government policies and that the organization is truly "African-led".

### **Local Partners**

#### **The Uganda Gender Resource Centre (UGRC)**

UGRC works across Uganda to empower women through research/advocacy, training and micro-credit programs. UGRC jointly organized our Mbarara workshop and subsequent workshops and trainings. UGRC facilitated field visits, and helped us define an agenda for the empowerment of pastoralist women. They are experienced in community-based development work and have well-established paralegal, gender awareness and business skills training programs.

#### **The Nyabushozi Development Agency (NYDA)**

NYDA aims to promote social and economic development among Banyankole pastoralists. NYDA has a network of volunteers in all parishes. NYDA has participated in PENHA activities since 1994, and has collaborated closely with PENHA-Uganda since 1999. NYDA has participated in or co-organized 12 PENHA workshops and trainings.

#### **The Sembabule Women's Development Agency (SEWODA)**

SEWODA serves women from both farming and pastoralist communities and focuses on efforts to raise household incomes. SEWODA also mobilizes local women for awareness raising activities around key gender and development issues.

#### **The Matheniko Development Forum (MADEFO)**

MADEFO is a local NGO, serving the pastoralist communities of Karamoja, principally in Moroto District, through research, policy & advocacy work, training and micro-projects. MADEFO has participated in a number of PENHA workshops and trainings. The organization has progressively gained in strength over the last few years and is increasingly playing a valuable role in District and national forums.

PENHA has also strengthened its collaboration with the **Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)**. MUST staff in several departments have produced useful

research outputs on pastoralism in the Western part of the Cattle Corridor and have collaborated with PENHA on several initiatives.

### **Contact Persons / Advisors at Sub-County Level**

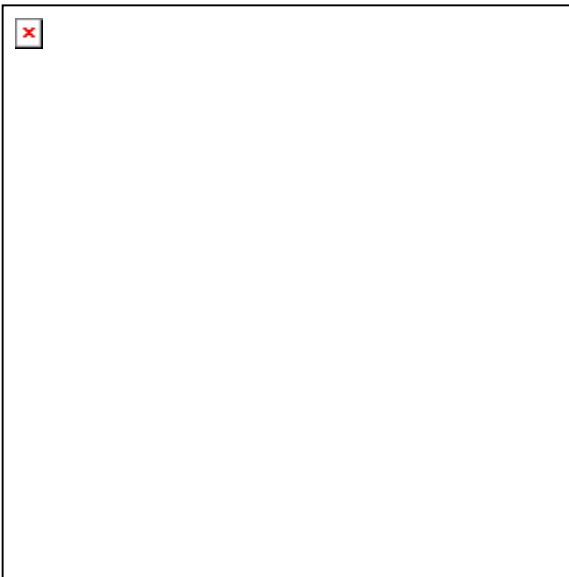
PENHA has also built up a network of contact persons in numerous sub-counties across the Western Cattle Corridor. Most of these are women and men, young and old, who are active in development and have a degree of influence in their communities. Others are ordinary people in the pastoralist communities. Many have been participants in PENHA workshops and other activities. These individuals – who are not members of our formal partner organizations - provide useful information and advice, giving a different perspective on issues and programs.

In future, we hope to formalize these valuable personal relationships, so that an active network of community members at the grassroots level consistently informs PENHA programs.

## 2. Background – Ugandan Pastoralism



The cattle market at Rugushuulu, Ssembabule – market dues contribute significantly to tax revenue, but pastoralists feel that they do not receive commensurate services from local government, even after the area was split off from Masaka District.



**Pastoralists in Uganda** are amongst the poorest and most marginalized groups. Most are not “asset poor” in the sense that they own cattle. But most do not own land and are subsistence milk producers or hired herders for wealthier cattle keepers. They are often the subjects of considerable ignorance, resentment and hostility from the population at large and their rights and citizenship, while officially recognized, are often tacitly ignored. Governments have either neglected pastoralists or subjected them to top-down interventions based on erroneous ideas about mobile cattle keeping as being irrational and environmentally destructive, in spite of research showing pastoralism to be a rational, environmentally sound and efficient form of land use in semi-arid environments and a major contributor to national economies.

Pastoralist communities have the worst human development indicators in Uganda, reflecting the low level of government commitment to their health and education services, as well as the difficulty of serving seasonally mobile populations. In stark contrast to the rest of Uganda, there is a dearth of NGO activity in pastoral areas. Only a handful of development programs, with limited geographical coverage, are currently in operation.

