

Pastoralism and Poverty: Research Informing Practice

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Abstract: *Efforts to address the challenges faced by pastoralists in the Horn of Africa have met with little success. Pastoralists continue to experience chronic food insecurity. The consequences of climate change mean that there is little hope for sustainable improvements in household well-being apart from a radical shift in strategy among members of the development NGO community. This paper briefly discusses the context of collaboration between World Vision and the research community and then describes the results of a state-of-knowledge study targeted at identifying strategic options for interventions intended to address issues of persistent poverty among Pastoralist populations in the Horn of Africa.*

Collaborative relationships have existed between researchers and development practitioners for a long time. Faith-based NGOs are no exception (Dean, Schaffner, & Smith, 2005). There is a growing recognition that development practice can benefit from the insights of applied research while, at the same time, research can be better informed through close collaboration with those working on the ground. In the area of agricultural development, for example, there is a lot to be learned from recent research in the area of development economics (Brown & Barrett, 2005).

As a Christian relief, development, and advocacy organization, World Vision¹ is dedicated to working with children, families, and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. With stewardship as a core value, World Vision endeavours to make wise use of the resources entrusted to it by donors. Part of this mandate is met by ensuring the application of “best practices” in whatever area the organization is involved. World Vision has a history of collaborating with university and research institutions. These collaborative partnerships have generally taken one of three forms:

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16 FAITH & ECONOMICS

1. research designed to assess the impact of project activities and the factors contributing to their outcomes;
2. collaboration in the field, particularly as it applies to farmer-centered experimentation with and evaluation of agricultural practices;
3. review of research results and incorporation of “best practices” related to problem analysis and project design into ongoing programming.

World Vision has had a presence in the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of the Horn of Africa for many years. It has been a major player in the delivery of emergency relief as well as in the operation of development programs throughout the region. Addressing the recurrent episodes of food insecurity and child malnutrition and mortality in the Horn of Africa has created enormous challenges for World Vision and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), national governments, and partner communities. Of particular concern is the link between chronic famine and the number and severity of droughts in the region over the past two decades. Recovery periods between major climatic shocks appear to be getting shorter. Longer-term predictions on the impact of climate change on rainfall variability, occurrence of extreme weather events, temperatures, and evaporation add a new dimension to the problems.

World Vision’s Horn of Africa Response to Drought (HARD) team observed during the 2006 drought which hit the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Burundi) that the international community’s response to the drought had been mainly focused on food aid while livelihood and non-food interventions had been limited. In reflecting on World Vision’s own efforts, they noted that, despite concerted and repeated efforts, over a decade of activity had, by and large, not resulted in significant sustainable improvements to livelihood and food security in the region. They observed that World Vision did not appear to have cost effective, sustainable, and easily replicable solutions that address livelihood security issues faced by communities, particularly pastoralists, in the region—a region where drought and extremes of climate are the norm rather than the exception. They also noted that World Vision has typically, although not exclusively, worked through more traditional development approaches, which have often encouraged settlement and rain fed or irrigated agriculture, rather than working within the pastoralists’ cultural context to ensure the continued viability of pastoralism itself as a sustainable and resilient livelihood strategy.

Noting that traditional emergency and development response mechanisms fail to address chronic needs that spike with each shock event, the HARD team decided early on in their work that there was a need within World Vision as well as in the larger NGO community for some reflection and strategic thinking around these issues. Recognizing that World Vision's own experience working with pastoralists was relatively limited, it became apparent that there was a need to research the current state of knowledge on pastoral development, particularly in the Horn of Africa, and especially as it related to livelihood security. The overall goal of the project was to provide strategic direction to World Vision's short and long term Relief, Development, and Advocacy programming in the Horn of Africa, with special emphasis on pastoralism. In addition to this, it was felt that these findings should be shared with the wider NGO community that they might benefit from the effort.

The Task

Recognizing that there were critical gaps in the response to the drought in the Greater Horn of Africa (Overseas Development Institute, 2006) and in order to get a better handle on the problem, the Africa Relief Office of World Vision organized the first of two round tables in the summer of 2006 to reflect on the problems presented by the drought that was under way at that time and identify areas for action. It was also recognized at that time that there were some knowledge deficits within World Vision and that there was a need to get a handle on the state of knowledge or "best practice" arising from recent research and the experience of other development NGOs.

