

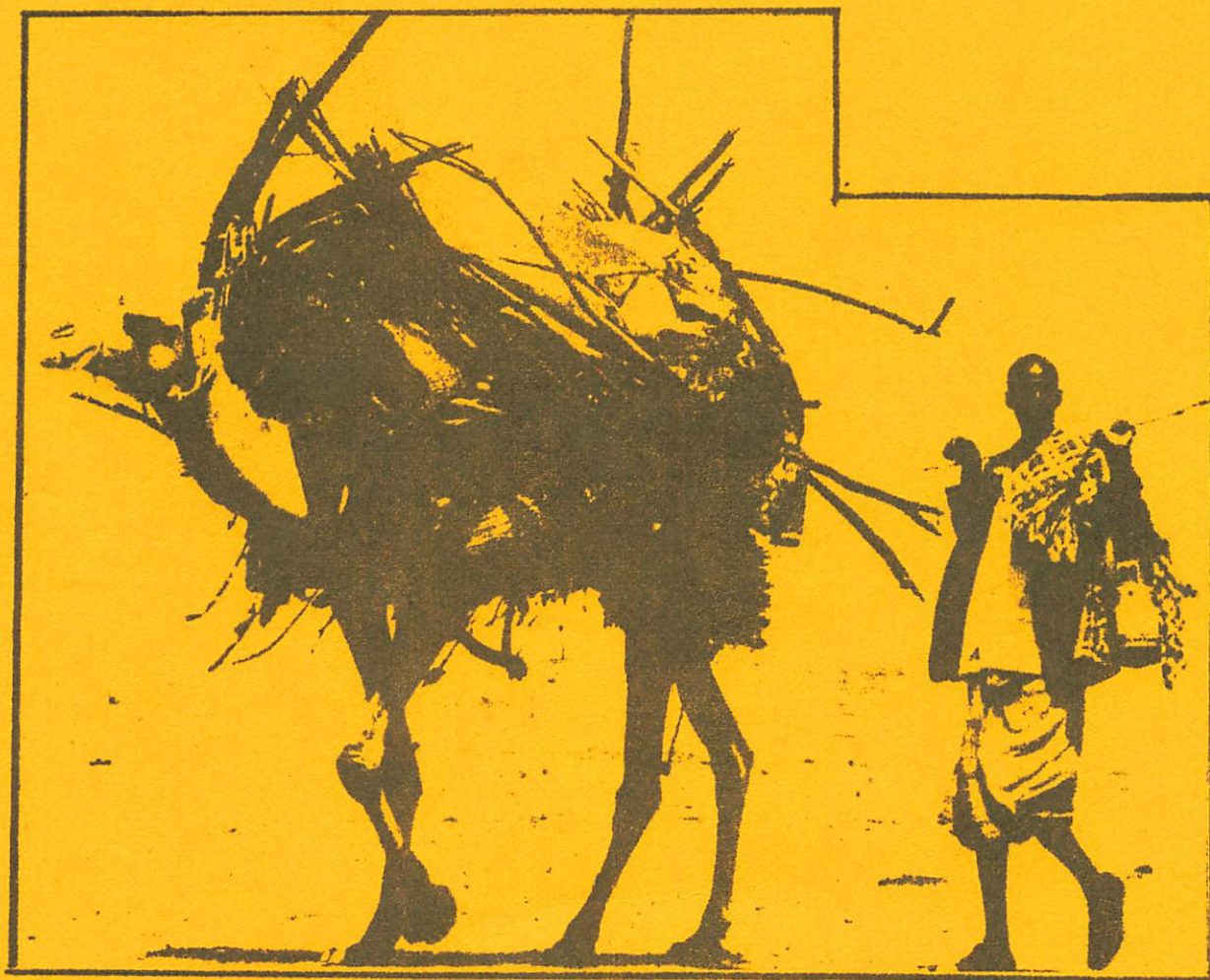
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CENTRAL RANGELANDS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION SERVICE

PAMPHLET NO : 1



PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

OF

SOMALIA RANGELANDS

PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SOMALIA'S RANGELANDS

THE CENTRAL RANGELANDS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 1981 - 5

INTRODUCTION.