**Uganda's semi-arid " Cattle Corridor "** stretches across the country in arc from Bukanga and Isingiro in the South West by the Tanzania border, through Mbarara District (and Nyabushozi County), Sembabule and parts of the Central Region (Ngoma and Nakasongora) and on to the Moroto, Nakapiripit and Kotido Districts of Karamoja in the North East, bordering Kenya and the Sudan. The fragile, drought prone environments are marginal for agriculture and suitable for transhumant pastoralism. They are sparsely populated by resource-poor, subsistence oriented cattle keepers, who are largely dependent on cattle and milk sales for their meager incomes.

**In the West, Banyankole and Banyarwanda pastoralists** maintain large herds, despite the alienation of traditional grazing land by game parks and absentee ranchers. There has been major socio-economic change since the 1980s, with marked social differentiation between the "progressive farmers" who hold land titles, "squatters", who were allocated small plots and the landless. This distinct agro-ecological zone has much greater potential for agriculture and crop-livestock integration than the Eastern part of the Corridor. But, even ranchers are forced to move their herds during the dry season. Pastoralists are dispersed across Districts in small pockets. With their distinct culture and livelihoods, they are often at odds with farming communities and because of their minority status are often overlooked by local authorities. Only in Nyabushozi and parts of Sembabule do they constitute a majority and dominate local structures.

**Karamoja** differs considerably from the rest of the Corridor. It covers a large area of land, is very sparsely populated and has been ravaged by drought, famine and chronic insecurity. The Karimojong comprise various ethnic groups - the Jie, Tepeth, Dodoth, Matheniko. Upe, Pian and Bokora. Despite a high degree of cultural homogeneity, there is intense inter-ethnic rivalry and a tradition of cattle raiding among groups and neighboring communities. Conflict is the single biggest obstacle to development. In the colonial era, Karamoja was dismissed as irredeemably backward and actually closed off from the rest of the country. This social and political isolation has persisted, compounding its geographical isolation. Insecurity has created "no-go areas ", promoting enforced sedentarization and accompanying environmental degradation.

**Gender inequality and women's subordination** are particularly acute in pastoralist communities, where society is governed by traditional culture. Social mores severely constrain women's personal autonomy and ability to participate in economic and public life. Women and girls have severely limited access to education and information. Their powerlessness, economic dependence on male partners, lack of personal autonomy and limited ability to insist on safe sexual practices together with widespread acceptance of gender-based violence, increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. This is compounded by negative cultural practices such as early marriage, wife sharing and the " inheritance " of widows by male relatives.

Women in pastoralist communities are severely disadvantaged in terms of access to health and education services. This is reflected in very poor social indicators – literacy

rates are extremely low (5-10%), and maternal mortality rates are very high in comparison to those elsewhere in rural Uganda.

Custom generally restricts women's ownership of cattle, though women generally manage non-commercial milk output, goat rearing and crop cultivation. Opportunities exist for women to develop new income-generating activities, however they face a number of constraints including low levels of literacy, skills and awareness of business opportunities, as well as a lack of access to credit. Widowhood has become a serious problem in pastoral areas, as a result of armed conflict in the East and the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the West, where many women find themselves caring for AIDS orphans.

Pastoralist women suffer from isolation and "voiceless-ness". They are largely excluded from the few existing channels of communication, with very low access to radio or print and audiovisual media. They receive minimal attention from extension workers or development agents, and have low participation rates in formal groups and decision-making forums. Where they do occupy positions of responsibility, they often lack the confidence to make themselves heard and the skills to plan interventions.

Those NGO programs that are in place have hitherto focused primarily on the production system. A number of agencies have recently begun to pay more attention to social development and gender issues. However, culture frequently makes working with pastoralist women difficult – they are reticent and the objections of husbands often prevent them from participating in meetings. In workshops, even the most sophisticated members of the community often flatly reject the notion of gender equality – many see it as an attack on their culture. So, a lot of thought has to go into tailoring approaches to the cultural context, distinguishing social and economic progress from "Westernization", building positive partnerships between men and women and developing an agenda that is not just distinctively African, but distinctively "pastoralist" – working with, not against, the culture. This is where the need for learning is acute.

There has to date been little interaction between Karimojong and other Ugandan NGOs, and little learning on experiences and insights from gender work in pastoral areas. There is an urgent need to establish and develop approaches and to adapt methodologies on the basis of thorough research.