It was recognized that there was a lot of good background research available and that one did not need to reinvent the wheel, so to speak. Rather, there was a need to collect and synthesize this in a form usable by development practitioners. There has been a lot written on pastoralism recently and the challenge was to sift through that information, separate the wheat from the chaff, and synthesize it into some key lessons applicable to the work of World Vision and, hopefully, to that of other development NGOs with an interest in the well-being of pastoralists in the Horn of Africa. The goal was not unlike that of the International Livestock Research Institute conference on Pastoralism and Poverty held June 27–28, 2006 in Nairobi (Little, McPeak, Barrett, & Kristianson, 2006), except that the target was development practitioners rather than policy makers.

World Vision established a Task Group composed of key personnel with an interest in this area and engaged a consultant to conduct a state-of-

knowledge study. The consultant was asked to identify what current research and practice is pointing towards in addressing the chronic challenges to livelihood security in the region, synthesizing lessons from current research and practice in terms of the underlying social, institutional, economic, and ecological causes as well as suggested and demonstrated elements of solutions. More specifically, the report was to provide a set of practical, actionable points to guide relief and development work in the immediate, intermediate, and long terms. It was intended to identify the essential elements of appropriate recovery, rebuilding, and development strategies to reduce vulnerability and improve resilience (of both ecosystems and institutions) prior to the next shock—in other words, better practices for working in support of pastoral livelihoods. It was also anticipated that the recommendations made in the report could have relevance to other stakeholders working in the Horn of Africa.

The report (Morton, 2007) was presented to and discussed by participants at a second Round Table held in December 2006. Participants included representatives from a number of international NGOs, government, UN agencies, media, and major donors, as well as representatives from World Vision offices in the region and in supporting countries.

Key Findings

A number of themes emerge from recent research into pastoralism and pastoral livelihoods as well as the practice or experience of other development NGOs. It is important those engaged in efforts to facilitate sustainable development among populations living in the pastoral ecosystems of the Horn of Africa keep these in mind. This section will summarize the essence of these emergent themes.

Relief-Development Continuum and the Concept of Drought Cycle Management

Relief and development ought not to be thought of as separate activities, but as existing along a continuum. Given the nature of the climate in the Horn of Africa and the nature of pastoralism, which is adapted to the vagaries of this climate, one should not be surprised that drought and flood occur with some regularity in the region. As a result, development efforts need to be carried out with an eye to the possibility of disaster in the future and, similarly, relief efforts need to bear in mind the impact they may have on future development activities. Seeing relief and development activities as part of a continuum of interaction with communities in pastoral areas is important for the success of

efforts to promote the long term sustainability and security of pastoral livelihoods. Drought Cycle Management (International Institute of Rural Reconstruction & Cordaid and Acacia Consultants, 2004) is an approach that integrates aspects of relief and development in a way that has the potential to build the resilience of pastoral livelihoods. While it is not a magic bullet, since it does not address all of the problems found in the Horn of Africa, it does provide a very helpful conceptual basis for thinking about drought and its implications for relief and development efforts.

Population Heterogeneity and the Nature of Poverty

The population living in pastoral areas is not as uniform as many think. It is important for development practitioners to recognize that there exists considerable heterogeneity. Although pastoralism still accounts for a majority of the core economic activity in the region (Little et al., 2006), mobile pastoralism is only a part of a diversity of livelihood strategies. There are three distinct groups of people living in the region: those who still practice mobile pastoralism, those who once pursued the activity but now are settled, and those who reside in arid and semi-arid areas but really never engaged in full-time pastoralism (Little et al., 2006).

