

# PENHA

Patron:

Joanna Lumley, OBE

PASTORAL & ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

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Pastoralists from Uganda

## Tailoring equipment for women's groups in Somaliland

The promotion of trade and enterprise are central to the development of Somaliland, and the efforts to reduce poverty there. Although livelihoods of over half of the population are based on livestock (camels, sheep and goats), it is supplemented by low productivity and small scale agriculture among the agro-pastoralist communities in rural and semi-arid areas. Small settlements are dispersed across vast plains. With erratic and

seasonal rainfall, pastoral mobility is necessary – so herders, and many households, move seasonally with their animals in search of pasture and water. There is a strong culture of enterprise, and many people, including women, are engaged in different kinds of business and petty trading. Dirt roads connect the villages and settlements to the bustling major towns, Hargeisa and Burao. The economy is an open one, heavily dependent on livestock exports to the Gulf, with middlemen and traders sourcing animals from pastoralists and the livestock markets of the local towns. Unusually for Africa, imported rice, as opposed to locally grown starches, is a staple food. A rather limited range of consumer goods, as well as clothes and material,

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**This issue of the PENHA Newsletter comes with our greetings. We hope you enjoy it and find it of interest. We have appreciated the comments that you have made on previous ones. Please keep them coming. The newsletter is also on our website: [www.penhanetwork.org](http://www.penhanetwork.org)**

**You can unsubscribe from the newsletter via a link at the end of this Newsletter or by post.**

## Nkoma Farm in Uganda

For the past ten years, PENHA has been able to use the Nkoma Farm, based at the village of Mbirizi in Central Uganda. The aim of this programme is in tune with the Ugandan government's gender and development policy of aiming to provide direct support to well organized women's groups in disadvantaged (semi-arid) pastoral areas, as well as information and demonstration of new techniques for women's groups and herders' associations.

PENHA has concentrated on supplying exotic goats ("improved breeds") to women's groups. The groups receive goat management training and visit Nkoma to observe proper management at first hand. The project has delivered tangible benefits to the beneficiaries, helping them to substantially increase their incomes.

Current stock at Nkoma stands at around 170 exotic goats (25%, 50% and 75% Boer-Mubende crosses) and four pure South African Boers, with a larger number of local Mubende goats held in separate housing. A new male was imported from South Africa. It has been difficult to maintain high standards of management (disease and breeding control), but the quality of Nkoma's goats still compares well with those of other, better-funded programs. The goats at Nkoma are in reasonably good condition. Salt and miner-

al supplementation has been adequate, although the low quality and quantity of dry season forage remains a problem. There is a need to experiment with new dry-season feeds.

Typically, a group with a small stock of goats can expect earnings of around £530 in six months, or £1,060 in a year. Divided equally between 10 members, earnings generated would be £100 per member. This represents, roughly, an additional 50% of annual income for a poor rural household (in a semi-arid area).

The project has focused on women's groups because women tend to spend more of their disposable income within the household, on things like school fees and medical expenses that promote household welfare. But, the adoption of improved goat breeds by men is also a project goal. And mixed groups have emerged naturally, as some women's groups have brought in male members, in particular to help with marketing.

The farm has been made available to PENHA by the generosity of a local Ugandan business man, Mr. Barnabas Nuwamanya who has leased it to us at a peppercorn rent. The running costs have mainly been provided over the last ten years by Open Gate, a small Trust based in Derbyshire which has as its principal objective the support of small scale environmental, ecological and educational projects. A number of other UK Trusts have also contributed to support this important work.



## Elizabeth Katushabe represents PENHA

An important aspect of PENHA's work is to represent pastoralists in policy formulation. Elizabeth, a PENHA worker belonging to the Ugandan Bahima pastoralist community, was invited to two meetings – in Bonn (Germany) in September 2012 and in Nairobi (Kenya) in January 2013.