### 3. Activities

#### 3.1 Exotic Goats Project with women's groups



South African Boer goats mature faster and produce more meat than local varieties – crosses are both more productive in terms of meat well adapted to local conditions.

Goat rearing has great potential to boost household, and particularly, women's incomes. Exotic breeds, produced by breeding local and Boer goats, available from South Africa, are well adapted to the local environment, produce more meat, for which there is a good local market, and are relatively easy to manage.

Boer bucks are in short supply in Uganda, even at research stations, and the availability of breeding stock at Nkoma will be significant, enabling us to disseminate these high-yielding breeds to women's groups on a self-sustaining loan basis.

We have built on the work done in 2003, developing our breeding center at Nkoma Farm. Participating women's groups have benefited from training in goat management and business skills.

Participating women's groups:

|            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| Kabale     | 5 women's groups |
| Bukanga:   |                  |
| Endinzi    | 5 women's groups |
| Rugaga     | 3 women's groups |
| Ssembabule | 5 women's groups |
| Masaka     | 5 women's groups |
| Nyabushozi | 4 women's groups |

These groups received cross breeds and local goats, so that they have their own breeding stock. The women have demonstrated their capacity to manage their projects efficiently and equitably. As the project develops, we will help the groups to build up their stock.

PENHA's breeding stock at Nkoma has expanded and is being managed well, despite some losses due to disease.

### **3.2 The "Nkoma" Agricultural Learning Center: a Demonstration Farm for Participatory Training & Exchange with Resource-Poor Pastoralists**

#### **The Genesis of the Project**

In 1999, PENHA held a regional workshop in Mbarara on pastoral development. We subsequently carried out a needs assessment and situation analysis in the pastoralist communities. The need for training to promote sustainable agriculture, increased incomes and food security for Ugandan pastoralists came out strongly. Discussions with the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) brought out the need for demonstration sites and training at the grassroots. Local partner organizations in 4 Districts as well as herders and agro-pastoralists called for training and extension.

Over 2000-2, with the Natural Resources Institute (UK), PENHA held two Natural Resource Management training workshops for local NGOs and four Stakeholder Workshops with national policymakers, local Government, NGOs and pastoralists. Participants gave strong recommendations for a demonstration farm – establishing a site for practical, local language, grassroots training in the local language and the sharing of knowledge and experience.

#### **The Target Group**

The project aims to reach resource-poor, subsistence-oriented pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. Government programs are often not extended to pastoral areas and, when

they are, service delivery and program design are often inappropriate for the special circumstances of pastoralist communities.

Herd sizes vary from 20 head of cattle to 200-300. Most now practice some crop cultivation, but productivity is low and cattle generally provide more than 50% of income. A key constraint is landlessness or insecurity of tenure. Many herders in the West are “squatters”, allocated small, often uneconomic, plots on the ranching schemes established under the big “land grabs” of the 1960s and 70s. Transhumant mobility remains an imperative – in the dry season, the choice is either to move with your cattle or to watch them die.

Under the pressure of population growth, privatization and the loss of traditional grazing land to competing users, and (in the East) chronic insecurity and cattle rustling, pastoralists are increasingly adopting mixed farming on the reduced area of land available to them. The result has been impoverishment and localized environmental degradation. Pastoralists’ indigenous technical knowledge and skills in animal husbandry are valuable resources, but most herders know little about arable farming or the potential for crop-livestock integration in mixed farming. There is scope to improve pastoral systems, building on pastoralists’ skills and knowledge. Improved techniques exist that combine traditional and modern knowledge and could boost yields and enhance food security as well as sustainability. Fodder production and haymaking, almost unheard of in the Cattle Corridor, could provide important dry season feeds for cattle. Cost effective methods for pasture improvement exist, but have not been taken up, in part because pastoralist communities have been poorly served by government extension and lack access to training and information.

The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) program envisions the formation of farmer groups, in the distinct agro-ecological zones, that will contract services from decentralized agricultural research institutions. However, little thought has been given to how this can be made to work in pastoral areas and there is a risk that pastoralists will once again be left out. Government policy, based on the 1998 “Meat Production Master Plan”, aims to modernize the livestock sector with a view to generating exports. The focus tends to be on the big commercial ranchers, who can afford the necessary investments in water points, cattle dips and veterinary services as well as record keeping. It is not obvious how poor pastoralists can be helped to participate in this market-oriented expansion, yet the traditional sector accounts for the bulk of the national herd. The government hopes to revive the cooperative movement. Certainly, if poor farmers and herders come together in groups, they should be able to afford substantial investments. But, innovative mechanisms will have to be devised in order to avoid the ownership and management problems that led to the failure of cooperatives in previous decades. The new cooperatives may have to be more like conventional companies, with shareholder membership – in line with government’s vision of promoting “farming as a business”. Similarly, the difficulties posed by land ownership and tenure issues may ultimately be overcome by the evolution of commercial leasing arrangements.

