Welcome to the first Newsletter from Lokhit Pashu Palak Sansthan (LPPS) during the second phase of the DRYNET network project. The second phase of the Drynet programme was launched in Santa Cruz, Bolivia from 18 to 21 January 2011. The meeting was attended by more than a dozen members of Drynet representing Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. It was followed by a training session on intercultural communication. Drynet II "A springboard for the promotion of resilience in drylands" has officially started its second phase on January 1, 2011 with funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Switzerland.

LPPS is part of this network which in this present phase consists of the following organizations from different parts of the world: Both ENDS Netherlands, CAREC Kazakhstan/Uzbekistan/Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan/Turkmenistan, CARI France, CENESTA Iran, DCG/DCG Mali, EMG South Africa, ENDA TM Senegal, GRET Madagascar, LPPS India, OLCA Chile, PROBIOMA Bolivia, SCOPE Pakistan, TENMIYA Mauritania and TEMA Turkey.

To effectively counter degradation, local organisations and communities living in drylands should be at the heart of the effort. DRYNET seeks to strengthen these groups and provide them a forum for placing their issues on a national and international platform.

If you would like to receive a print copy/electronic copy of LPPS newsletters, please send your contact details to: lpps@drynet.org

---

**Cultural Dynamics**

**The Cultural Stepping Stones Model**

by Jitske Kramer*

Cooperation between cultural strangers evokes questions and emotions, as this can challenge many things we have previously taken for granted. Experiencing behavior and thoughts that are at odds with ours can bring about sincere confusion. However, this provides us with great building blocks for change and personal growth, as our unconscious routines and conventions are challenged. But at the same time, the risk of conflicts and misunderstandings grows. These dynamics can be referred to as 'cultural dynamics', which I define as: The psychological and emotional effects of experiencing a cultural distance, and the processes set in motion to arrive at a new balance and to find a new way to manage the (cultural) dilemmas, paradoxes and polarities.

Working internationally, it is important to understand how to facilitate people in managing these cultural dynamics. This means being aware of your personal routines, assumptions and judgments, as well as having an understanding of the cultural dynamics involved in working together with 'cultural strangers'.

**Three phases of the intercultural interaction process**

Experiencing differences is coupled with
The other’s ‘being different’ confronts us with our own habits, norms and values. Cultural dynamics involves feelings, perceptions, misunderstandings and power struggles, and can become very complex. To get to grips with these processes, I designed the Cultural Stepping Stones model (Figure 1).

The Cultural Stepping Stones describe three phases of an intercultural interaction process. The needs in each phase are different, requiring a different focus and approach.

There is a certain sequence to the phases, but one step does not necessarily lead to the next; this will differ per person and situation. Sometimes, people jump back and forth through the phases; sometimes, certain aspects will require extra time and attention. The Cultural Stepping Stones model starts with a meeting between two cultural strangers, in which they are confronted by different behaviors and thoughts, throwing them out of their routines.

This can be very refreshing, stimulating curiosity about each other. Unfortunately, however, people often react emotionally to the uncertainty that then arises; especially when the pressure is high and important issues are at stake.

The first cultural stepping stone therefore deals with emotional reactions to the unknown. This phase is about Opening up. To further explore the situation, it is essential to be open to differences, to allow the exploration of misunderstandings, frictions or possible issues of exclusion. We need to recognize differences and emotions and to reframe negative feelings and judgments into a more neutral and positive attitude.

The second phase, Exploring, requires a curious and open mind. Judgments should be put aside and situations explored from different perspectives: our own, the other’s, and that of mutual interaction.

Through this triple perspective, we can see and compare images of reality, compare and contrast cultural frames of reference and take a closer look at the interaction process, in order to which tensions and misunderstandings need to be resolved. Interpretations of underlying intentions and needs are made explicit.

The next step in the process is to create solutions for those matters that need to be resolved in order to ease the tensions. In general, this is about questions such as: how will the team cooperate, how will we manage the differences and how will we put these into use?

During this phase of Creating, we search for creative solutions in order to work well with the differences. Defining and exploring the different perspectives and searching for ways to solve misunderstandings, making sure everyone can participate. This often means finding new ways to manage polarities, dilemmas and paradoxes.

Creating ways to work and live with differences

Contrasts create movement. The essential task during the creating phase is to combine the similarities and bring together and manage the differences.