It is important to ask the question: who are the poor we seek to assist? The highest rate of poverty in regions where pastoralism is the dominant economic activity occurs with those *not* involved in pastoralist activities (Little et al., 2006). Those with large herds or herds above the minimum threshold levels are less vulnerable than people who have become sedentarized—who have lost their livestock and are now trapped in low-return activities. There is also evidence that the nutritional status of the children of sedentarized pastoralists living in communities in pastoral areas is poorer than that among mobile pastoralists. This does not discount the fact that poverty does exist among pastoralists, but in regions where pastoralism does exist poverty becomes relative. The important point here is that appropriate strategies for dealing with poverty depend upon the nature and origin of the poverty itself and by ignoring this heterogeneity, efforts to assist the populations living in pastoral areas are less successful than they might otherwise be.

Little et al. (2006) point out the importance of understanding the dynamics of pastoral poverty since different types of poverty necessitate different sorts of interventions to deal with them successfully. Without going into the details of their discussion of the nature of poverty, it is important to note the difference between shock-induced, transitory, or stochastic poverty and chronic, structural poverty since the strategies

to deal with them are so different. Failure to make this distinction has resulted in a range of costly development failures—failures which arose out of a view of poverty that did not recognize such differences (Little et al., 2006). Those that are structurally or chronically poor are deprived of both assets and an income base and need long term assistance designed to help them overcome the obstacles that trap them in poverty. This is more than short term assistance such as food aid. On the other hand, transitory poverty occurs as a result of a shock-induced (i.e., drought) event. Poverty may exist until the shock has passed and they are able to rebuild their asset base again. They need short-term assistance to carry them over the hump and prevent them from falling into structural or chronic poverty (Little et al., 2006).

These issues are essential because they question the whole approach to relief and development in pastoral areas. Working with mobile pastoralists is not the same as working with sedentarized populations. Yet both groups live within these regions. Understanding the target population in pastoral areas is not as simple as identifying those who herd livestock. Likewise, the ability to distinguish between situations of transitory and chronic poverty is important. Projects that target pastoralists while in a period of transitory poverty may end up creating chronic poverty if they are not designed appropriately. On the other hand, efforts to assist the chronically poor through short-term food assistance are doomed to failure since they do not address the underlying issues that trap them in poverty. Proper understanding of the dynamics and variability of livelihoods and their causes is vital to success.

Environment: Climate Variability and Resource Management

Pastoralists live in an environment that is characterized by a highly variable and unpredictable rainfall regime. Mobile pastoralism is well adapted to this context. Efforts to reduce poverty in pastoral areas need to be based on an understanding of the unique biophysical aspects of ecological systems in the African dryland regions.

Rangelands used by pastoralists are characterized as non-equilibrium rainfall systems (Behnke, Scoones, & Kerven, 1993). Non-equilibrium systems have a high spatial and temporal variability of rainfall. Fodder adapted to these highly variable rainfall regimes is fundamentally very resilient, having the ability to rapidly recover when the rain does arrive. However, because the rainfall is temporally and spatially variable there is a heterogeneous distribution of resources. For these reasons the ecological integrity of the system is driven more by rainfall than by animal population

pressure (Morton, 2007). This is not to say that grazing pressure is without impact on productivity, just that it is not the only factor. Care needs to be taken with the spatial and temporal distribution of livestock and their impact on both rangeland productivity (quantity and quality) and on off-site and downstream impacts of the livestock and associated human populations that may arise through management decisions.

The most viable livelihood strategy within a system that has this much variability is one that can adapt to this extreme environmental variation. Mobile pastoralism is such a strategy. A system of traditional land tenure is a way of facilitating livestock movements under these environmental conditions (Morton, 2007).

Livelihood Strategies in Pastoral Areas

The existence of a diversity of livelihood strategies in regions where pastoralism is the dominant activity is not always out of choice. People are often pushed out of pastoralism as a livelihood because there is no other option for survival (Barrett, Bezuneh, & Aboud, 2001). As livestock are lost, mobile pastoralism is no longer a viable option. Former pastoralists congregate around small towns and take up menial tasks through informal employment, petty trade, or labor migration as other options fail to materialize.