Low population densities and the dispersal of the pastoralist communities across vast rangelands make it much more difficult for herders, than it is for farmers, to organize cohesive groups. These are major obstacles, but are not necessarily insurmountable.

## The Site

PENHA is developing Nkoma Farm as a demonstration site / agricultural learning center to promote improved techniques in natural resource management to surrounding pastoral communities. The location of Nkoma Farm, near the main road and in between Sembabule District and Nyabushozi, both with large pastoralist populations, facilitates visits by groups of pastoralists from both areas. An on-site diagnostic survey was carried out to determine the range of techniques that can be demonstrated at Nkoma. The area is suitable from an ecological point of view and offers the opportunity to demonstrate dry season mitigation measures.



Cattle emerging from the dip at Nkoma Farm – crossbred cows produce more milk and revenue than Ankole cows, but they require greater veterinary investments and are less mobile in the dry season.

## The Need for Training In Support of Increased Productivity, Sustainability and Incomes

Extension efforts to date have been focused on arable farmers and commercial ranchers. The presence of a model farm within a farming community has a powerful demonstration effect – people are able to witness “close up” new practices that are more effective or efficient. The demonstration sites that do exist serve these groups, and have been successful in promoting new techniques. However smallholders (the mass of the rural poor) and in particular pastoralists, have been neglected. Pastoral areas are sparsely populated – people do not live in clusters of villages where it is easy to observe what your neighbor is doing or what is happening on a nearby demonstration farm.

For this reason, pastoralist communities require residential demonstration and learning sites that are more or less centrally located – they can leave their cows with a relative and converge at the center for several days of learning and exchange.

**New seed varieties**, developed by local research stations, will be tried out for cultivation in home gardens and fruit orchards. Pastoralists are experts in traditional cattle keeping, but agriculture has only ever been a supplementary activity, generally managed by women. **Lack of Access to Safe Water**, along with poor hygiene and sanitation practices result in avoidable ill health and disease. Water sources often serve both humans and animals. Preventable diseases continue to take a heavy toll in terms of lost lives – maternal and child mortality rates for pastoralists East and West are amongst the highest in the country. Dirty water is estimated to account for more than 50% of disease. We aim to promote safe water for households using cheap, locally made, roof and underground catchment systems, the most cost-effective technology available for increasing access to safe water, in addition to the use of troughs and other simple systems, such as the planting of grasses that act as natural filters, for ensuring hygiene at water points used by both animals and humans. Ventilated & Improved, or “VIP” latrines have been identified as the most suitable design, but communities are not aware of the health benefits and do not know how to construct them.

### **Project Goals**

This project aims to improve crop and livestock production in agro-pastoral and pastoral communities, using the best traditional and modern practice, and to build local capacity for sustainable management of natural resources.

We will show cattle-keepers, “good practice” in animal health, selective breeding, crop-livestock integration, soil and water conservation and sustainable agriculture. We also hope to stimulate the formation of herder groups that can become effective vehicles for pastoralists’ participation in national programs.

However, this is not a “top-down” exercise – we do not assume that outside “experts” have all the requisite knowledge and technologies and that all that is needed is for them to demonstrate these. Local herders will be key resource persons, sharing their knowledge with other herders and interacting with experts, the majority of whom will be qualified Ugandans with roots in the communities. Indigenous knowledge is dynamic – evolving constantly through learning and experimentation. (Many herders now use “Omo” soap powder to treat some animal diseases!) Government’s NAADS program seeks to stimulate farmer innovation through participatory on-farm research and experimentation. But, agricultural livelihoods are inherently precarious – many rural people are reluctant to try risky new techniques because failure would mean disaster. This project will allow risk-free experimentation – herders can see for themselves what works and what doesn’t without risk.

Given PENHA’s regional mandate, we see exchanges of visits between pastoral communities as a valuable means of promoting the sharing of experience and knowledge. We will, therefore, endeavor to arrange visits to Nkoma by groups of pastoralists from various countries in the Horn of Africa.

