
RECIPROCAL RESOURCE AGREEMENT DOCUMENTATION

Documented by

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1.1 Background Information on Marsabit County

Marsabit County is situated in the northern part of Kenya, bordering the Republic of Ethiopia to the north and Lake Turkana to the west. With approximately 66,000 square kilometres of which 4,956 km² are covered by Lake Turkana, the foremost part of Marsabit County is an extensive plain which lies between 300m and 900m above sea level. It is characterized by a population density averaging 2 persons per km² and a distribution varying between 1 person up to 22 persons per km², depending on the scarcity of water as well as the amount of permanent and semi-permanent settlements. Moreover, with rainfalls between 200 and 1000mm a year, with high elevation areas receiving a larger amount of rainfall, Marsabit is located in the driest region of the country. It is notable to say that the area that lies below 700m above sea level accounts for approximately 75% of its total land area, and is mainly composed of poor soils as well as vegetation consisting generally of thorn shrubs. Therefore, the land has low agricultural potential and thus predominantly supports livestock and wildlife.

These area specific attributes are reflected by the fact that 80-90% of its total population are pastoralists who attain their livelihood from livestock and livestock based industries.

The absence of permanent streams and the seasonal rainfall variations are forcing people into a migratory lifestyle, dependent on the availability of water and grass for a limited time before the herds have to move on. The geomorphologic features of the area do offer, however, water sources under the dry river beds stretching from the mountains to the surrounding lowlands. These water sources have been tapped for generations through the digging of wells below the rocky underground, from where people bring up the water by “human ladders”, lifting buckets to the surface in a steady rhythm accompanied by singing praise to the respective owner of the wells. The towns of North Horr and Dukana owe their existence to the permanent availability of water and have developed into settlements of considerable size.

The remote location has led to a situation of neglect where the local population has been cut off from most developments in both countries. And so, the situation of health and education services, for example, is appalling. Due to the dependence on water and pasture, climatic variations have a potentially devastating effect on the livelihoods of the pastoralists, and so there is a strong need to address disaster preparedness and drought response accordingly. Many other development problems still remain, though.

1.2 Socio-Economic Grouping and Characteristics

Wealth in the pastoral livelihood zone of Marsabit County is relative and determined on the basis of number of livestock owned, ownership of business, and formal employment. Thus, three main socio-economic groups can be derived within the county: a) Better-off, b) Middle, c) Poor.

a) This group accounts for 10% of the population, and is defined by households that own more than 20 camels, 300 shoats, and 50 cattle. They include traders, and high level of government and NGO employees.

b) 20% of Marsabit's population are estimated to lie within this group that includes small shop owners, teachers, and middle level GOK employees. Furthermore, these households own less than 100 shoats and fewer camels and cattle.

c) The majority of the population (70%) consist of the poor. These groups are characterized as owning little to no livestock and mostly depending on gift, relief, and remittances.

1.3 Challenges

Especially the rain failures that have been going on during the last decade have led to a protraction in the recovery of the affected areas. Furthermore, taking the large percentage of people into account that depend on livestock, sustainability of livelihoods is declining rapidly. Additionally, the accompanied increase in malnutrition in children under five has reached 26% in Marsabit against an acceptable maximum of 15% (FAO, 2011).

2.1 Context of Conflict in Pastoral Environment - Northern Kenya (North Horr District) and Southern Ethiopia (Southern Omo Zone)

The North Horr District and the South Omo Zone in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia respectively, are home to the following tribes: Dasanach, Hammar, and Gabraa. Their proximity, long history of fighting, scarce resources as well as different cultures and traditions has increased tension and conflicts by a large extent. The Dasanach are located on the east of Lake Turkana across both sides of the area bordering Kenya and Ethiopia, while the Gabraa are situated across the southern and eastern parts of the Chalbi District, and the Hammar are settled in the southern Omo Zone, Ethiopia. Conflict mapping, done during a reciprocal agreement meeting between the Dasanach and Gabraa in May 2010, showed their relationships between one another more clearly. While the Gabraa and Hammar have enjoyed a relatively peaceful co-existence, the Dasanach show the other extreme. Both Dasanach communities experience a conflict prone relationship with the Hammar as

both show very high tensions due to recurrent attacks from either sides. Moreover, also the Gabraa are seen as the Dasanach's major enemy tribe, resulting in frequent incidents of cattle rustling and severe conflicts. As the main cause for intense violence among them the concerning tribes identified the competition over available resources, their different traditions and values, and more importantly, a everlasting history of hatred and fighting that cannot be changed within a moment's notice.

