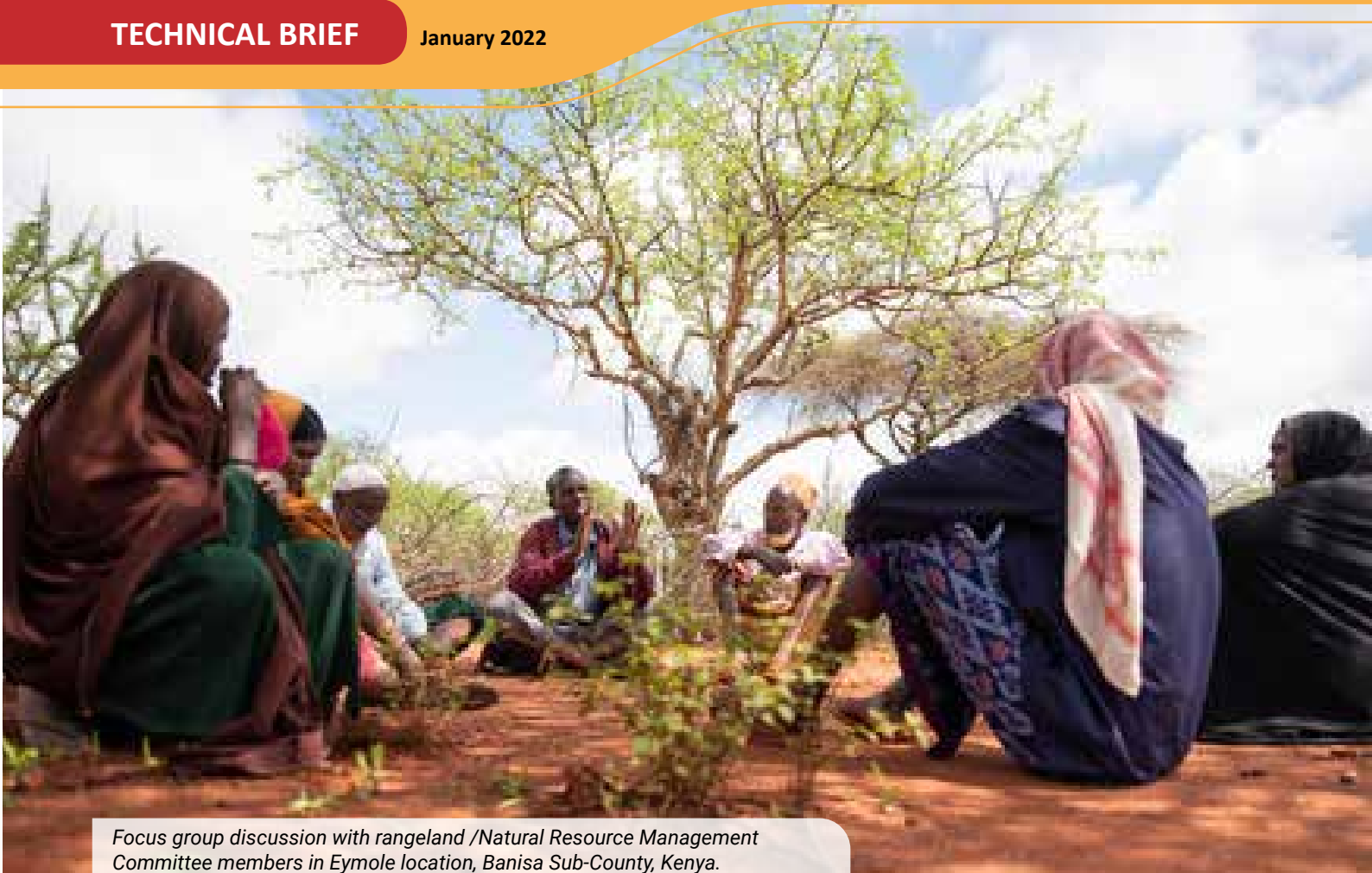




MANAGING SHARED NATURAL RESOURCES AMONG THE CROSS-BORDER PASTORALIST IN THE MANDERA TRIANGLE

TECHNICAL BRIEF

January 2022



Focus group discussion with rangeland /Natural Resource Management Committee members in Eymole location, Banisa Sub-County, Kenya.