## Activities

As it develops, the project will ensure that:

- Pastoralists can learn about and exchange new techniques for sustainable agricultural intensification, animal husbandry and soil & water conservation
- The planting of drought resistant varieties, the establishment of a tree nursery and seed multiplication facility enable participating groups to access new planting materials and seeds developed by local research stations
- Pastoralists can learn new skills for processing milk and agricultural products, so that they can add value to the products they sell and boost their incomes
- Community Animal Health Workers (para-vets), extension professionals and practitioners of traditional animal medicine, can be trained in basic animal health techniques
- Information can be collected, in routine farm work as well as in workshops with herders, for the production of local language posters, fact sheets, training manuals and materials for communication through radio and video
- Pastoralists from across Uganda and the Horn can share and transfer expertise, knowledge and skills – locally, nationally and regionally

Demonstration and training will cover:

- Soil and water conservation (mulching, terracing, contour farming, use of absorption channels and retention ditches)
- Agro-forestry practices (woodlots, fodder banks, contour hedges, live fences)
- Pasture improvement (oversowing using forage legumes, weeding and grazing control)
- Animal husbandry techniques
- Goat rearing with high-yielding Boer goats (supporting the distribution of improved breeds to women's groups)
- Design and construction of fuel-efficient stoves
- The potential of cheap solar systems
- Rainwater harvesting for domestic use (particularly, training in the construction of roof catchment systems that use affordable and locally available materials)
- Good practice in sanitation and hygiene and the construction of Ventilated & Improved Pit Latrines
- Yoghurt making and milk processing

Parallel to the training, the farm will be used to do some basic research. Careful recording of day-to-day farming activities will track the effects of the different techniques employed on the herd and on different soils within the farm, as well as the performance of different crops and new varieties of seeds. This will feed into the training as the farm staff will be able to show very directly the advantages and problems found on the farm.

Due to funding constraints, we have not been able to develop the center as planned. Only a handful of events have taken place, but numerous herders have visited Nkoma, shared ideas with Nkoma staff and gone away with new plans to develop their own herds and plots.

### **3.3 NRI study on the Pastoralist Parliamentary Groups of Ethiopia, Kenya & Uganda**

PENHA, in collaboration with the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich, UK, carried out research on the Pastoralist Parliamentary Groups (PPGs) of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. PENHA-Uganda undertook the Kenya and Uganda studies.

The studies also looked at broader questions of governance, pastoralists and politics and attempted to assess how pastoralists can defend their interests in the political arena.

#### ***Background and Methodology***

Three factors contributed to the identification and planning of the study:

- A growing consensus that the most important problems of pastoral development lie at the levels of *policy* and *governance*
- A lack of attention by researchers, not only in the field of pastoralism, on MPs as actors in development, despite 15 years of democratization in Africa
- A knowledge that PPGs exist in at least three countries, but that we lacked information on who they were, how they worked and where they are going?

The study took the form of three three-week case studies, mainly centered on semi-structured interviews of MPs and other stakeholders, with document review.

#### ***Preliminary Findings***

The PPGs have been evolving through informal activities since around 1996, and have influenced each other at key moments. The Kenyan PPG was formally launched in 1998, but operated at a low level in an unfavorable political environment until its relaunch in 2003. It is an informal group, without a written constitution, open to MPs concerned with pastoral development. In practice its 30 active members are all drawn from traditionally pastoralist constituencies. The Ugandan PPG was formally established in 1999, with seven stated goals and a constitution. Membership was in principle “open to all MPs who feel their constituencies have pastoralist related issues that the group should address” but active membership was in practice restricted to MPS from the Karamoja, Teso and southwestern regions of Uganda. It became dormant from 2001 until recent moves to relaunch it. The Ethiopian Pastoral Affairs Standing Committee is in contrast an entity established by Proclamation of Parliament, in 2003, and has eight pastoral and five non-pastoral members chosen by Parliament as a whole.

The PPGs have so far had a mixed record of achievement. In Uganda PPG members played an important role in pursuing corruption in the valley dam scandal of 1998, and securing exceptional access to a National Park in the drought of 1999. The group also contributed to alleviating, though not stopping, armed conflict between pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in 1997-2001. In Ethiopia, the PASC has a statutory duty of oversight of the Livestock Marketing Authority and the pastoral activities of eight ministries, which in general it implements effectively. In Kenya, parliamentary procedures have allowed less of an oversight role.