Here it is necessary to make a distinction between diversity of livelihood strategies and multiple strategies. A loss of one livelihood strategy in exchange for another strategy is not necessarily diversification. Maintenance of preferable strategies while gaining access to other strategies creates resilience when shocks do occur. There is great diversity of livelihood strategies in these regions, but it is individual pastoralists who have multiple strategies available to them that are less vulnerable to external shocks. This type of livelihood diversification is central to pastoral development. Those that have large herds may have increased flexibility to invest in trade, transport, real estate, and natural resource production (Morton, 2007). This livelihood diversification can complement existing livelihood strategies well.

Education is an essential means for creating diversification in the long term (Morton, 2007). Little, Aboud, and Lenachuru (2004) showed that in the Baringo district of Kenya an increase in education also resulted in higher income and better risk management strategies. However, the difficulty is that formal education necessitates sedentarization. Education must be re-evaluated so that creative solutions are found to work within the context of the environmental and livelihood strategies.

Encouraging diversification can also be accomplished through markets. Pastoralism continues to be of economic importance to national economies. However, there is still limited market access for products from regions where livestock production is the dominant economic activity. There is poor access to cross border trade, a need for relaxation of veterinary restrictions on livestock movement, niche markets for higher value products, market infrastructure, market information provision, and grassroots facilitation of community trader linkages (Desta, Gebru, Tezera, & Coppock, 2006). With increased market access, those living in pastoralist regions will receive better value for their product than currently exists, while simultaneously promoting diversification of livelihood strategies.

It is important to maintain an emphasis on reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience. Even with improvements that may arise through livelihood diversification and improved market access, the environmental fragility of the region remains. Therefore, one must always be mindful that environmental shocks will occur. Management in accordance with this awareness must result in the coupling of development activities and emergency relief in order to mitigate against future risks. Drought Cycle Management (International Institute of Rural Reconstruction & Cordaid and Acacia Consulting, 2004) does this, in part, by integrating early warning systems, contingency planning, and response with interventions ranging from development activities to food relief and which are matched with the appropriate stage of the drought cycle (Morton, 2007). Being able to identify the appropriate stage and intervention according to the livelihood of the respective regions is essential. For example, in the 2005 drought in the Horn of Africa, NGOs failed to intervene in livelihoods of pastoralists. Instead the focus was on “saving lives,” and not “livelihoods” (Overseas Development Institute, 2006). The response options that governments and NGOs had at their disposal were delayed because of the lack of focus on livelihoods. Lives may have been saved but livelihoods were lost and this becomes another example where a situation of transitory poverty could turn into chronic poverty.

Governance Arrangements and Institutions for Natural Resource Management

Poor governance is closely associated with the multiple marginalizations of pastoralists: environmental, economic, political, and socio-cultural (Lesorogol, 1998). The inability of governments and NGOs to understand the dynamics and viability of livelihoods in pastoral areas

has often led to inappropriate interventions and policies. Ultimately, marginalization results in increased vulnerability among pastoralists.

An increase in vulnerability of pastoralist livelihoods is, in part, a consequence of government policies that have limited access to key natural resources, such as water and land (Overseas Development Institute, 2006). Government policy has often ignored the fact that pastoralism is an economically viable livelihood strategy in the Horn of Africa. In some cases, governments have made it official policy to sedentarize populations of pastoralists. Pastoralists also see the encouragement of sedentarization as a government ploy to create more political and administrative control. Because participation of pastoralists in government is limited and policy making is often driven by the private sector, there is poor governance in pastoralist regions. Better governance for pastoralists might include experiments in several areas: community-based organizations, traditional authorities, decentralized local government, and producer and trader organizations.

Local institutions, which have traditionally facilitated management of pastoral resources, seem to be weakening. The fabric of traditional authority and its ability to manage traditional grazing lands is deteriorating as pastoralists compete among themselves for water and pasture, as populations move and newcomers lack respect for traditional decision-making institutions, and as the private sector and government take up valuable rangeland for cropping, ranches, commercial farms, mining, and national parks. Reinforcement of local institutions—including social capital and traditional coping mechanisms—is an important component of Natural Resource Management.