1. This small pamphlet is about the Central Rangelands of Somalia and it will discuss proposals to attempt improvement in the area by a project which is proposed to work in the regions of Hiiran, Galgudud and Mudug during the period 1981 to 1985. The three regional headquarters will be at Beledwein, Dusa-Mareb and Galkayo.
2. The project will receive money from the Somalia government as well as from the World Bank of the United Nations, the United States of America, and the Federal Republic of Germany.
3. It is expected also that the Somali people who live in the area will help by taking part in the discussion about what needs to be done and how to do it, and for this reasons a mobile training service (called a Non-Formal Service) will be created in each region and later in some districts in order that all livestock owners will know what is proposed and may take part in the planning of improvements.
4. It is this Non-Formal Service which will become the voice of the project and the ear for the livestock owners to talk to. Since the trees and the grasses have no voice, then we will all have to think for them also. This pamphlet is the first publication of the non-formal service.
5. Although the non-formal service is called a training service, it is not like the usual training or educational system. It is designed to receive knowledge from the livestock owners as well as studying their needs and their problems. It will also explain to the livestock owners the proposals of the project and try to reach, together with the livestock owners, agreement on the best way to do things.
6. There are many serious problems. They are not new problems, although perhaps some of them are more serious now than they were when the old men were young, or in the days of the past. Let us look at some of these problems together. Afterward you can decide if there are any which have been missed or forgotten. These problems are :-

- a. Populations are probably increasing due to the use of medicines and to refugee problems. The production of milk & meat has to be divided amongst more people.
- b. There have been several years of serious shortages of rain in the last ten years. Even in 1980 the rains did not arrive at their expected time.
- c. When the rains do arrive, Somalia does not have a lot of rainfall. It is therefore necessary to try to make use of every drop.
- d. Although Somalia does not have a lot of rainfall, it is often the case that the rain arrives in heavy storms. Much of the water then rushes away down the sand rivers and is lost. At the same time rushing water will carry good soil away and cause deep gulleys to spread more widely. Sheet erosion, that is the creation of flat bare areas, will also spread if the water does not soak in to encourage plant life.
- e. Good water points are many kilometres away from each other in many large areas. This means that livestock either stay close to the water causing wider sheet erosion, or that they walk long distances between their food areas and the water, causing a loss of energy in the livestock and probable soil erosion on the stock-routes in some types of soil.
- f. The needs of cooking, housebuilding and livestock-protection fencing also come from the rangelands. In many areas trees are now scarce.



IN MANY AREAS TREES ARE NOW SCARCE.

- g. Lack of shade from the hot sun is a problem. Many more good shade trees are needed. Animals need shade for health.
 - h. Important roads to district Headquarters may need improving for communication and supply purposes.
 - i. Where water points are operating they often need large storage tanks, quicker distribution to troughs, & more troughs, with an organized method for efficient watering. They also need to be kept clean since animals also need clean water.
7. Those are some of the problems as seen by the project. The project is part of the National Range Agency, and we would all be glad to hear if there are more problems which are considered to be of equal or greater importance. You can give us any information through your district committees or Range Educators.
8. A separate pamphlet. (No: 2) will tell you about the actual proposals which have been made for the Central Rangelands. These proposals you can also discuss in order to see if they are the best solutions. Before this, let us have a look at (discuss). The general methods which are thought to be helpful to rangeland and livestock improvement.

IMPROVEMENT & PROTECTION METHODS

9. a. The main way to improve rangeland is to close it, that is to give it a rest in order that it can recover its energy. The best or only time to do this is in the rains. This means that areas have to be planned and prepared for closure before the rains start. It is even better, usually, to close areas completely for two rains, without opening the area at all. There will be some areas where great benefit would follow closure for two full years, that is, normally, four rain periods. If the rain fails, then the areas chosen have to be closed later when the rain does arrive. As we all know, this will require patience and long-term planning so that everything is ready when the rain actually comes.