2.2 Nature of Conflicts among Pastoral Communities living across Kenya and Ethiopia

Boarders

Besides having devastating effects on livestock and crops, the drought furthermore nurtures conflicts, due to a scarcity of natural resources. The vast majority of Marsabit County's inhabitants consist of pastoralists for whom livestock not only represents wealth but moreover life. The failure of the rain seasons in 2010 and 2011 have forced many pastoralists to decrease the number of their herd (e.g. destocking) as well as having to watch their livestock decrease. Furthermore, livestock resembles the wealth of a household (HH), the higher the number of shoats, cattle, and camels, the higher the HH position in the community. A fair number of livestock is also necessary for a man to get married in pastoral communities, since only a man who is sufficiently wealthy will be able to get a wife. This importance of livestock thus often leads to raiding of other tribes, cattle rustling, and petty thefts. Petty thefts only involve a relatively small amount of livestock, mostly shoats and occasionally also camels, stolen by the peri-urban population of a community. These actions are normally being followed by revenge acts of the affected tribe, which eventually will resolve in a continuous circle of petty thefts, in which humans are usually to stay unharmed. The increasing amount of illicit fire arms in pastoral settings, which can be easily acquired at the price of a cow, are a common way of protecting the herd, the community, the land but also more frequently to raid. Raiding has much more severe impacts on the affected tribe than petty thefts, as human loss is a fairly common outcome. By questioning several communities in northern Turkana, all agreed upon the fact that the youth is to be blamed for such actions. By organizing and preparing themselves without consulting the elders, the youth raids an enemy tribe, and once being successful they will present part of the raided livestock as a gift to the elders. The lost lives on either side will soon be forgotten whenever the newly acquired animals are large enough in number and moreover the young warriors will then be seen as heroes.

These traditional conflicts have a long history and are moreover part of the traditional pastoral culture, but have become more destructive and less manageable over time. Additionally, Karimi (2003) identified the main causes of nowadays conflict as: "Proliferation of illicit arms,

inadequate policing and state security arrangements, diminishing role of traditional governance systems, competition over control and access to natural resources such as pasture and water, land issues, political incitements, ethnocentrism, increasing levels of poverty and idleness amongst the youth". These violent conflicts have severe impacts on all concerning communities and despite the loss of human life further result include, but are not limited to: "Loss of property, displacements of large segments of the communities, disruption of socio-economic activities and livelihoods, increased hatred between communities, degradation and threat to water catchments areas, increased economic hardships as a result of loss of livelihoods, high levels of starvation and malnutrition among the displaced groups and unprecedented dependency syndrome on relief food are the main negative impacts of the increasing and severe inter-ethnic armed conflicts in northern Kenya." (Karimi, 2003)

2.3 Traditional Conflict Coping Mechanisms

The most traditional mechanism to cope with conflicts among pastoral communities is the unification of kraals. By merging the individual kraals and thus creating one large community, they will become stronger as a whole. The better coordination as well as the increased number of loyal warriors that are ready to protect their community make them a greater threat towards their enemies, and thus might prevent attacks.

To reduce the severe impacts of cattle rustling, one traditional coping mechanism includes spreading the herd across the range. However, with the introduction of firearms, conflict prone areas are often avoided and livestock is kept close to the settlement and police presence or where a group of armed men functions as the herder.

Most commonly, conflicts occur in areas where scarce resources are being found. Therefore, many tribes opted to put their settlements relatively far from these areas (e.g. from a borehole). Especially, the Dasanach communities still use to practice this coping strategy up to now.

2.4 Peace Building Mechanisms, their Challenges and Constraints

The peace building mechanisms have evolved over time and thus can be divided between the traditional as well as the contemporary approach.

Traditional Approach

Whenever both rivalling tribes recognize the need for a peace agreement, most commonly after a large amount of lives have already been lost on both sides, the elders would agree on a peace

ceremony. During this ritual, spears, bows, and arrows are being buried as a symbol for peace. This ritual was accompanied with the perception that whoever was to break the peace will be cursed. With the introduction of more modern and deadly weapons, such as the machine gun, as well as an accompanied decrease in superstitious beliefs, the traditional peace building approach is no longer pursued.

Contemporary Approach

Nowadays, outside parties often play a major role in initiating peace agreements between different tribes. This is most commonly being done by NGOs, which will function as messengers for both tribes, first talking to each one separately, and then based on their assessments, arrange meetings.

Furthermore, by bringing these tribes closer together on outside activities, e.g. during events for the youth, common schools or other activities both get a chance to recognize their similarities.

Unfortunately, this approach is sometimes not welcomed by all tribes, due to the perception that international NGOs only want to pursue their own interests in order to obtain funds.