This demands attitudes and skills that are part of creative problem solving. It needs a willingness to create a climate in which people are invited to think outside the box. During this process assumptions are challenged and (cultural) truths are tackled in a respectful and playful manner, creating the space to arrive at new ways and to implement agreements. The targets, goals and reasons why people are together serve as guidelines for reaching an agreeable way to interact and build relationships. Following the Exploring stepping stone, which is pretty free from obligations, emotions can arise again during the Creating phase due to power differences and power play.

It is important to realize that this step is about creating the best way to deal with the differences, and not about who has to adapt to whom, who is ‘right’ or who has the ‘best conduct’. If managing the differences leads to a power struggle over principles or politics, you will be in a difficult situation. If, for example, a team discusses the question of whether Italian Feliciana should from now on be as punctual as her German colleague Klaus, or whether Klaus should deal with the deadlines in a more relaxed way, the creative challenge becomes an ‘either/or’ problem.
LPPS-Drynet Workshop on Camel Products Development and Marketing

On April 15 2011, a National Level Workshop on Camel Products Development and Marketing was held at LPPS, Sadri.

A pre-workshop event was held the previous day when children from a local school were invited to participate in a drawing session using the camel dung paper made in the new papermaking unit on site. The children drew images inspired by their surroundings and these drawings were displayed during the workshop held the next day.

On April 15 2011 the delegates attending the workshop were welcomed by Mr Hanwant Singh Rathore, the Director of LPPS, and he introduced the theme of the workshop “Camel Products Development and Marketing”. In Sadri region the fodder area is reduced, added to which the Kumbalgarh Sanctuary will become a national park thereby further reducing fodder availability for camel grazing. Mr Rathore said that there is scientific evidence to prove that camels do not damage the forest. He added that with the decline in camel populations in some regions, it was necessary to take steps to ensure that the next generation retains interest in the profession of camel rearing.

An introduction was provided by Dr. Ilse Köhler-Rollefson to the theme of the workshop. She mentioned that the camel population has been decreasing by 20% every five years, except in Jaisalmer district where the camel population has increased by 26.5% according to the last census. LPPS has been working in Jaisalmer district and some of the activities it has initiated are to prevent camel thefts, provide health care and raise the economic profile of camel breeding.

Some of the actions that are necessary according to her to conserve camel populations were: a. To reduce theft, and form a task force for this purpose; b. To address livestock health issues; c. To try and do something to prevent accidents like put up camel warning signs, and prosecute offenders who cause accidents.

Dr. N.V. Patil, Director of the National Research Centre on Camel asked the audience what were the economic benefits being passed on to the owners.

Kamal Kishore of the Rainfed Livestock Network gave a presentation of the Task Force on value addition of camel wool in Rajasthan. He said the speciality of camel wool is that the colour range is very wide. They have created a range of products which had been displayed at various fairs, and met with a good response. How to raise the income of camel owners is a supplementary issue.

Dr Ilse Köhler-Rollefson gave a presentation on camel milk. Advantages of the milk were described. Camel milk is marketed in Kenya, and in Dubai camel milk chocolate is produced; however, she mentioned that camel milk marketing is not working out the way it had been envisaged because there was no support forthcoming from the relevant agencies.

A group discussion took place later. The topic was “Why do we need camels? Why not sell them all to Dubai?”

A world café process was used to enable discussion – teams were divided into groups and sat at round tables like in a café. There were four groups. Each team presented their opinions, and a discussion ensured. The recommendations that emerged from the workshop appear in the table overleaf.
Recommendations for Rajasthan State Government to support camel conservation

by Participants of a National Level Workshop on Camel Product Development and Marketing held at LPPS in Sadri in 15th March, 2011

In a one day workshop held on 15th March, 2011, the participants which included camel herders, scientists from National Research Centre on Camel, Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (RAJUVAS), Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI), Department of Animal Husbandry, national and international NGOs, discussed the continued importance of the camel as a source of livelihood for rural people and as an adjunct to agriculture.

They noted the potential of the camel for a range of innovative and appealing products that can create added income for camel breeders as well as provide the basis for a wide range of income generating cottage industries in the Thar Desert. The participants also expressed concern about the continuing decline of the camel population in Rajasthan, while also noting that this decline has been halted in Jaisalmer district where LPPS has implemented a number of measures to strengthen the camel economy.