It is Nature's way that life needs rest. Man needs rest and we have the wonderful gift of sleep. If a man is ill, then rest is one of his medicines. The rangelands are the same.

b. Because the rangelands are in use by everyone, it is not possible for one family to decide to close an area in order to rest it. Someone else may have different ideas and the area would still be used. It is very important, therefore, that some human organization is created which can make decisions about the areas which are to be closed. In the North of Somalia groups of livestock families with interest in the same district or area have formed themselves into Grazing Associations, and these Associations are able to discuss with the Non-Formal Service and the Range Technical Officers, the areas for closure and the methods of control. The Grazing Associations should act for all the livestock owners who are interested in the area. Range Guards can then be provided by NRA to help control the closed areas. Range Technical Officers should advise the Grazing Associations and discuss with them the correct times for re-opening the controlled areas.

c. How large should the closed areas be ? In other words what percentage of rangeland area should be closed for rest and regrowth. The answer is that the area should be as large as possible. During the rains, livestock should be concentrated as much as possible into special areas of temporary water supply. After the rains, some large areas should still remain closed for longer periods as discussed under para 9(a) above.

d. The general objects of closure are clearly understood to be :-

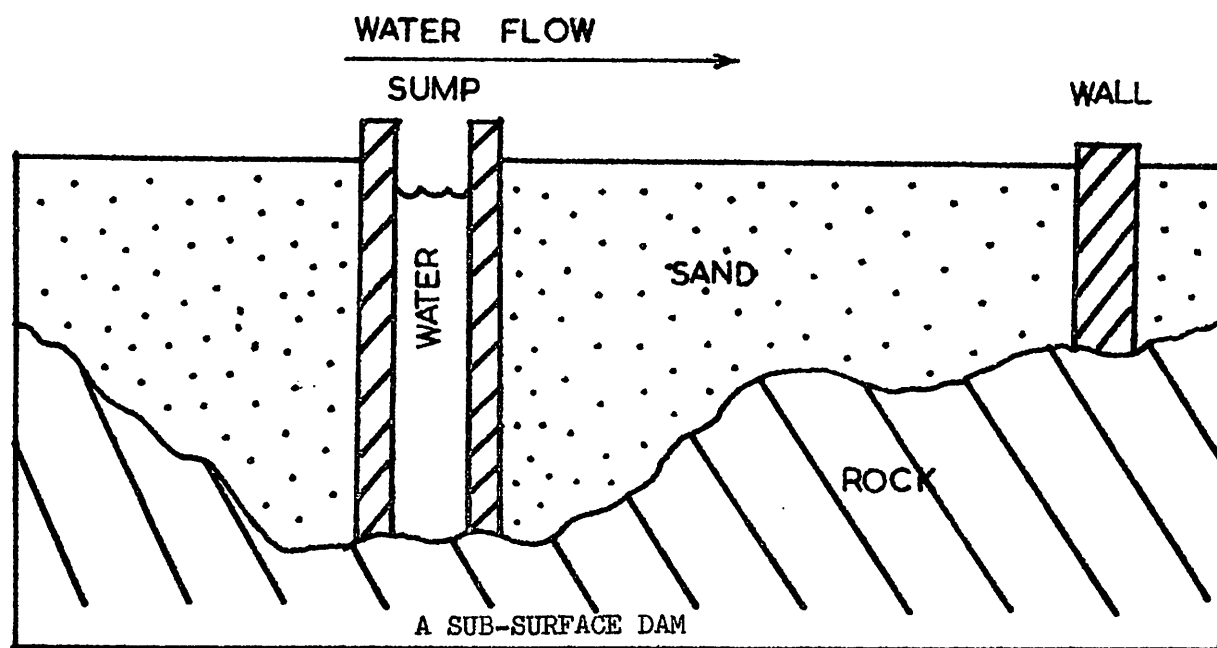
1. To allow leaf growth which then supports the vegetable life through the energy of the sun and so saves the plant from dying as well as providing extra food for animals.
2. To allow seed generation without grazing or trampling.
3. To allow better species to survive without being eaten out before they can seed themselves.
4. To encourage a better root system and ground cover in order that rainfall in the future will penetrate the soil with run-off therefore less erosion.