3.1 Drought in Pastoral Situation

The immediate effects resulting of droughts in pastoralist settlements consist of a decline in food production, different migratory patterns, exacerbating resource-based conflicts, losses of livestock and a rise in food insecurity for many communities. Especially, since pastoralists derive their livelihood from livestock they are among the most vulnerable people when it comes to droughts. Several coping strategies are thus being applied, such as decreasing the number of meals eaten in a day, relying on less preferred foods, gathering wild fruits or seeking support from other HH or aid agencies. The ability of to cope with an ongoing drought over time varies, depending on the socio-economic features of the affected region and status of the HH. Furthermore, the increasing frequency and intensity of droughts weakens the ability to cope as HH are given less time to recover. While in the pre-colonial era, pastoralist's movement had no boundaries as walking long distances across borders was a common practice as to reach water and pasture during droughts. The traditional movements became impaired in the 1930s as international borders were fixed. As a result, droughts developed into an increasingly severe threat as foreign pasture and water resources became less accessible.

The demographic pressure, the increasing severity of droughts which are often accompanied with conflicts, the decrease in livestock assets, and increased destitution has currently forced thousands of people to rely on food relief.

3.2 Impacts of Drought on Conflicts

Droughts can trigger a variety of different conflicts.

Conflict over grazing area: Failures of rainy seasons prevent wet-season grazing areas from flourishing as dry-season areas start decreasing in size. The high demand for pasture results in competition over the remaining areas and therefore triggers a series of conflicts.

Conflict over water resources: As shallow wells become obsolete and the number of water containing boreholes declines, people undertake large distances by foot in order to meet their water needs. As the drought conditions advance, people tend to settle around the functioning boreholes while these start serving more people than possible and ultimately are often subject to violent conflicts.

Conflict over Cattle Rustling: Pastoralists rely on livestock to derive their livelihood. In order to restock deceased animals that died during the drought or suffered from diseases as well as to retaliate for livestock stolen in the past, raiding is a common solution. Moreover, the availability of illegal arms has led many men into banditry and organized cattle rustling, while at the same time claiming an increasing number of lives.

Conflicts for cultural reasons: A significant reason for banditry and cattle raiding is the lack of a meaningful activity for many young men during drought conditions in pastoral settlements (Berger, 2003). Thus, wealth and heroism can be most easily acquired by stealing cattle and harming the warring communities.

3.3 Challenges in Dealing with Drought in Pastoral Setup

There have been a variety of strategies developed in order to address drought related challenges. However, even though a significant amount of benefits result from these actions also a number challenges and drawbacks are one of the consequences.

Most pastoral tribes have been passing on their attitudes, traditions, values, and norms from generation to generation for centuries now. A tribe that was seen as an enemy decades ago is often still perceived as such, as this knowledge was passed to the children. Coping with droughts by initiating reciprocal grazing agreements thus commonly faces a variety of constraints as changing these attitudes and values cannot be done easily.

Kenya is worldwide known for its breathtaking landscapes and large variety of wildlife. Thus, allowing pastoralists access to national parks and wildlife reserves during necessary seasons might make

needed resources available but can also lead to a loss of wildlife. Increased competition over pasture and water sources in protected areas as well as a rising number of poaching incidents not only endangers these areas in terms of safety but also lowers tourism, which functions as a main income for many people in these areas.

In order to make pastoralists less vulnerable to droughts voices were raised to develop alternative income sources to livestock. Fewer livestock would lead to a longer sustainability of natural resources, but due to very little alternatives in arid areas the options are narrow.

The insufficient infrastructure in northern Kenya, i.e. in remote areas, delays an immediate response to droughts and other emergency situations by the government or other relief agencies. Also inhabitants of these areas are faced with a limited access to markets, due to a lack of transportation means, and consequently an inability of destocking livestock for cash.

When drought hits, pastoralist tend to relocate to locations where resources are in sufficient amount. However, deforestation is a common outcome as trees are being cut around the new settlements for fencing and other usage. This is accompanied with a continuous increase in land degradation and soil erosion that limits thrive of grazing areas during the wet season to some extent.

4.1 Reciprocal Resource Concept

The Reciprocal Resource Concept is a strategy to guarantee an increased accessibility to natural resources such as water and pasture for livestock by sharing of high resource areas during dry seasons.

4.2 Methodology of Reciprocal Grazing Agreements (Best Practice - Eunice Obala, Andreas Jenet, 2011)

Step 1: Mobilization and sensitization of communities - Communities are sensitized using the participatory integrated approach in which they acknowledge their problems and identify the need for durable solutions. The community selects a core working group using developed criteria through general community meetings.

Step 2: Establishment of Core working groups – Gender sensitively composed consisting of people with clear understanding of the community boundaries, existing resources and historical information. The group's roles and responsibilities are clearly stipulated.

Step 3: Drawing of Resource use Maps – Core group developed a map showing boundaries and neighbouring communities, different existing resources, dry, wet and reserve grazing areas, migration routes to markets and grazing areas (water & Pastures), conflict prone zone and existing institutions. Map is then critically analysed through brainstorming in relation to resilience and coping capacities in case of prolonged drought leading to consumption of all reserve leading to the need to negotiate beyond the community boundaries to incorporate neighbours in order to access conflict prone areas and sharing of resources leading to resource sharing plan options. Maps drawn by three groups Youths, women, Men were triangulated and the most comprehensive adopted with additional inputs from plenary discussions.