They issued the following recommendations to retain the camel as part of Rajasthan’s heritage and biological diversity:

Grazing Issues
1. Identify locations of large camel herds and declare reserves for camel pastures in collaboration between camel herders, animal husbandry department, revenue department and forest department.
2. To this end, the government should constitute a task force composed of different stakeholders to look into the grazing reserves.
3. The implementation of the Forest Rights Act for graziers must be given explicit backing by the government.
4. Environmental services by herders (such as prevention of forest fires) should be recognized. Enquire about frequency of forest fires through RTI.
5. The camel must be included in the Famine Code.
6. There is an urgent need to address the encroachment of orans (e.g. Badhria).
7. Conversion of the Kumbalgarh Sanctuary into a national park needs to consider the customary grazing rights of the Raika and other camel, sheep, and goat herders.
8. The eradication of Lantana and Prosopis juliflora (angrezi babul) must be pursued in the context of MGNREGA.

Camel health services
1. Disease surveillance and monitoring (district level units) must be improved by means of district level units.
2. Multifacility centres for livestock keepers should be instituted along migration routes.
3. Provisions should be made for a special vaccine cover for camels.
4. The possibility of micro-chipping of camels should be looked into.

Income/Marketing
5. Camel milk should be sponsored as health drink for school children under the government’s midday meal programme.
6. Development of camel dairy under RKVY (including processing and chilling, marketing through media, extension).
7. There needs to be a centrally sponsored scheme for camel development (including products, even meat) — implementation to be discussed; should include task force.
8. Education for children should include camel.

Mr. W.M.K. Waris 1955-2010

LPPS regrets to announce the untimely demise of Mr. Waris December 23, 2010. With over 28 years of experience in varied capacities in the dairy and poultry sector, as well as in grassroots level organisations like AFPRO.

Mr. Waris provided his expertise to LPPS as consultant on projects. He also provided his valuable inputs for the Drynet workshop in 2009.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Camel Charisma will have a stall at Dastkar’s Nature Bazaar from 8-19th October 2011 at the Craft Bazaar, Pragati Maidan, Bhairo Road, Delhi, where they will sell dhurries, doormats, shawls from camel wool, as well as artwork on camel dung paper and a selection of camel milk soaps. For more information contact: camel.charisma@yahoo.com

7th International Microinsurance Conference. 8 to 10 November 2011 - Hotel Sheraton, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This event is hosted by the Munich Re Foundation and the Microinsurance Network. Around 500 participants and experts including NGOs and aid agencies and from around the world will exchange experiences and discuss the challenges of microinsurance. www.microinsuranceconference.org/2011.
Demonstration against the non-implementation of the Forest Right Act 2005 for the Raikas

"Humein bheek nahi, adhikaaar chahiye!" chanted JogiRam ji, a Raika community member while hundreds behind him followed him with equal vigour. Thousands of Godwad Raikas from as many as 60 villages in Pali District have had enough and are demanding their rights to graze their animals.

The Raikas are an indigenous semi-nomadic pastoral community in Rajasthan, whose livelihood is dependent on their customary rights on forest land and village common property for grazing camel, sheep goat and cattle. They have been generations-long custodians of traditional knowledge regarding breeding and have also been maintaining the biodiversity of the landscape. Though The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 recognizes the rights of other traditional forest dwellers, including nomadic or settled pastoralists, the Raikas are left out when it comes to implementation of the Act.

Since the area sought for grazing comes within the boundary of the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, implementation of the Act for the benefit of the Raikas becomes even more complicated since various other contradictory prohibitions are placed on areas declared as National Parks or Sanctuaries.

In the case of the Rajasthan State Forest Department, a ruling passed by the Supreme Court suggest exactly the opposite of that promised with the FRA, prohibiting grazing of sheep, goats and camel within areas demarcated as Wildlife Sanctuary. So, while it allowed cows and buffaloes to graze freely on forest land, it prohibited the smaller animals. The Raikas happen to be the majority keepers of these small animals.

Shrinking sizes of common property due to land grabs by both, the Government, and illegal dwellers supported by local politicians have already reduced grazing space for this community. The State Forest Department, following the rulings of the SC have disallowed the Raikas to access forest land for grazing their livestock. But instead of completely making the area off-limits for them, the Forest Department, in collaboration with local politicians started levying a fine for accessing the forest. So while last year, the Raikas paid Rs 2.50 per goat to enter the forest area, this year the same was decided to be increased to Rs 25 per goat. Local politicians negotiate on behalf of the Raikas, but hardly in consultation with them. Livelihood of the local pastoral community thus, is left entirely at the mercy of the local politicians and Forest Department's whims. Contradictory rulings and clauses passed by the Supreme Court and the Government alike make it impossible to understand the intricacies of the Act and gain from the privileges that the Act sought to provide. In the name of 'saving the forests', the Forest Department found an easy way to earn money: 'Tax the Desperate'.