All three groups, alongside civil society organizations, have contributed to raising awareness of pastoral issues. But the groups seem to have made a very modest contribution to the major policy debates – the PRSP processes and the Ugandan PMA.

### ***The Challenges for the PPGs***

The PPGs themselves must rise to various challenges:

- Engaging with policy questions and influencing the big debates on policy
- Mastering parliamentary procedures, both formal and informal, to influence government
- Maintaining their own continuity as key individuals do not return to parliament: the groups should explore more formal arrangements for civil society or research organisations to provide ongoing advisory and/or secretariat services, and ways of co-opting ex-MPs and non-MPs as honorary members
- Accessing appropriate information for the debates they engage in and their capacities
- Mobilising their own resources, and those of parliament and government: this will be important to avoid fatiguing donors with demands for support
- Overcoming local, clan and ethnic particularism
- Making use of the potential synergies between members of different backgrounds, generations, regions, standings within government: “mentoring” less experienced MPs.

### ***Lessons for Donors and NGOs***

The PPGs are worth supporting as one strand of the development of pastoralism, but they can only ever be part of the picture. Donors and NGOs (and researchers) should take account of MPs as “policy-makers”, but recognize they are more than that – they also have crucial oversight functions.

Donors and NGOs should:

- Be pragmatic about “representativeness”: representation is a process, not a state
- Understand these groups in the real-world political context of history, ethnicity, real and perceived national security needs, and party politics
- Understand what MPs actually do, the formal and informal processes of parliament
- Understand the relations between MPs and (variously decentralized) local governments
- Work with individuals, especially those who can act as bridges: between parties, and between politics, NGOs and academia
- Help the PPGs address their differing information and training needs, particularly to address policy questions in environments where new thinking on pastoralism has been slow to percolate.
- Help the PPGs build appropriate institutional arrangements for information and for continuity: with NGOs/CSOs, with researchers, with former MPs
- Address the “hard” capacity needs of the PPGs, especially transport, which is a key constraint in maintaining links with constituents and comparing issues across constituencies
- Work regionally: the fact that pastoralists and their MPs can move across frontiers and work across frontiers is an asset, not a liability.

The study also looked at 'grassroots democracy' and donor support programs, emphasizing the need to strengthen citizens' capacity to engage politically.

### **3.4 Panos Eastern Africa "Eastern Africa Pastoralist Interparliamentary Group Workshop", Kampala, 15-17 March 2004.**

This PANOS organized workshop saw the launch of the Uganda Pastoralist Position Paper and included discussion of efforts of the "Pastoralist Taskforce" of CSO organizations to get pastoralists' concerns recognized in the PRSP process, as well as the presentation of papers and plenary discussions. PENHA-Uganda participated in this process, principally through its local partner organization, the Nyabushozi Development Agency (NYDA), providing participants with materials to support their participation in the NGO forums involved.

PENHA Board member, Dr. John Morton, presented the preliminary findings of the NRI/PENHA comparative study on Pastoralist Parliamentary Groups in the region and distributed a summary document to workshop participants.

Saadia Ahmed, program coordinator for the PENHA-Somaliland program, presented a paper on pastoral development policy in Somaliland.

Everse Ruhindi, PENHA-Uganda's associate gender expert, who contributed to the NRI/PENHA study, participated in discussions.

All of PENHA's contributions emphasized the importance of strengthening pastoralists' understanding of and participation in political processes and reducing the informational asymmetries between representatives and constituents as an essential step in producing healthy democratic processes. The acute subordination of women, the high illiteracy rates in pastoralist communities, their limited access to channels of information and their dispersion are significant obstacles to participation are significant obstacles. But they can be overcome by determined efforts at the sub-county and parish levels that combine adult literacy and civic education work with other development initiatives.

PENHA's work with NRI on pastoralism and politics proved to be timely and will feed into the work of PANOS and the emerging civil society forums. This is an under-researched area and this work will hopefully provide useful insights and a basis for further work as well as concrete action on behalf of pastoralists.