It has been shown in many parts of Africa that Nature is a marvellous doctor. Closing large areas in the rains allows Nature to do its work.

e. When large closures are made possible by the agreement of a wise people, then extra water points should be provided so that livestock can find water in the open areas and without having to walk long distances. In pamphlet No: 2 we will discuss the water development proposals for the Central Rangeland Project.

f. Where rangeland is under control it is also possible to use some of the flood water which follows heavy rain and to divert it from the sandrivers to flow over flat areas of soil or over areas protected by earthworks (bunds). These flooded areas will then be available for growing fodder crops for livestock. Similarly it is sometimes possible to find rocky or stony areas which will cause water to flow into nearby places which also have to be protected by bunds in order to grow fodder crops.

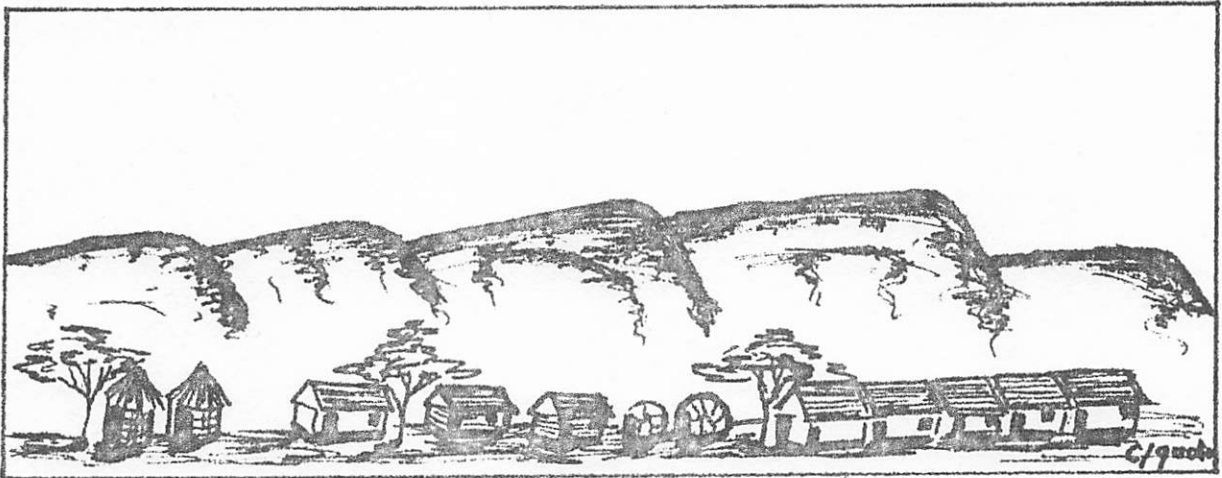
g. In small sand rivers there can be many possibilities for making sub-surface dams by finding rocky outcrops and building a concrete wall across the river. A sump, or well, into the sand, can then produce a lot of water. Concrete or stone walls across other small tributaries can also hold back soil & water, and if built in large numbers can improve the tree-shrub environment along the water course.



h. Finally, rangelands should be protected by livestock marketing. It is obvious that overstocking will cause damage to these dry areas. Increased sales of livestock, when they are in good condition, must be preferable to deaths of livestock from drought as happened in 1974 and 1975 and on many other occasions. The big question is how are all the livestock owners going to be able to agree about the percentage of animals which should be sold each year ?. Are there enough traders with money to buy the stock which is offered for sale ?.

SAND DUNE CONTROL.

10. The control of sand dune is a major problem and, later, a special booklet will be written about this.



MOVING SAND-DUNES CAN DESTROY VILLAGES.

SUMMARY.

11. It is believed that the rangelands of Somalia have been deteriorating over the last 100 years. Further deterioration could lead to the creation of deserts which are then impossible to improve. Action is needed by all the users of the rangelands to provide agreement upon what should be done and who is to take the responsibility for doing it. We all need to talk about these things and to find the solutions together. The NRA want to help. The CRDP wants to help in the Central areas. Above all, the Somali people need to find the answers to the common problems and to co-operate in doing the things which need to be done.
12. At present, nothing can be more important to Somalia than the protection of the rangelands. If the rangeland programme fails, Somalia will become another desert and the moving sand will cover the land.



RANGELAND GULLY EROSION



RANGELAND SAVANNAH

WE NEED TO CHANGE EROSION TO SAVANNAH IN SOMALIA