Step 4: Community validation of resource use maps – Maps were shared with entire community members in a general meeting where they analysed made their inputs and endorsed promoting ownership. The process of the deliberation on the Map and its outcome informs the community to recognize that fact that they can't live in isolation and therefore enhancing informed decision to seek inter-community meetings to reach consensus and Mutual agreement with neighbours which is resisted first but accepted more after more sensitization meetings.

Step 5: Inter-community meetings - These are several meetings depending on the facilitation process aimed at creating understanding among communities. The team involved in the meetings are selected representatives from each community to negotiate the process. The maps are not shared at this level due to the foreseen overlapping boundaries in order to avoid boundary based disagreements but outcome of the discussions at community levels appraised at the inter-community meeting. Special focus was given to identification of grazing areas with un-utilized or under-utilized pasture & water resources as a result of resource based conflict as well zoning of potential existing resources for possible sharing (e.g Gabraa having pasture with no water, while Borana having water with no pasture could negotiate exchange use of their resources).

The first two to three meetings are aimed at attitude change and trust building in order for members to own the process and favourable or conducive environment is acquired. The subsequent meetings are aimed at identifying the conflict zones and other potential resource (e.g. pasture and water) available for future sharing. The inter-community representatives then share the outcomes of their meetings with their community in general community dialogue meetings in which they are guided in terms approvals, amendments and rejection of different proposed elements for feedback to the inter-community meetings.

Step 6: Inter-community resource use strategic planning – The elements that are agreed upon during the cross border or inter-community meeting in consultation with respective communities are

then translated into action plans in a systematic framework that can be monitored. It forms the terms and conditions on how the agreement will be operationalised. The plans consist of Reciprocal Agreement Framework Matrix which further is subdivided into what elements was agreed upon, where, when, responsible person, how to implement, and nature of penalties.

Step 7: Ratification and validation of the proposed plans elements – The draft plan is shared again the community for common understanding and endorsement in community dialogue meetings by the core committee to ensure that the Reciprocal Grazing agreement is owned and gains the will of the communities.

Step 8: Final Reciprocal Agreement signing – Once the Reciprocal Agreement is approved or endorsed by the community members considering all sectors/ genders. The agreement is then signed by the Representatives of the communities in an event witnessed by Local opinion leaders, political leaders, Government District of Zonal security team for reinforcement while ordinary members were advised as tend as many members as possible. In particular for cross border reciprocal resource use plans the inclusion of governmental representatives are important. There must be documented proof of an agreement allowing cross border movements with livestock and significant amounts of people in times of disasters.

Step 9: Implementation of Reciprocal Grazing Agreements - The committees, leaders, and general community are responsible to ensure that the agreements are implemented. Outreach meeting were conducted at community meetings & foras, Chiefs Barazas and market centre to increase publicity and awareness on terms and conditions.

Step 10 Monitoring of the Reciprocal Agreements - The committees had the responsibility to monitor the implementation process through their scheduled meetings, take note of indicators of violation of the agreement or emergencies and share with them Leaders, government as soon as possible for reinforcements.

4.3 Different Reciprocal Agreements facilitated by VSF-Germany

i) Dasanach – Gabraa

The first workshop, aimed to initiate reciprocal resource agreements between the Dasanach and the Gabraa, was implemented by Eunice Obala at the Bulluk AP camp on the 10th-11th of July 2009. The main objective of this workshop was to enable both communities to share the previously unused grazing areas and water resources around Bulluk, which were conceived as being inaccessible due to

conflicts. Furthermore, it was aimed to make both tribes aware about the benefits and the need of a peaceful co-existence. By using the “Do No Harm” framework as well as by letting the communities analyze the context of conflicts, the dividers and connectors between both tribes were listed, which moreover resulted in a better understanding of each other’s culture and the awareness for the need of agreements.

On the 21st of May 2010 another meeting between the Gabraa and the Dasanach was held at the Illeret Primary School. Part of this meeting was to review previous verbal reciprocal agreements, conflict mapping, to raise awareness for the context of conflicts, and to actively include participants in developing peace building strategies. This meeting was successfully completed on the 24th of May 2010, and the participants were to present the acquired proposals to their community to get their endorsement. Additionally, Dasanach Kenya promised to inform Dasanach Ethiopia in order to attain their participation in future negotiations.