In his 56 years, Muhumed a resident of Balet-hawo in south-central Somalia has never seen the environment so different. His village has experienced severe land degradation – soil erosion, reduced vegetation cover, and encroachment by invasive prosopis plants all making it difficult to meet his basic household needs. Initially, communities had traditional systems to manage natural resources.



Globally, large surface of up to **45%** of earth is covered by rangeland.



In Africa, rangelands cover up to **66%**.

Africa rangeland covering nearly 20 million Km² serves for about 230 million cattle, 246 million sheep and 175 million goats and it is one third of global rangeland. In East Africa, specifically arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) accounts for 60-100% of the land cover of Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti. However, Africa rangeland biodiversity has suffered from the effects of degradation, poor land use, climate change, habitat fragmentation and the development of infrastructure.

Mapping of cross-border shared grazing areas revealed widespread deterioration of rangeland resources (BORESHA 2018). A consultation with cross-border communities between 2018 and 2020 on underlying causes of rangeland degradation indicated that indigenous institutions and indigenous knowledge are weakened and unable to sustain historical roles in natural resources management. This has resulted in widespread degraded rangelands, increased natural resource-based conflicts, poor grazing practices, and increased vulnerability of pastoralist livelihoods systems.

Traditionally, local institutions effectively managed natural resources based on indigenous systems. The elders enforced rules and regulations that governed use of rangelands and other resources such as water and livestock. There are efforts by humanitarian and development agencies to restore some indigenous knowledge in the management of natural resources including rangeland and water points. This has led to the introduction and implementation of Participatory Rangeland Management (PRM).

Rangelands are grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, wetlands, water sources (rivers, springs, and water pans), and deserts that are grazed by domestic livestock, wild animals and other fauna. Grazing and browsing are an important use of rangelands that sustains animal life.

Range management is geared at ensuring a sustained yield of rangeland products while protecting and improving the basic range resources (soil, water, and plant and animal life).

Source: WMO, FAO, AND IIRR.2020. Climate Change Adaptation Guide for Farmer Field Schools

BORESHA Project

The overall objective of Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa (BORESHA) project is to promote economic development and greater resilience, particularly among vulnerable groups in the Mandera Triangle. The project adopts a community-driven approach to address the shared nature of the risks and opportunities in this border area. The BORESHA project is led by Danish Refugee Council in a consortium of Care International and World Vision as partners.



Members of the Eymole Rangeland Management Committee clear shrubs and twigs from one of their enclosures.



Natural resources management committee meeting on rangeland management.

Participatory Rangeland Management

Participatory rangeland management is a collaborative process of planning and administration of rangelands. The process is led by communities, and can be supported by government, development actors and/or rangeland experts. The PRM combines both scientific knowledge and indigenous knowledge and targets the improvement of ecosystem services for strengthening pastoral rangeland governance to improve pastoral livelihoods. The approach recognizes sharing of resources among pastoralist communities and the interaction between adjacent blocks of rangelands. It involves reviewing and strengthening of the existing customary institutions that govern rangelands and how such institutions can work in partnership with Government and other agencies.

As a multisector approach in resource management, PRM is gaining prominence over 'government only' approach as it promotes bottom-up and inclusive NRM. There is also an increased government policy shift towards community involvement in NRM through community institutions.

APPROACH

BORESHA facilitated community appreciation of the magnitude of the problem and supported them to strengthen structures for efficient management of the shared natural resources.

Awareness creation through mass media (radios), public gathering and drama, sensitised the community on practices that contribute to the deterioration of rangelands. Poor grazing practices, over exploitation of indigenous trees for charcoal production and encroachment on prime grazing areas by human settlement are all harmful practices. BORESHA conducted cross-border

community dialogues with community leaders, local government, technical specialists, and civil society organisations on equitable natural use, sharing, and management of natural resources.

Revitalisation of customary institutions through facilitated meetings with traditional elders and reviewing historical best practices on rangelands management, and traditional norms on rangeland resources utilization and management. BORESHA then supported them to incorporate current rangeland practices into their revived traditional systems and develop customary based by-laws that govern use of shared resources.

Capacity building targeted the community PRM institutions, government sector ministry staff as key stakeholders on participatory natural resource planning and management, conflict resolution and adoption of innovative approaches and technologies in the control of invasive prosopis plants. BORESHA also facilitated development of a 5-year PRM plans for their grazing areas. The community PRM institutions are natural resource management (NRM) committees at the village level and Range Councils (RC) at district or woreda level. BORESHA improved the capacity of 40 NRM committees and seven Range Councils to effectively support equitable sharing and sustainable management of cross-border rangelands and other shared natural resources. BORESHA also trained 143 (106M, 28Female) community peace-building facilitators on natural resource conflicts early warning, mitigation and resolution.