All this culminated into a massive gathering on the 19th of August 2011 at Sadri, Pali District of the Raika community. Thousands of men women children left their day’s work and came from all across the district to be a part of this massive rally. They also brought their wealth- the animals that they were fighting for, with them.

Women, as much (perhaps more) as the men, were fiercely raising their voice against the Forest Department and the DFO. While one hand clung to a child on her hips, Dayabai, with a mike in the other, led a host of women and men in their chants against 'rishwatbaji' or bribery. The local MLA, Pushpendra Singh Ranawat representing BJP was present at an initial gathering ahead of the rally, and expressed his solidarity with the cause. He also promised to take up the cause at the Vidhan Sabha session on the 23rd of this month.

The Raikas though, seemed to have had enough of these empty promises. They want to see some tangible results this time. The gathering seemed to be driven by a central motive: "Include us in your decision making process. If we have to pay for our goats and sheep to enter the forest, ask us how much we can afford to pay, before finalising a price. Our animals are our wealth. Don't deprive us of our wealth by keeping the animals hungry. We want
Camel-dung Paper making unit inaugurated at LPPS campus

On April 16, 2011, the inauguration of the camel dung papermaking unit established at the LPPS campus in Sadri took place.

Mr Gulab Kothari, Editor of Rajasthan Patrika was the Chief Guest.

The District Collector of Pali as well as the head of the Political department of the German Embassy were attending.

A felicitation of personalities took place in traditional Rajasthani manner. This was followed by the official release of a book on camel histology edited by Dr. T.K. Gahlot. Mr. Hanwant Singh Rathore addressed the audience. This was followed the inauguration of the camel dung papermaking unit.

Above: View of dignitaries during inauguration ceremony. Below left: Watching the process of preparing paper from camel dung. Below right: Camel wool products also on display at the event.
Banni grasslands, Banni Buffalo and the Maldharis to be showcased in Livestock Fair

Banni, the finest grassland ecosystem in India found in the state of Gujarat, has its long symbiotic association with the local pastoral community who are the curators of the Banni Buffalo Breed and custodian of other animal genetic resources like Kankrej Cattle, Sindh Horse, Sheep, Goat and Camel.

The Banni buffalo has been developed with extraordinary features due to special care and attention of animal breeders with strong wisdom about grassland ecology and their livestock. Banni buffalo which was raised in this grassland has typical quality of night grazing ranges from 8-10 k.m. every day during monsoon which increased to 15 km during stress period in summer.

Being faced with three years droughts in every five years cycle, the Banni buffalo can survive in water stress conditions and adopted very well with limited grasses to feed. The unique ecosystem of Banni grassland where this buffalo fed on various types of grasses resulted in high milk production. Banni buffalo is being considered as one of the most economic animals with high milk yielding capacity by feeding local resources with very low external inputs. Recent study indicated that average lactation yield of Banni Buffalo is 2857 litres with high fat content. Similarly, grasses of Banni make this buffalo healthy enough to produce offspring every year with first calving at the age of 3 years and attain peak yield 38 days after calving.

Pastoralists have a lot to teach the rest of the world when it comes to adapting harsh climatic conditions. They could be the first to conquer climate variation if they are not forced to leave up pastoralism since they have capabilities to cope up with extreme climatic conditions.

Four years ago when the pastoral community of Banni organized 1st Banni Pashu Mela, they wanted to showcase their treasures, Banni Buffalo and exquisite handicraft of the people, and to organize their community to bring them in the umbrella of Banni Pashu Uchherak Maldharis Sangathan (Banni Breeders' Association).

Today, Banni Breeders’ Association, with the help of University, Research Institute, and civil societies, has been able to get recognition of Banni Buffalo as 11th Breed of the country, the first ever buffalo breed to get national recognition since independence. Recently, Maldharis of Banni developed their Bio-Culture Protocol, a commentary of their pastoral way of life, the past and present and their ray of hope for future.

The 5th Pashu Mela (Livestock Fair) to be held in October 2011 will showcase not only pastoral lifestyle, their interaction with Banni ecosystem, but also bring out their traditional knowledge on conservation and sustainable utilization of Banni.