After the proposals were endorsed by the entire community members of both tribes, the Gabraa and the Dasanach each selected 40 community representatives, and the agreement was declared during the 6th-7th of June 2010. This final meeting focused on the formulation of functional grazing control systems, the management of security in conflict areas as well as fines and penalties. Moreover, peace focal points, a cross border peace committee, and an improved communication in form of meetings on a regular basis were declared to ensure a peaceful co-existence along the borders around Bulluk and Darate. Furthermore, the content of this reciprocal agreement was to be shared with the Dasanach and Hammar of Ethiopia on the 8th of June in order to obtain a greater impact and acceptance of these agreements.

The agreement was officially launched and signed on the 28th of July 2010 in Marsabit, involving political parties of the district, opinion leaders, and government officials.

ii) Inter-Country Agreement: Hammar, Dasanach, Gabraa

Following the reciprocal grazing agreement of the Dasanach and Gabraa, also the Gabraa and Hammar of Ethiopia, which already had obtained a verbal agreement in May 2009, were still in need of a documented and signed agreement. During the 8th-9th of June 2010 the documented agreement between the Dasanach and Gabraa (Kenya) was shared with the Gabraa (Ethiopia) and Hammar in Omorate, Ethiopia, together with a delegation of Kenya as well as Dasanach and Hammar Woreda administrators. Due to several preceding meetings with the concerning communities the agreement was easily reached in June 2010. Together with the Dasanach and Hammar communities of Kenya, this agreement was signed on the 28th of July 2010.

iii) Gabraa Resource Management Rules

Coping with a rising number of severe droughts over time became increasingly difficult and thus induced the Yaas to develop overall resource management rules which were to be obeyed by all Gabraa communities. The Yaas consist of a group of elders who have the power and authority to resolve disputes within the community as well as to implement new customs and to decide on grazing regimes (Berger, 2003). During the Gabraa General Conference in February 1998, consisting of Yaas from almost all clans, the following Resource Management Rules were passed:

1. Forest guards should be posted in every sub-location in the North Horr constituency, in order to prevent the destruction of trees and other vegetation.
2. In the areas surrounding every trading centre, reforestation should be started and effectively protected by fences and proper rules.
3. Restrictive norms should be established regarding stock grazing in the areas surrounding trading centres and water points.

iv) Turkana – Dodoth

The RGA between the Dodoth community of Uganda and the Turkana community of Kenya was established as part of the ECHO funded DMI project which was conducted between 2008 and 2011. This activity, undertaken within the first year of the project, started off by mapping the entire district in order to identify high potential grazing areas that were prone to conflicts and thus only offered a limited accessibility. These areas included: Naporoto, Loile, Pire, Matakul, and Kalopeto, which were easily accessible by the communities bordering these areas after the agreement was signed. Further actions, undertaken by the village planning committees of the two communities, included: land use planning, early warning sensitization, and drought preparedness planning of the communities. After some delays, caused by heavy rains in Uganda in early 2010, the CBO Dodoth Agro Pastoral Organization (DADO) assisted to mobilize the community as well as to engage the Dodoth in drought preparedness planning together with the Turkana. Moreover, by organizing a forum of stakeholders with the key community leaders of the Dodoth, DADO managed to improve the relations between the two communities and therefore to --- of a grazing agreement. On the 17th of December 2010 the agreement between the Turkana community of Oropoi village, Kenya, and the Dodoth community of Kotido-Kaabong Villages, Uganda, was signed together with the following statements: a) Coexist peacefully with each other as a result of reduced resource-based conflict. b) Share scarce resource especially pasture and water to their livestock during the dry season when there is scarcity of these resources. c) The established Village Land Planning Committee (VLUC) members to ensure that the above agreement is adhered to by all parties through regular participatory monitoring & evaluation meetings.

v) Turkana – Toposa

Also the RGA between the Turkana bordering South Sudan and the Toposa had been implemented during the Drought Management Initiative project together with a similar methodology. However, as the government of South Sudan had been actively engaged in civic education, mobilization of communities, and campaigns for the referendum in 2010 postponed the activity until January 2011. Together with the CBO Losilia Relief Rehabilitation and Development Agency (LRRDA) an agreement, allowing the Turkana to access dry season foliage on Toposa grounds, was then reached. Since the communities were hesitating on signing the agreement as they were uncomfortable making documented agreements, both vowed on keeping the peace and acknowledged the existence of stability.

vi) Intergovernmental Agreement Kenya-Ethiopia

On the 21st of February 2010 VSF Germany facilitated an intergovernmental meeting between the Kenya government and Ethiopian government delegation, due to an official closure of the Kenya – Marsabit North and Ethiopia – South Omo Zone border. The closure was implemented by the Kenyan District Commission (DC) for Marsabit North in September 2009 after a Gabraa community was raided by the Dasanach community resulting in 5 deaths and thousands of livestock lost at Darate. However, the closing negatively affected the tribes living in the area including the Hammar, Dasanach Kenya/Ethiopia, Borana, Gabraa, and Albore, due to restricted movement. A cholera outbreak along the Dasanach community from October 2009 to January 2010, as well as the negative impact on traders and moreover the impaired project implementation for development and relief agencies further increased the need for an open border together better security regulations.

