



Community-based breed documentation as tool for empowerment – the example of Karamoja, Uganda

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Overview

- ❖ Overview of global livestock and poultry resources
- ❖ International breed conservation efforts
- ❖ Breed documentation
- ❖ LIFE breed documentation training in Karamoja, Uganda





Global livestock and poultry resources (State of the World Report, FAO 2007)

- ✿ About 40 mammalian and avian species domesticated (examples: cattle, goat, sheep, yak, pig, chicken...)
- ✿ Breeds = populations within a species sharing defined and identifiable external characteristics
- ✿ > 7600 breeds documented:
 - ✿ > 1000 “transboundary” (> 1 country)
 - ✿ > 6500 local





High breed diversity in drylands

- ✿ Breed diversity (number of breeds/million people) is especially high in remote countries (Hall&Ruane 1993)
 - ✿ ¼ of all breeds is in drylands (FAO 2007)
 - ✿ Many breeds associated with specific communities and societies
- reflects involvement of pastoral and small-scale livestock keepers in breed development





Livestock and poultry breeds—treasures at stake

- ✿ 1 breed dies out per month
- ✿ 9% of recorded breeds extinct
- ✿ 20% of all breeds are at risk
- ✿ Valuable genes get lost

Reasons:

- ✿ Intensification of livestock production
- ✿ Development, globalisation etc.
- ✿ Adverse policies
- ✿ Climate change





Renewed interest in local breeds

Local breeds

- ✿ more productive under low levels of inputs
 - ✿ Most suitable foundation for livestock development in marginal environments
 - ✿ have valuable traits that high performance animals have lost
 - ◆ Disease-resistance
 - ◆ Drought resistance, hardiness
- interest to the livestock industries and scientists





International conservation efforts

FAO and governments:

Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources

⇒ 180 country reports

⇒ State of the World Report

⇒ Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources

⇒ Adopted by some 170 governments in 2007



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Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic resources (GPA)

- ✿ Recognises contribution of pastoralists and small-scale livestock keepers to breed formation and conservation

But:

- ✿ Does not involve these groups as partners in breed conservation





Local breeds are underreported

- ✦ State of the World Report does not fully capture breeds in remote areas (e.g., Uganda report has little information on Karamoja)

Reasons:

- ✦ Remote areas difficult to access
- ✦ Scientific and local classification systems and breed definition differ
- ✦ Scientific documentation method inadequate for local systems

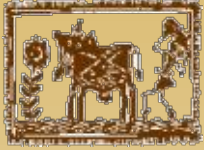




Limitation of scientific documentation

- ✿ Mostly restricted to structured questionnaires
- ✿ Concentrates on external characteristics and production plus - recently - a few fitness parameters
- ✿ Does not capture characteristics valued by local keepers
- ✿ Neglects ecological and social context
- ✿ Neglects that animals can have multiple functions





Breeds can more than produce!

Example: Lesotho

- ✦ Income (sales to cover expenses, ploughing)
- ✦ Milk (drinking and sale)
- ✦ Meat (mostly sale)
- ✦ Draught (ploughing)
- ✦ Transport (sledge / cart)
- ✦ Culture (slaughter for funeral)
- ✦ Marriage (23 cattle as dowry)
- ✦ Skins
- ✦ Manure (fuel, fertilizer, building)
- ✦ Medicinal uses
- ✦ Sign of wealth and prestige
- ✦ Expression of friendship

(Tebellong Ministries Feb 2007)





The LIFE approach of breed documentation

- ✿ Evolved from > 15 years of research and interaction with Raika pastoralists in India
- ✿ Documents breeds and breeding from the perspective of communities





What is LIFE?

Local Livestock For
Empowerment of
Rural People:

Informal network
that started in
Rajasthan, India, in
2000 to support
community-based
conservation of
animal genetic
resources



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What is different about the LIFE approach ?