Encroachment on valuable grazing lands and a continual lack of voice in public forums to address these problems has brought increasing conflict in pastoralist regions. An increase in armed conflict has brought insecurity to some regions. As a result they remain inaccessible to pastoralists and, therefore, unused at the same time that more secure areas experience overpopulation and significant environmental degradation (Little et al., 2006). The conflicts that have resulted from external influences have now filtered down to more localized regions, creating a very complex situation.

The successes and failures of working with these various local institutions in different regions emphasizes the fact that a solution is not easy. However, an improved governance structure must not address these different approaches in isolation, but as a part of the bigger picture.

Strategic Options and Recommendations

Five principles and four priority sectors emerge from recent research and practice. These should be kept in mind when addressing the needs of pastoralists in the Horn of Africa. These are foundational concepts that ought to permeate all activities.

Cross-Cutting Principles

Local problems, local solutions: While it is possible to make some broad-based generalizations about pastoralism in the Horn of Africa, there is a huge variation between and within pastoralist societies and between the different political and economic contexts they find themselves in. The heterogeneity found between and within pastoralist groups and those living in pastoral areas as well as their social, ecological, and economic contexts must be recognized. Needs and potential solutions may differ from one region to another, from one ethnic group to another. It is important for programming to explicitly consider these differing problems and potentials; there are few, if any, one-size-fits-all solutions.

Geographic boundaries are problematic: A strict geographically-bounded approach to working in pastoral areas is problematic given that pastoralism involves complex relationships among people, institutions, and resources across time and space. A more systematic approach is needed, one which is able to involve stakeholders scattered in space who use resources at different times, if we are to ensure that changes to management of a local resource do not have a negative impact on people and other resources that are outside of the geographic bounds we normally confine ourselves to.

Holistic and integrated approach: Given the complex realities of pastoral livelihoods, traditional sectors of development action cannot be pursued in isolation: there is a need for a holistic and cross-sectoral integrated approach to development efforts.

Operate at different levels: Given the nature of many of the issues that affect pastoralists, it is essential that development efforts be made at, and coordinated across, multiple levels—from the local community to the national (and international) levels. Development must incorporate aspects of policy advocacy in the community approach so that there is better representation at national levels. However, advocacy on behalf of community-level development will not be enough if pastoralists are left out of the process. Pastoralists must be granted space to be involved in their own advocacy.

Form partnerships: Organizations (such as World Vision) with limited experience working with pastoralists should strengthen linkages with their more experienced peers in the development community. Stronger networks should be established and built into partnerships so that resources and knowledge can be shared. Community based organizations in pastoral regions should also be granted space to grow independently.

Priority Sectors

Natural Resource Management: Natural Resource Management remains a key sector in working with pastoralists. It is important to emphasize the establishment of institutional frameworks for effective land-use planning or management. Experience has shown that land tenure and other land-use planning issues cannot be resolved through a sole emphasis on either new exogenous institutions or traditional institutions. Experience shows that these institutions need to be combined together for successful land-use planning (Morton, 2007). Reinforcement of local institutions, including social capital and traditional coping mechanisms, is an important component of Natural Resource Management. World Vision has been working with Holistic Management International² in Kenya on a pilot project to promote better management of pastoral ecosystems at the local level and should continue to promote this, carefully evaluating its social and ecological impact.

Other forms of resource management that support pastoralist livelihoods are improved livestock feeding technologies and better use of niche resources such as tree fodder and tree pods. Promotion of irrigated fodder production might be investigated, but only in such a way that it did not crowd out traditional uses of riverine resources. Technologies targeted at poor, sedentarized populations in small towns might be considered. In each case, one needs to ensure the inclusion of appropriate environmental safeguards. Finally, facilitation of better trade links between those in need of fodder with those producing it might be considered.

Drought Cycle Management: Increased resilience to drought is critical to efforts to reduce poverty in pastoral regions and among pastoralists in particular. The concepts of Drought Cycle Management can make a significant contribution to these efforts. The essential point is that there is a need for improved institutional capacity to both plan and implement appropriate development, mitigation, and relief interventions as communities move in and out of drought. It also means that NGOs (World Vision included) need to confront and deal with institutional separations between relief and development within their own organizations. More use

can be made of the early warning systems and contingency planning that is available in countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia. In countries like Somalia, where there is minimal government coordination, partnership with other NGOs is important.