The agenda during this meeting consisted of the following:

1. The relationship between Dasanach, Hammar, and Gabraa communities in relation to conflict.
2. Security along the Kenya – Ethiopia Border
3. Cross border trade
4. OLF and rebels
5. Possible effects of Ethiopian Elections on Kenya

It was concluded that the governments agree on reinforcing the RGA developed by both communities and further stated that disobeying these regulations would result in penalties in order to keep a peaceful co-existence. In addition, VSF-Germany was requested to facilitate a peace meeting between the Gabraa, Hammar, Dasanach, which was held in Turmi, Ethiopia, on the 11th-12th of March 2010.

Additionally, the two governments agreed on frequent meetings in order to share information and to improve the coordination of their actions across the border, and more importantly, declared the Kenya – Ethiopia border as opened. Cross border security was to recover by assigning the police station in Illeret and Eubua together with the division officers in Omorate, Turmi and North Horr to form a security team.

4.4 Field Visits in Turkana

19.07.2011 – Oropoi

When visiting the village of Oropoi, Turkana, we got a chance to talk to some of the elders of that community about the current Reciprocal Grazing Agreements (RGA) facilitated by VSF-Germany. The goal of this RGA was to bring peace to the tribes of Turkana, Kenya as well as the Dodoth, Uganda. Both sides have experienced a prolonged history of conflicts that have led to several raids, leaving a large amount of victims behind. Furthermore, the RGA was a part of the Drought Management Initiative (DMI) which helped these communities to achieve sustained access to dry season grazing and water areas as a way to cope with the extensive drought that has been threatening the livelihoods of pastoralist at the Horn of Africa. Although this project was completed with great success in May, 2011 leading to a total increase of grazing land of approximately 110 sq. miles, new conflicts arose recently between the tribe of Oropoi and the Dodoth.

In the past, peace agreements were not established by outside parties like the government or NGOs but by the tribes themselves. In order to do so, spears, arrows, and bows were buried by both sides as a sign of peace. This ritual was accompanied by the belief that whoever acted against this agreement will suffer from a curse. Of course, this view has changed and with the introduction of automatic guns, conflicts within these tribes have become much more severe.

Before VSF-Germany started intervening in these areas there have already been other attempts of bringing peace to these tribes, especially by the governments of Uganda and Kenya as well as local NGOs such as LOKADO, RIAMRIAM, LOPEDO, and APEDI. However, none of which succeeded, since all agreements only curbed the conflicts for some time. As a main reason of these failed agreements the Oropoi claimed that they were not sufficiently involved in the process. Instead of including both sides in the decision making, the government “forced” the agreement upon them. In the view of the elders of Oropoi, also previous agreements by the local NGOs did not sufficiently involve the tribes themselves in the decision process.

Currently, the RGA implemented by VSF-Germany is no longer being accepted as such in the area between Oropoi and Uganda. It was stated that in order to get access to that grazing area, Oropoi

had to leave all its weapons behind to guarantee a conflict-free zone. However, even though Oropoi first accepted this rule, they were attacked by armed Dodoths. Therefore, Oropoi no longer sees the RGA as being valid. As with the failure of past agreements, Oropoi also sees insufficient decision makers as its main cause. Their wish is to bring both communities together in order to once and for all make peace with their everlasting enemies. Furthermore, the youth should be targeted in making the peace agreement last, since they represent future warriors. By bringing children from both tribes together (e.g. one school for both tribes, joined activities), better relations might be a result and thus fewer conflicts. Moreover, especially the governments of both countries were blamed for ongoing conflicts. Oropoi wishes for a better distinction of the border to Uganda, as well as increased border control to sustain security. This border control has already been implemented by the government of Uganda, which makes the Turkana feel less favoured. Further emphasis was put on the Dodoth, which in the eyes of the Turkana are not yet ready for peace. As the chief of Oropoi explained: The Turkana are people of peace, which has been part of their culture ever since. However, in the history of the Dodoth, war has always played part. Unless the Dodoth are willing to change the roots of their culture, peace will never be possible.

27.07.2011 - Mogila

The recent reciprocal grazing agreement by VSF-Germany resulted in a tremendous improvement on the number of conflicts, raids, and security for the Turkana as well as the Toposa. Unfortunately, this state only persisted for a short amount of time until conflicts started soaring again. Currently, only 6 month after the RGA was implemented, the Turkana (community of Mogila) claim that they no longer can rely on this agreement.