She gave a presentation at the Bonn meeting in which she described the important role Bahima women pastoralists play in keeping and nurturing of the Ankole cattle, which are their traditional livestock.

The two international conferences looked at the differing positions of the pastoralists and other small herders as against the large scale herders. The total output of the small herders is overall very significant – but, until recently, has not been recognised. The meetings also recognised that there were different needs for the different groups. Getachew Abebe Kibret from Ethiopia, a panelist at the Bonn meeting, pointed out that Africa has a number of different systems. He asked: "How independent has Africa been in terms of thinking? Africa needs the space to link in to the realities of what is happening. There are potential resources and contributions from Africa."

A feature of these conferences was the presence of senior figures from international organisations as well as government ministers and officials. This meant that the concerns from the grassroots had a real chance of being heard.

## Books for Sudanese schools

With the support of the South Holland (Lincolnshire) Rotary Club, 2,000 books in Arabic were purchased and sent to six basic (primary) schools in villages around Kassala. These villages are mainly occupied by agro-pastoralist families. The Khartoum Rotary Club was also involved in organising the purchase of the books. The subjects covered were books needed for learning Arabic at a basic level as well as those on numeracy and maths.

PENHA's representative in Sudan, Abdelghani Ibrahim, reported:

*The idea was great, there was a serious need for the books – we can say it was crisis. The situation shows that every five students were sharing one book and in some schools no books at all, except for the teacher. Therefore more investment in this issue is crucial.*



**A teacher receiving some of the books**

## Somaliland Elections

PENHA worker, Kees Maxey, was part of an international observer team at the local elections in Somaliland at the end of November 2012. These were the first local elections since 2002, but followed the successful Presidential elections of 2010. There were 379 seats being

contested, with 2,368 candidates, over 90% of whom were men. The elections were enthusiastic and mainly peaceful, apart from some problems near to the Puntland border. Long queues of voters, with separate lines of men and women stood patiently outside of the voting booths. There was no register of electors so multiple voting was discouraged, not wholly successfully, by colouring the thumb with a blue indelible ink. However there was undoubtedly much double and under age voting by supporters of all the seven parties. The observer team congratulated Somaliland “on a largely peaceful and transparent expression of democratic will in local elections”.



**Queuing to vote**

## Food We Want Campaign

PENHA is a partner in a European consortium which, under the title of “Food We Want”, is actively publishing and organising workshops on issues of food security and sustainable agriculture. It regularly updates its website with globally relevant articles on food issues.

The project organised a Media workshop at University College

London (UCL) in February this year. The discussion focused on issues such as outdated media portrayal of Africa and food security and lack of focus on African land grabbing by governments and commercial organisations. A fuller report can be seen on the Food We Want website. Click below:

[www.foodwewant.org/eng](http://www.foodwewant.org/eng)

## Tailoring equipment for women's groups in Somaliland

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are imported from the Gulf.

Dresses and outfits are tailored locally to suit traditional styles prescribed for women, including the traditional “dirie” for special occasions. The market for women’s clothing is very different from those of other African countries – with heavy use of local tailoring, little or no importing of second-hand clothes and an almost exclusive dominance of traditional dress. There is, thus, considerable scope for the development of local businesses that make and repair women’s clothing, and many women have the relevant skills.

The Rotary Club of Grantham, Kesteven, through its “Trade Aid” scheme, donated five boxes of tailoring equipment, each of which included a hand driven sewing machine, a bench and a range of other materials. These were distributed to five women’s groups in three villages, all of which are distant from the main towns, and none of which have electricity. One of the problems faced by the women is the lack of capital – and these boxes were a very real contribution to setting them on their way. They have had small business training from PENHA as part of the Danish supported Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme. Women’s group members spend a large proportion of their increased incomes on health and on education of their children. In addition, one of the larger groups plays a significant role in local affairs. For example, it participates in the campaign against the environmentally destructive burning of wood for charcoal production, often contributing funds for armed guards to protect trees. It is also involved in local sanitation efforts. The Rotary Club support is an important contribution to the local community in Somaliland.