- ✿ Understands breeds as products of social networks
- ✿ Is not a fixed method but set of possible actions and participatory methods that can be combined and adapted
- ✿ Captures priorities of livestock keepers and their **indigenous knowledge** about animal breeding (=IK-AB)





LIFE documentation covers:

- ✿ Cultural aspects
- ✿ Classification system
- ✿ Knowledge about production system and animal breeding
- ✿ Breeding decisions (e.g., selection criteria)
- ✿ Breeding management: selection, mating control, removal of unwanted animals





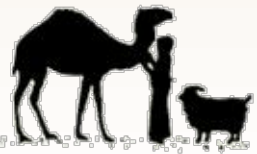
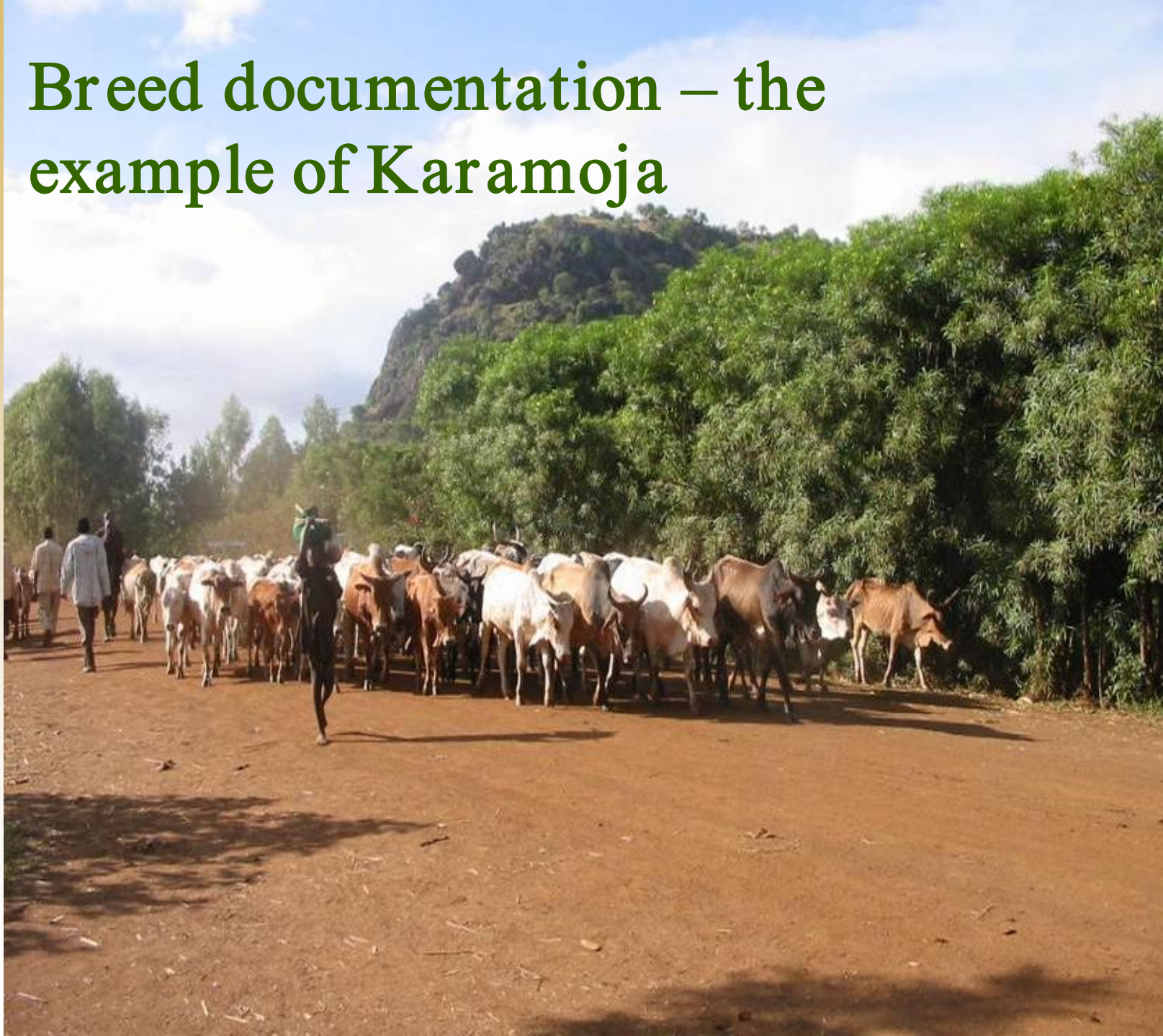
LIFE data collection methods

- ☀ Informal discussions with livestock keepers
- ☀ Group discussions
- ☀ Interviews with key informants (e.g. elderly)
- ☀ Progeny histories
- ☀ Village surveys
- ☀ Participatory mapping of breeding area
- ☀ etc.