### **Problems facing pastoralists in the isolated areas of the Western Cattle Corridor**

- Landlessness or insecurity of tenure => strong disincentives to invest in improvements (such as water points and cattle dips)
- Inadequate water sources
- Regular outbreaks of animal diseases
- Prohibitively high cost of veterinary drugs and services
- Lack of milk cooling facilities and milk processing activities
- Distance from urban or “roadside” markets / poor marketing infrastructure
- Exploitation by middlemen (very high mark-ups for traders)
- High cattle mortality during the dry season / distress sales of cattle at very low prices

### 3.5 Working with Herders in Rwemiyaga

Around 90% of the people in Rwemiyaga are cattle-keeping herders. They depend for their incomes on sales of cattle and milk. They are resource-poor, subsistence-oriented semi-nomadic pastoralists who maintain small herds of cattle and cannot afford to buy land or expensive inputs, such as veterinary drugs and exotic bulls that would make their herds more productive.

There is no local market for milk. The local people are mostly herders, who all produce milk. The area is very remote and transport to the urban areas, where demand for milk is high, is very difficult. This means that whenever they want to pay school fees for their children, or even buy a box of matches, they have to sell a cow.

#### “Abariisa Kweteerana” – a herders’ association



The executive members of “Abariisa Kweteerana” with the LC3 Chair at a meeting organized by PENHA in 2003

Rwemiyaga’s pastoralists formed a group or cooperative society back in 1987. The association is called “Rwemiyaga Abariisa Kweteerana”, literally “Rwemiyaga Pastoralists Getting Together” – it could be better translated as “Rwemiyaga Pastoralists’ Cooperative “.

These are resource-poor pastoralists in a remote area whose principal source of income is milk sales and who currently receive very low prices for their milk because they are

unable to access distant (semi-) urban markets in the absence of cooling facilities. They have formed a co-op and acquired a cooler, but without a generator the cooler is not operational. Milk is actually being thrown away.

PENHA, with funding from a Church group in Brentwood UK, purchased a generator for “Abariisa Kweteerana”. The generator will increase their bargaining power vis-à-vis traders and enable them to sell at higher prices - they currently sell at “distress” prices to traders who are aware that they will be forced to pour away their milk if they do not take the prices offered immediately. However, we subsequently discovered that the cooler was not operational and required substantial repairs. PENHA helped to bring the cooler to Kampala for repairs. Alongside PENHA’s contribution, the herders have collected funds and received donations from local MPs. We expect that the cooling facility will soon be functional.

PENHA held meetings with the LC3 Chairman of Rwemiyaga and the members of the “Abariisa Kweteerana” group in order to define group structures and address ownership and management issues. PENHA has also held discussions with the members aimed at strengthening their management systems. Members of the executive received training in organizational and financial management from PENHA in 2003.

The association is open to all pastoralists in Rwemiyaga, and has a management committee and elected Executive. The generator will ultimately be owned by the local government, at LCIII level and this project will have its own management committee comprised of the “Abariisa Kweteerana” executive, the LCIII Chairman, and two MPs – Honorable Hanifa Kawooya, Women’s MP for Semababule District and Honorable Theodore Ssekikubo, MP for Rwemiyaga. PENHA will oversee the management of the project and ensure that the money serves its intended purpose.

## **Prospects**

The generator may facilitate simple processing and packaging (e.g. commercial yogurt making) that could increase value added and incomes “lower down the food chain”. A fundamental problem for pastoralists right now is the fact that they sell poor quality milk to middlemen at very low prices, who then sell the milk on to urban processors and packagers with very high mark-ups. A liter of milk sells for 100 shillings in Rwemiyaga as against 800 shillings in Kampala. The current situation of excess supply requires measures to boost demand (school milk programs, etc.), as well as efforts to increase quality (where coolers are a first step) and promote processing (where electricity is a key input). So, electricity and milk coolers at the LC3 level can play an important role in boosting the opportunities and incomes of poor pastoralists.

In some areas, pastoralists have been able to increase the price they command for a liter of milk from 100 to 200-300 shillings – doubling their incomes. This has in turn helped them to cover school fees for their children as well as medical expenses, which are particularly onerous under the present cost recovery policies. Though we do not have hard evidence on this, anecdotal evidence suggests that where such facilities boost household incomes, pastoralists are more likely to send girls to school.

A relatively small investment can go a long way to changing people’s lives. Households will have bigger incomes; children who would not otherwise have had a chance to go to school will get an education and hopefully go on to lead better lives.

PENHA will continue to work with “Abariisa Kweteerana” with a view to strengthening its capacity to take part in a range of development activities. Forming cohesive associations is important if pastoralists are to participate in the NAADS program. Such groups, if they are well managed, can provide important vehicles for the uptake of new techniques and ultimately for pastoralists to make the kind of substantial investments in new water points or cattle dips that are beyond the reach of the individual pastoralist.