Strengthening collaboration and coordination amongst the stakeholders through quarterly coordination meetings involving NRM committees, Range Councils, Government sector offices,

NGOs and leaders of other community-based institutions. These meetings discussed key issues that affect NRM such as destruction of key tree species, locust invasion, and resolving resource-based conflicts. They also discuss implementation of the PRM plans.

Cross-learning on equitable sharing and sustainable management of rangeland resources. BORESHA conducted in-country exchange visits among NRM committees to facilitate learning and adoption of best practices on rangeland management. The Range Councils in the Somalia and Ethiopia project areas were supported to develop inter-community agreements on equitable resource use, sharing and management.

Peace building events for resource-based conflicts management were enhanced to mitigate conflicts over pasture, land and water. This improved peaceful co-existence within and between cross-border pastoralists communities in Kenya's Mander County, Dolo Ado and Dolo Bay Woreda in Ethiopia, and Belet Hawa district in Somalia.

RESULTS

Rangeland rehabilitation efforts show impact over time, however some of the benefits are immediate. It also takes time to change behaviours for people to start taking individual responsibilities and action, and when they do the benefits are immense. This section shares some results from the BORESHA initiatives.

In Gawido village, Belet Hawa district, Somalia, key degraded range sites were rehabilitated through soil and water conservation measures, use of range enclosures that enabled pasture recovery, prosopis clearing and re-planting. This led to improved vegetation re-growth and availability of pasture for the livestock particularly during the dry season grazing.



Rehabilitated rangeland through cash for work in Malkariyey village.



The areas that were rehabilitated and set aside are now source of pasture during this dry season.

The environmental awareness campaign on improved shared natural resources practices reached an estimated number of 460,000 people. The communities have adopted better rangeland management practices such as establishing dry season grazing reserves, rehabilitation of degraded rangelands, and use of innovative approaches in the use and control of invasive *Prosopis juliflora* plants. A total of 47 grazing reserves and range enclosures have been rehabilitated, providing critical dry season pastures and other grazing materials

Women are increasingly participating in rangelands management and conflicts resolution amongst cross-border pastoralists communities. About 47% of the NRM committees and Range Councils are women. Their role includes decision making on sharing of water and grazing resources, conflict mediation and enforcement of customary by-laws. This ensures that the most affected by degradation have voices and make critical decisions that affect them.

Community institutions at the grassroots are now actively participating in coordination meetings for planning and management of shared cross-border natural resources. A total of 506 persons are members of NRM committees in 40 cross-border villages. The community institutions have formulated cross-border agreements and by-laws to mitigate conflicts over natural resources use.

Improved collaboration between customary institutions and local authority in natural resource governance led to joint development of seven PRM plans. The plans are expected to improve sustainable management and equitable sharing of cross-border rangeland resources with the revitalized customary institutions taking the lead role in the implementation of the plans

The pastoralists have increased and diversified livelihood options including using the invasive prosopis plants to make briquettes, firewood, timber and selling of fodder from the grazing reserves and range enclosures. BORESHA supported 749 people (488M, 261F) in 20 groups with technology and training package to control and derive livelihoods from the invasive prosopis plants.

“The areas we have rehabilitated and set aside are now are sources of pasture which supports out lactating animals during the dry season. I planted watermelon and other crops in the rehabilitated land which earns me about 20 dollars per day. I also keep livestock from which I sell milk. The living condition of my family is much better to the past.” - Muhamed



Cash for work to control flooding of River Dawa to Shantoley farms in Rhamu location in Mandera North Sub-County.

CHALLENGES

Implementation of the PRM experienced the following challenges:

- a. Lack of legal frameworks for Range Councils and NRM committees in their mandates. This reduced their capacity to effectively safeguard the interest of pastoralists and protect their communal grazing fields from encroachment by unplanned settlements and other incompatible use.
- b. Frequent security and political tensions between the borderland administrative units hampered optimal cross-border collaboration and coordination among PRM stakeholders.
- c. Cultural norms inhibiting women from active participation and decision-making in community institutions in the PRM process. Women comprise 47% of NRM committees but cultural norms discourage them from effectively participating in rangeland activities.