The first peace agreements between the Toposa of South Sudan and the Turkana of Kenya were negotiated and controlled by the British during colonial times, and as the Turkana assert, this was the only period in which peace was actually obtained between the two tribes. As a reason they claimed that the weapons during these days were less harmful and additionally the British managed to control the movement of illegal arms. Once Kenya declared its independence, conflicts and the number of weapons started rising.

Before VSF-Germany started intervening also the local community based organizations (CBO), APEDI, LOCADO, and LOPEO, tried to bring peace to both tribes. Although tension was on the decrease, conflicts started soaring soon after again. As a reason for the failure Mogila residents blamed the Toposa for violating the agreement by raiding them early June 2011. During the incident a large amount of livestock had been stolen which further resulted in increasing poverty for the effected households. According to the Turkana also VSF-G's agreement failed due to the Toposa. Moreover, they emphasized the need to educate the youth of both tribes about each other in order to bring

peace to these communities, since they represent the most war-oriented segment of the tribe, and thus often opt for retaliation. Furthermore, in order to solve this everlasting problem of rivalry between the Toposa and the Turkana, the Mogila elders pointed out that if the governments of Kenya and South Sudan won't be able to stop the flow of illegal weapons also the conflicts will not cease to exist.

4.5 Personal Testimonies

1) Dasanach-Kenya

Peace committee and community members

- Loki Derete-peace committee
- Kalany Hile- peace committee
- Kitau Nyalala- Community member
- Moringole Amicha- peace committee
- Kocho Helekwa-community member
- Linga Korre-community member
- Samuel Lomorumoe- community member
- Loki Kulugutho-community member
- Hiriyan Maade – Community member

Other organizations involved in RGA: EPaRDA, Catholic mission, Human Rights, KWS, 'Fish People', KWS, Office of the President and Kenya Police.

Members of the peace committee as well as community members of the Dasanach-Kenya perceived a positive change in the security situation and sharing of natural resources after the signing of VSF-Germany's RGA. Initially, conflicts over pasture and water, raiding of livestock, and murder on both sides were omnipresent. Only the Dasanach Kenya and Arbore have no history of conflict between one another. Although many measures have been undertaken to address this issue in the past by other NGOs as well as interventions by the Government of Kenya, peace was never fully obtained, despite the fact that these interventions led to a rapid improvement in the situation of pastoralists in the area. As a reason for the failure of previous interventions the Dasanach-Kenya saw an insufficient follow up of the agreements, which led to further conflict. Moreover, natural circumstances such as the prolonged drought further nurtured into the conflict over natural resources.

Currently, VSF-G has been quite successful with the current RGA and the affected tribes see the change as "very necessary and important to all communities". According to the Dasanach-Kenya the evidence of change includes an improved security situation, a reduction of mass raids, return of stolen livestock, and furthermore the possibility of sharing the few available pasture and water resources. However, the participants also mentioned the need of involving traditional methods of

agreements into modern RGAs as well as the urgency for a dialogue between the Gabra and Dasanach to resolve current conflicts at Bulluk.

2) Dasanach-Ethiopia

Peace committee and community members

- Nyemeto
- Guoshumo
- Lobolite
- Boko
- Baale
- Kore
- Yierbur-Chief

Other organizations involved in RGA: EParDA, Catholic mission, Human Rights, KWS, 'Fish People', KWS, Office of the President and Kenya Police.

The Dasanach-Ethiopia saw their livelihood threatened as there were conflicts with all bordering tribes (Hammar, Turkana, Gabra). This issue was first addressed by the local organization EParDA and the Government of Ethiopia, however the participants claimed that even though there was an improvement in their situation, the agreements had not sufficient impact to make a lasting difference. Since meetings were rare and there was poor follow up, livestock was not always returned and conflicts arose shortly after.

VSF-G's intervention has been perceived of having a greater impact, due to large amounts of livestock being returned, close collaboration between GOE, GOK and other NGOs as well as increasing peace and stability in the area. Yierbur (chief) explains the situation as follows: "a young child can now sleep well without disturbance to sleep". Furthermore, previously inaccessible pastures and water resources such as Fajaj, Girgilam, Narama, Surge and El Nyimor are now being shared. For the future the Dasanach-Ethiopia hope for a continue of VSF-G's peace interventions as well as an enforcement of such by other NGOs like EParDA and GOE.