## Celebrating the Horn of Africa with Joanna Lumley

About 70 guests joined our Patron and Mohammed Sulieman, a former chair of PENHA's Trustees in an evening of regional food, music and dance at the Adulis Restaurant in London.



Speaking at the event, Joanna said that "I think that the best thing you can do if you want to know about PENHA is ... to go to the excellent website and to read the really superb newsletter – I do love them.

"PENHA has such broad and almost undefinable aims and ambitions – which are to support

people in their own way, in their own place and to stop one kind of people being ruled by other people. And the people who have got the nomadic spirit, the pastoralist feel – we have to help these

people remain who they are and not to trammel every one into a tellable shape. I hate being told ... you are this kind of person, this is what you do. We don't want that – and there is something liberating about the nomadic people, who simply move around – and incidentally are as generous and courteous as anyone I have met on the planet."

### PENHA updates its structure

**Zeremariam Fre**, remains PENHA's founding and continuing Director. Responsible to the Director is **Bereket Tsegay**, the Regional Project Officer for the Prosopis project as well as being the PENHA Programme Development Manager and **Kees Maxey**, Fundraising team leader as well as head of Country Programme Support for Uganda and Somaliland. **Menbere Hailemariam** is the UK national co-ordinator for the Food We Want (FWW) project as well as the PENHA Communication Officer. **Tesfaldet Okubayes** is the UK press officer for the FWW project as well as the PENHA Project Development Officer. In addition, PENHA has two Research Associates who are also interns – **Meije Gernez** and **Jennifer Eddis**. In Africa, **Amsale Shibeshi** remains

Regional Programme Co-ordinator while **John Livingstone** is the Regional Policy Officer – including research and the writing of policy documents. They are both based in Somaliland. **Sadia Ahmed** in Somaliland, **Elizabeth Katushabe** in Uganda and **Abdelghani Ibrahim** in Sudan represent PENHA there.

The two Board members in Ethiopia (**Prof Hirut Terefe** and **Dr. Taffesse Mesfin**) along with the local advisory boards in Uganda and Sudan will continue to contribute important advice along with PENHA's research associates.

Almost all of these positions, in the UK and in Africa, are non-remunerated. PENHA is endowed with great human capital bonded by a common vision of service to others that is our greatest blessing and asset.

## Alternative Uses of Prosopis

PENHA and the International Fund for Agricultural Development are working together in a two year project 'Alternative uses of Prosopis Juliflora for Animal Feed' in both Somalia/Somaliland and Sudan. The main goal is to improve the livelihoods of the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities by providing technical skills to make use of Prosopis as an animal feed and so controlling the spread of the shrub.

This approach is based on PENHA's research in Eastern Sudan and it is expected to benefit about 700 households with more than 3,000 indirect beneficiaries. The project targets pastoralist and agro-pastoralists families. Extension workers and policy makers will also benefit.

### Future Events

**Media Strategies for Understanding Food Security in Africa**  
Thursday 23 May 1.00 to 5.00 pm  
Oxford Brookes University,  
Oxford OX3 0BP

**Join or Support PENHA's 10 km Walk in Epping Forest.**  
Chingford 10.30 Saturday 15 June  
**Join:** email: [kees@penhanetwork.org](mailto:kees@penhanetwork.org)  
**Sponsor PENHA:** click on:  
[www.justgiving.com/penha-walk2013](http://www.justgiving.com/penha-walk2013)

**Horn of Africa Arts**  
Meet musicians, artists and designers  
**Wednesday 26 June, 6.30-9.00 p.m.**  
Adulis restaurant, 44-46 Brixton Rd.,  
SW9 6BT - very near Oval tube.

For more information, click on:  
[www.penhanetwork.org](http://www.penhanetwork.org)

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