- d. Low investment of the private sector in nature-based rangelands economic value chains such as prosopis products, honey, gums and resins, herbal medicine, wild fruits, meat, milk, hides and skins. Increased investments in nature -based value chains will increase environmental and livelihoods benefits accruing from the adoption of the PRM approach.
- e. Emergence of desert locust have contributed to destruction of grazing fields.
- f. PRM approach is relatively new concept in the project area, longer period is required to comprehensively promote it and fully realize the intended benefits. Integration of PRM approach into government policies, strategies and plans is still not very effective.

LESSONS LEARNED

The linkage of PRM approach to the community NRM institutions and relevant government sector ministries improved sustainability of PRM process. The NRM committees leveraged on the capacity of government administration in the enforcement of their customary by-laws (locally known as *xeer*), resource mobilization, and acquiring technical skills such as sustainable rangeland management practices.

PRM approach is a multi-stakeholder planning process that brought together diverse stakeholders including community traditional leaders, women, youth, religious leaders and government officials from the cross-border communities. This

contributed to equitable sharing of rangeland resources and improved pastoralists livelihoods.

PRM approach incorporates scientific, indigenous knowledge and customary practices in the management and utilization of rangeland resources. This enhanced community participation through collective efforts in improving conditions of the communal grazing lands contributing to reduced vulnerability to shocks.

Because PRM approach is bottom-up inclusive process, it effectively identifies local realities and community priority needs thus creating community ownership for sustainable implementation of their PRM plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need to lobby for integration of community PRM Plans within the government budgeting process. This will improve resource availability to support implementation of community actions. Additionally, when PRM is integrated into government policies, strategies and plans, it builds synergy between NRM actors and PRM community institutions. Inter-governmental mechanisms through lobbying can contribute to improved security and reduce political tensions in the cross-border. This will minimize hindrances to movements and meetings between PRM community institutions.

Customary institutions are playing an important role in the rehabilitation and management of rangelands. However, these institutions are not fully developed in capacity to sustainably implement their action plans. Stakeholders can support their capacity development for example in resource mobilization and proposal writing and linking them with potential funding sources to enable them implement some of their plans.

CONCLUSION

Active involvement of the rangeland users is a critical and important stage in rangeland management. To sustain this collaboration, communities need to be empowered and awareness sustained on the importance of natural resource management both for local benefits, and for global effects. BORESHA's engagement and the ensuing results is indication of the desire for consistency in efforts around rangeland reclamation and management. While women play key role in the community institutions against cultural constraints, it is important that social behaviour change communication become part of program intervention to enhance understanding of the importance of their participation and build their capacity for resilience in leadership. PRM sustainability is best anchored on the goodwill of the government and ownership of the people and so there is need to cement these collaborative initiatives through institutional frameworks that are sustainable and vouch for accountability.

REFERENCE

1. BORESHA (2018): Mapping of Key Natural Resources in the Cross- border Areas of Kenya, Somalia & Ethiopia. <https://boreshahoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NRM-MAPPING.pdf>
2. Fiona, F. and Cullis, A. (2010): Introductory Guidelines to Participatory Rangeland Management in Pastoral Areas. USA: Save the Children.
3. Participatory Rangeland Management in Africa: A Review Hussen Ebrahim² and Fasil Negussie¹
1 Department of Animal Production and Technology, College of Agriculture, Woldia University, Woldia, Ethiopia
2Dept. of Animal Production and Technology, CoA, Woldia University, Mersa, Ethiopia E-mail: hussenebrahim199@gmail.com
4. Rangeland Management and Pastoralism Strategy for Kenya, 2021 – 2031: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Co-operatives, Kilima House, Nairobi, Kenya. <https://kilimo.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/RANGE-MANAGEMENT-AND-PASTORALISM-STRATTEGY.pdf>
5. WMO, FAO, AND IIRR.2020. Climate Change Adaptation Guide for Farmer Field Schools. Nairobi Kenya

Contacts:

BORESHA Consortium
Danish Refugee Council - East Africa and Great Lakes
Lower Kabete Road (Ngecha Junction)
P.O Box 14762 – 00800 Nairobi, Kenya
Office: +254 709867000
Twitter: BORESHA_HoA
Website: www.boreshahoa.org

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union and Danish Refugee Council (DRC). Its contents are the sole responsibility of BORESHA Consortium and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or DRC.