The livestock fair will have livestock keepers and traders attending to purchase high quality animals, Banni Buffalo, Kankrej Cattle, Horse and Camel. Various competitions, like animal milking, animal fitness, animal decoration, Exhibitions/ film shows will be organized to display lifestyle of pastoral communities who lives with nature and nurture. They will voice their concern, particularly their grazing rights and rights to live their own traditional way of living. - Information provided by the Banni Breeder's Association.

The Banni Breeder's Association will hold a Pashumela (livestock fair) at Banni on 15 & 16th October 2011 at village Hodko (Banni) Taluka Bhuj, Kacchh District, Gujarat.

For further information contact : Dr. Pankaj Joshi (Cell phone: 09099974383) or Mr. Kiran Patel (Cell phone :09099974378). Saleh Mamad Halepotra, President, BPUMS, Banni, Kachchh.

Email: bpums4@gmail.com

Scenes from last year's Banni Pashumela
Interview
Dr. N.V. Patil, Director, National Research Centre on Camel (NRCC), Bikaner, Rajasthan

What are the thrust areas for research in the arid and semi-arid regions of India over the next ten years, and how does the NRCC envisage its role currently within this context, and in the future?

Efforts may be efficient use of natural resources available in the region to improve the productivity of agricultural components – Crops, Livestock and sustained despite climate change threats.

To evolve the technologies using local resources with the help of local communities to improve livelihood and protect environment in the region.

The species specific institute NRCC is identified with the animal, “Camel” and it is dedicated for conduct of researches and innovations for the benefit of camel species and camel rearing people in particular. In order to popularize the technologies developed in the Centre and to impart training and create awareness in the people involved in Camel Rearing communities and people in general the activities were taken up in the Centre.

What are the two recent major innovations or research outcomes from your institute which are of particular significance to you and to the cause of research on camels?

The institute has come out with convincing facts to pose camel as a milch animal and the milk potential of the camel can substantially support the milk demand of the region. The technology of reproduction has helped to reduce the period between two calvings which can help the animal to reproduce quickly and the loss of number in the population can be recovered fast. Rasagulla and traditional Raabri (sweet dishes) prepared from camel milk can prove to be important from the value addition point of view.

Do you think camel milk marketing is impossible in India? I believe camel milk is no longer supplied in Delhi – why is this? Is there any effort on to make it available again?

It is not impossible but there is need of collective and coordinated efforts from producer, processing and marketing people. The supply of camel milk in Delhi has been stopped by the agency which was engaged in processing and marketing because the quantity of milk available for processing was less than the capacity of the processing vats. The efforts are on to make it available through interested agencies.

How did the programme of the camel ambulatory services come about – and is it being used by Raika or other camel pastoralists? What are the institute’s experiences in this regard?

The Camel Ambulatory Service was made functional in the camel populated areas around Bikaner to cater the need of health and management service required by the camel rearing population. There is huge response to the service offered and people are making use of expertise from all disciplines of Camel Husbandry and Health Management people of NRCC.

Is there any new development regarding the recommendations that were put forth at the workshop at Sadri?

The issues regarding Common Property Resources, Health Management etc. were discussed in the Institute Research Advisory Committee meetings and also with the stakeholders involving Director, Department of Animal Husbandry, Rajasthan and progressive farmers and Camel rearing people and their representatives.

Contd. from Page 2

Cultural Dynamics....

The strongest person, the majority or the one with the highest status or the biggest mouth will win this battle; which doesn't necessarily lead to improvements in teamwork.

The question should be: how can Klaus and Feliciana work together, optimizing their personal time management strengths? Figure 2 shows the four ways in which it is possible to arrive at solutions to deal with the differences: no way, my way, your way a new way. The way you chose will depend on the importance of the mutual goal and relationships in the short-term and the long-term, and the interests of the other.

The 'new way' strategy can unleash amazing positive energy, creativity and innovation. It asks of people to be open to new realities, think and/and instead of either/or. If people are ready to take on the challenge to manage polarities differently the true potential of cultural dynamics can flourish.

*Jitske Kramer holds a Master’s Degree in Cultural Anthropology. She has vast experience in facilitating (culture) change and in training and coaching people who work across cultural borders (e.g. international managers, expats). In 2006, she set up the international network organisation HumanDimensions. HumanDimensions is an Associated Practice of the ViralChange™ network, which has developed a method for achieving real changes in behaviour within organisations quickly and effectively.

This article was part of the training material during the workshop held at Santa Cruz, Bolivia in January 2011 for Drynet members.