3) Dasanach-Woreda

Interviews: Mr. Stimula Chumareng, deputy Woreda DO, Dasanach Woreda

Other organizations involved in RGA: EParDA, EPDA (Ethiopia Pastoralist Development Association), GOE

Just like the Dasanach-Ethiopia, also the Dasanach-Woreda faced a considerable amount of conflict with the surrounding tribes (Turkana, Nyangatom, Hammar, Gabra) before VSF-G implemented the

RGA. Previous interventions by other NGOs and the GOE greatly improved their situation in the short run by implementing natural resource agreements, human rights awareness projects, forming of peace committees, and improving farming techniques. However, in the long run a shortfall in follow up actions, the habit of cattle rustling, and the different beliefs of each tribe led to an increase in conflicts again. As Mr. Stimula-Chumareng states, there have been once again improvements in the livelihoods of the affected tribes due to the interventions of VSF-G. These include: The return of stolen or stray livestock, a greater security situation, and sharing of the few available natural resources. For the future Mr. Stimula-Chumareng proposes more possibilities for interaction between conflicting tribes (e.g. exchange visits, sport activities) which could help to decrease prejudice and better communication. Also an increase of meetings and peace trainings for all stakeholders should be obtained. These actions could lead to a better understanding of one another's culture and thus to a reduction of conflicts. As Mr. Stimula-Chumareng said "where there is peace everything else is possible".

4) Gabraa

Interviews

- Chief Saru- member Divisional peace committee
- Chief Adano Katello- member divisional peace committee
- Kizito Konchora- Secretary divisional peace committee
- Gonoba Adano- divisional peace committee
- Alex Gollo-community member
- Chairman District peace committee-Elema Adano

Initially, peace agreements were made by the affected tribes themselves during dialogue meetings. However, due to a lack of authority these agreements were often broken and thus not very successful. Especially the large amount of conflicts between the Gabraa and the Dasanach, the Borana, the Arbore and the Wotawendo, have resulted in the death of several persons. Most notably during the Kokai-Massacre and along the Bulluk and DArate pasture areas. Several NGOs have addressed this issue in the past such as: PACODEO, IGAD, Arid Lands, Diocese Development Office, Shade Initiative, Goet and Oromo Pastoralist Association, Care and Eparda. Although these interactions have led to an increased level of communication between the different tribes, refund of stolen livestock, and better security, conflicts did not fully vanish and arose soon after again. According to the Gabraa representatives the Dasanach were the reason for failure due to dissatisfaction and different interests. Furthermore, the need for peace agreements should originate from the tribes themselves instead of the government or other NGOs. Also the increase in population is seen as a general threat to available resources.

VSF-G's interventions have been perceived as having a great impact on the current situation. Mainly, joint road construction between the Hammar and Gabraa, the sharing of grazing areas as well as VSF-Gs cross border coverage made this possible. Further evidence of change includes the return of livestock and the reduction of major raids. In order to keep and further strengthen these improvements in the long run it is proposed that VSF-G helps in resolving issues of administrative boundaries, facilitates community meetings, and involve an increasing amount of Fora people in the peace committee. Furthermore, the different governments should interact by implementing and legalizing the process.

Finally, like the Dasanach also the Gabraa call for a dialogue meeting to resolve current tensions at Bulluk junction.

5) Hammar

Interviews

Peace committee and community members

- Arbola- Chief
- Gulo Bola- peace committee member
- Okoda
- Oita
- Ayibila
- Asachi

Other organizations involved in RGA: EPaRDA, GOE

According to the interviewed members of the Hammar, previous interventions have been implemented the correct way by frequently monitoring the peace situation, having sufficient meetings to come to a conclusion as well as achieving proper peace declarations. However, it was stated that these interventions became useless as the Dasanach did not honor the agreement which led to an increase in conflicts once more. Further interventions by local NGOs and VSF-G now managed to bring peace with the Gabraa, Borana and Arbore. In addition, grazing agreements managed to access grazing areas more efficiently and also the Minogelti-Bulluk road is now open and in use. As Okoda says "I sleep with my back facing Gabraa, Borana, and Arbore because it is safe. I sleep facing the Dasanach because I am not sure what will happen". This statement additionally represents the urgency of a peace agreement between the Hammar and the Dasanach. Moreover, in July 2011 at Minogelti stolen livestock had been returned to its owners, however the Dasanach are yet to refund stolen cattle. For the future the Hammar wish VSF-G to continue the way they help now and ask to improve water structures in the Hammar region.

6) OCS- Ileret Police Station

Interviews

- OCS- Ileret police station

Prior to VSF-G's intervention in the Ileret area there were no other NGOs tackling the issue of conflicts between different tribes. The intensity of conflicts between the Gabraa, Dasanach, Amarkoke, Turkana, and Arbote could not be resolved by the GoK alone which resembles the need for help of other organizations in the area. As a result of educating locals and constructing wells, VSF-G's actions had a great impact in the whole area by bringing communities together. Additionally, grazing agreements managed to increase stability and return stolen livestock to its rightful owners. Furthermore, a large amount of pastoralists now benefit from newly achieved animal health services. Unfortunately, there is still a communication barrier between different tribes as well as the GoK which further represents an obstacle in resolving conflicts. Therefore, it is suggested that VSF-G continues its work in the area to support all communities and moreover improves watering points and grazing areas in order to decrease conflicts over natural resources.