Breed documentation – the example of Karamoja



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Karamoja

- ✿ Karamoja: Region in north-eastern Uganda
- ✿ People: Karimojong pastoralists
- ✿ Keep mostly cattle, goats and sheep
- ✿ Minor species: donkeys, camels, chicken and pigs

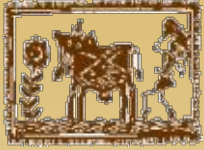




Participatory breed documentation training in Karamoja

- ✿ 2 trainings: Nov 2006 + Feb 2008
- ✿ 3-5 days
- ✿ 20-40 herders and NGOs participated each time
- ✿ Places: Namalu Trading Centre and Moroto
- ✿ Discussions in English and Karimojong language





Part 1: Provision of background information

- ✿ Overview on global situation of livestock sector
- ✿ Introducing Livestock Keepers' Rights = a set of rights necessary for livestock keepers to continue keeping their breeds
- ✿ Introduction of LIFE method



Part 2: Visit to livestock market



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“What types of animals are sold in the livestock market?”





What is a breed?

Learnings:

- ✿ Karimojong livestock classification differs from western science
- ✿ No definition of the word “breed”
- ✿ They classify by phenotype, sex and function (differentiation beyond “breed”)



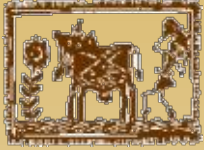


The Karimojong definition of “breed”

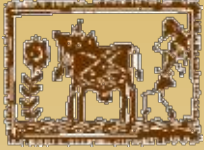
Therefore extra session was necessary to define “breed”:

==> Animals that have certain similar characteristics, resemble each other and have a common birth background or originate from the same family





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Documentation exercises

- ✿ Mixed Working groups of literate and illiterate pastoralists
- ✿ Discussions in Karimojong language
- ✿ A group member documents in English





Characteristics discussed and documented

- ✿ Description of external characteristics
- ✿ Range of products and uses
- ✿ Production performance
- ✿ Reproductive performance
- ✿ Customs
- ✿ Management
- ✿ Comparison with other breeds





Part 4: Discussion of results and follow-up

- ✿ Plenary presentations of the English outputs in Karimojong language
- ✿ Discussion: What can we do to conserve and improve our breeds without external funds?

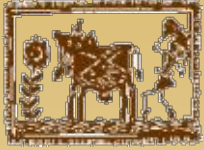




Outcome

- ✿ Preliminary documentation on Karimojong cattle, goat, sheep, donkey and chicken
- ✿ Raised awareness of value of their own breeds
- ✿ Interest in conservation of their breeds
- ✿ Specific conservation activities identified:
 - ◆ Awareness raising within their communities of value of local breeds
 - ◆ Formation of indigenous breed associations
 - ◆ Etc.





Benefits of breed documentation

- ✿ Records information on breeds
- ✿ Records intellectual contribution of livestock breeding communities
- ✿ Contributes to breed conservation
- ✿ Provides arguments for advocacy





Benefits of breed documentation (continued)

- ✿ Contributes to understanding of outsiders of local breeds and knowledge

Important: Outsiders should

- ✿ respect the intellectual property rights of communities to their breeds and knowledge
- ✿ Help communities to protect their rights from abuse





The way ahead

- ✿ Understanding of Karimojong breeds and breeding knowledge only at its beginning
- ✿ Breeding associations in Karamoja should define their own breeding goals and may fulfil also social functions
- ✿ Can breeding associations play a role in conflict management in Karamoja?



Goats and sheep at a watering point on a dry river bed



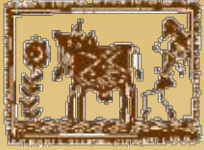
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Watering cattle at a watering point on a dry river bed



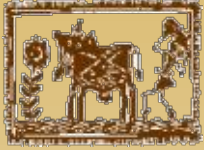
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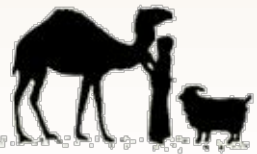
Donkeys – used mainly for transport. . . .



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Sheep



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Pastoralists . . .



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Thank you!



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