If interventions during droughts are to complement development activities, then focusing on livestock will be fundamental. For example, destocking, feed distribution, and emergency livestock vaccination in times of drought, if carried out on a sufficient scale, will go a long way to reducing the number of mobile pastoralists whose livelihoods are unable to recover from shocks and who subsequently end up in chronic poverty. On the other hand, it is also important to take into consideration the differences within pastoral communities when designing both mitigation activities and local institutions for drought management since the poorest will require different forms of assistance during periods of drought, for example. It is also important that interventions be designed in such a way so as not to detract from or upset existing support mechanisms.

Livelihood diversification: Livelihood diversification is central to pastoral development. However, diversification does not necessarily mean a change in livelihood strategies, but rather a focus on multiple livelihood activities. Any livelihood diversification activities must be assessed with regards to their sustainability in the socio-cultural, economic, and ecological dimensions. Locally adapted, context-specific choices need to be based on a diagnosis that is both participatory and market-aware. There is a need for leadership in networking and mutual learning between NGOs and donors in the area of livelihood diversification.

Education: Finally, the surest route to diversification is education. Education is also the most challenging. A paradigm shift in the approach to educational development requires designing a system that is mainstreamed into the national system but is compatible with mobility, settlement patterns, patterns of child involvement in herding, and cultural preferences of pastoralists. Education, especially where the need is expressed from pastoralists, must be creative and willing to go beyond traditional boundaries and models.³

Lessons Learned from the Process and Conclusions

Pastoralism as the dominant economic activity in an unpredictable environment is a natural strategic choice. In a region where there is a non-uniform spatial and temporal distribution of resources (i.e., water, grazing land) traditional approaches to development adapted to sedentarized agricultural contexts are problematic. Approaches that encourage rain fed

agricultural production may actually expose people to greater risk than pastoralism in these regions since they are not adapted to the highly variable spatial and temporal distribution of precipitation. Options for agricultural production that attempt to control the unpredictability of rainfall through irrigation may, in fact, reduce the viability of pastoralism since they may encroach on existing grazing areas and result in reduced access to valuable grazing land for pastoralists. Irrigation schemes may be more relevant if they support activities such as fodder production.

The current development paradigm also focuses on a geographically bounded area. Development in these regions must work towards operating within flexible boundaries that occur across districts and countries. Facilitation of development among people whose livelihoods have adapted as a result of the same environmental constraints is essential to sustainability.

Even though severe land degradation and unpredictable climate are at the root of drought and flood and their increasing severity, the problems caused by and the solutions to the resulting poverty are much deeper. Vulnerability is not only a result of environmental constraints but also a result of multiple feedbacks in which a specific drought event can be the final trigger to livelihood collapse. These multiple feedbacks are affected by population heterogeneity, governance arrangements, institutions, and livelihood strategies and they can be better understood through an analytical understanding of livelihoods throughout the region.

Therefore, the increased severity of droughts and floods in the Horn of Africa cannot be proactively addressed only by attempting to predict climate variability and mitigating against possible disasters, but also focusing on the fundamental underlying mechanisms that have led to the current vulnerability. Using Drought Cycle Management within the context of the livelihoods framework is an important step towards appropriate intervention. If Drought Cycle Management operates within the livelihoods framework for both sedentarized populations and mobile pastoralists then there is potential to avoid and eliminate chronic poverty in these regions.

An element of Drought Cycle Management that World Vision and other NGOs need to address is the relationship between emergency relief and sustainable development activities. There is no need to have such rigid boundaries between relief and development, but to view relief as a part of the development continuum and in fact, if used strategically, relief can be a powerful tool in kick-starting the process of sustainable development.

Relief and development interventions should move towards an approach

that focuses not necessarily on one's ability to control the environment but on its resilience. The greater the resilience of the environment the more likely the ecological and social systems will be able to absorb a shock and recover as well as to adapt to change. A healthy, resilient ecosystem allows for pastoralism and other livelihoods to exist, but as livelihoods are "pushed" to the extent that they compromise a system's ecological integrity, both the ecosystem and the livelihoods of those who depend on it will fail. Therefore, relief and development programming should focus on ecosystem health in conjunction with creating sustainable livelihoods.