### **3.6 Pastoralists, Parks and Wild Resources**

PENHA participated in preliminary work in support of a proposed research project, to be led by Dr. Andrew McWilliam of the McAulay Institute (Aberdeen, Scotland). Dr. McWilliam undertook consultations with a wide range of stakeholders and experts.

PENHA organized a meeting with pastoralists from communities around Lake Mburo National Park. A number of useful insights emerged from the discussions, which will help to shape the design of the research program, if funding is secured.

- Pastoralists living around the LMNP are still bitter about the failure of successive governments to provide new water points to compensate for the loss of access to the areas major permanent water source – Lake Mburo.
- Community participation in commercial “sport hunting” has generated significant benefits for some sub-counties, but there are questions about the distribution of the profits made.
- Herders felt that the provisions for tracks and controlled access to Lake Mburo were inadequate.
- Most participants felt that tourism does not yet generate sufficient revenue to compensate for the loss of access to resources that are vitally important to pastoral livelihoods, but a number, aware of the scale of tourism in Kenya, recognized the possibility that, over a period of time, it may be possible to develop a significant tourist industry around the Park, which could bring substantial benefits to local people.
- Pastoralists acknowledged that they made use of a wide range of wild plants to treat animal and human disease, but were reluctant to divulge details, fearing that outsiders might exploit their intellectual property commercially. Much of this traditional knowledge is held by individuals - “abashaho w’ekinansi” or “abaraguzi” (traditional doctors) who provide services to the community on a commercial basis. Local practitioners were not thought to be participating in the national organizations that bring together traditional healers. Traditional medicines, for humans and animals, were seen as effective and cheap, relative to modern services. There was little awareness of the need to take steps to conserve these wild resources.
- Participants were not, on the whole, concerned about the environmental impact of the area’s thriving charcoal burning trade, which serves urban as well as local markets.

### **3.7 International NGO “Write-shop” in Nairobi**

PENHA’s range management specialist, Mr. Emmanuel Kyagaba, participated in a “write-shop” on drought mitigation and management strategies in Nairobi, organized by and involving various international NGOs, which brought together experts and NGO personnel from around East Africa.

A “write-shop” brings together people from different organizations in a workshop situation with the goal of discussing a set of issues and drafting a policy document for the organizing institution. This is a novel approach, albeit one that raises some issues with respect to ownership of “intellectual property” and remuneration.

Emmanuel brought his considerable knowledge and experience of Ugandan conditions, practice and policy to bear and made a substantial contribution to the editing of the final document.

We have yet to see the results of PENHA’s participation, but we look forward to seeing the final product. Undoubtedly, substantial scope exists to improve upon current drought management strategies, which are largely ineffective. In addition to government’s new water for production program, tackling ownership and participation issues, building capacity at District and sub-county levels, improving communication between Districts and with herders as well as systematizing and controlling cattle movements are all important elements in any new strategy.

### **3.8 PENHA-Uganda Situation Analysis**

PENHA-Uganda conducted a new situation analysis, based on a review of existing documents and new published reports and data, as well as interviews and discussions with pastoralists in Ntungamo, Isingiro, Nyabushozi, Rwemiyaga, Ntuusi, and Luwero. Talking to pastoralists in relatively informal settings has been particularly useful in this.

Without radically changing our fundamental understanding of pastoral development in Uganda, the analysis threw up a number of new insights and pointed to new directions for development and advocacy work.

Our situation analysis benefited from other PENHA work. Early on in 2004, PENHA-Uganda staff contributed to the reviewing of a manual on East African pastoralism written for DFID. This turned out to be an illuminating exercise, prompting discussion of policies and programs, and encouraging us to re-examine our core beliefs. We were able to raise a number of points, which we hope will be addressed in the final document.

This work has helped us to refine our approach and to define our new priorities as an organization. It has also confirmed in many respects the appropriateness of the approach we have been following in the couple of ears.

#### **4. Future Directions**

PENHA-Uganda intends to intensify its fundraising efforts so that it can fully fund the program it has worked out with the communities and partner organizations.

We will work hard to build on the foundation we have established. We need to work with others to expand pastoralists' access to information, training and knowledge.

We will endeavor to produce local language materials that support the activities of agents of social change at the sub-county level and to strengthen grassroots organizations and link them up with District and national processes.

PENHA will contribute to the development of a "bottom-up" advocacy process for pastoral development, recognizing that indigenous voices are the only legitimate ones.