Lastly, advocacy should work more closely with both relief and development programming activities in developing local institutions that will be able to voice concerns that impact their livelihoods. It is important to advocate for institutional change and better governance within the Horn of Africa. This includes not only government institutions as they relate to pastoralism but also the private sector and its impact on governance and decision-making. It is also important to invest in the social capital (the local formal and informal institutions, interpersonal social networks, shared community values and trust) that is so important to the survival and well-being of those living in pastoralist regions. Furthermore, World Vision and other NGOs can act as a bridge between institutions, to link the "bottom-up" approach to the "top-down." Creating a dialogue between various groups will allow for greater accountability and an increase in access and control over resources that livelihoods depend upon.

To summarize, there are several key messages arising from the research:

- **Be proactive:** drought and flood are normal expressions of climate in the Horn of Africa and proactive planning with communities can play an important role, particularly in the design of activities which can prevent or reduce their severity and long term consequences;
- **Build resilience:** relief and development activities can play a significant role in reducing vulnerability of livelihoods and ecosystems if they are targeted at (re)building resilience of pastoral ecosystems and appropriate diversification of livelihood strategies;
- **Take account of heterogeneity**
 - populations in pastoral areas and, more specifically, the poor, are not a homogeneous group: assess, plan, and target appropriately;
 - populations and resources are non-uniformly distributed: ensure that programming does not further aggravate this non-uniform distribution and increase the pressure on local carrying capacity by encouraging populations to concentrate;

- spatial and temporal heterogeneity in the distribution of grazing resources means that pastoralists may rely on far-flung resources such as dry season grazing reserves: care needs to be taken that these remain accessible to them;
- **Reinforce local institutions:** the importance of well-adapted, functional local institutions cannot be underplayed: a community-empowerment approach which builds social capital, encourages local coping mechanisms, and facilitates community-based management of resources is important;
- **Employ best practices:** learn from and apply principles related to Drought Cycle Management, Holistic Resource Management, surface water management, soil and water conservation, etc.

Reflection, analysis, and synthesis go a long way towards discerning appropriate strategies and directions in development work. There is a lot to be learned and gleaned from the work of research institutions and that of other development practitioners. Similarly, there is a lot to be learned through the effective involvement and participation of the people themselves. While this paper has focused on the relationship between research into the connection between pastoralism and poverty, it is important to recognize that our true target audience, those we truly wish to assist in the path towards life and life in all its fullness, are the people themselves who live in pastoral areas. This paper has not attempted to discuss transformational development itself as a process of facilitating positive change, of empowering communities, of helping people to help themselves. This is taken as a given—as “best practice” in the area of development process. The “how” of development practice is critical to success (Brown & Barrett, 2005), but beyond the scope of this paper.

Endnotes

- 1 Motivated by the Christian faith, World Vision is dedicated to working with the world’s most vulnerable people, especially children, to improve their well-being. World Vision serves all people regardless of religion, race, gender or ethnicity—serving them through activities such as emergency relief, education, health care, agricultural and economic development, and promotion of justice. Established in 1950 to care for orphans in Asia, World Vision has grown to embrace the larger issues of community development and advocacy for the poor in its mission to help children and their families build sustainable futures. We provide hope and assistance to approximately 100 million people in nearly 100 countries.

World Vision's mission focuses on human and social transformation. World Vision employs a three-pronged strategy of development programming, humanitarian response, and advocacy. Projects and activities which promote sustainable household livelihoods and, in particular, sustainable agricultural development make up an important part of the work World Vision supports in communities around the world. Through these activities, and many others, World Vision helps communities help themselves.

- 2 For more information on Holistic Management see: <http://www.holisticmanagement.org/>
- 3 There are three other sectors which, while not in the top four mentioned above, are nevertheless important. One area of importance is the building of roads for better market access. A second is expanding livestock water supply through surface water management. Lastly, World Vision should work towards generating solutions on working with invasive species.

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