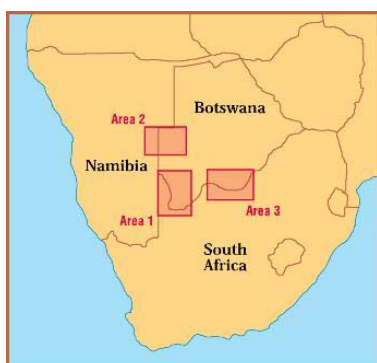


Community Feedback- rationale and methods

Objectives

- To tell communities what we found out about their lives from our work with them over the last three years
- To give communities a chance to comment on, update or re-emphasise issues of importance or change in their lives
- To collate community feedback and incorporate it into regional and international policy meetings



Research areas:

1 Arid southwest:

- a) Mier, South Africa
- b) SW Kgalagadi, Botswana

2. Semiarid northwest:

- a) Ghanzi Dist, Botswana
- b) Omaheke, Namibia

3. Dry sub-humid southeast:

- a) NW Province South Africa,
- b) Barolongs, Botswana

No. 1F

PANRUSA Briefing Notes

PANRUSA, Poverty Policy and Natural Resource Use in Southern Africa. A DFID funded research project at the University of Sheffield UK.

This briefing provides an overview of the PANRUSA project community feedback meetings that were held in July 2001. The PANRUSA team visited each study area and held a series of local public meetings with research participants. In Botswana and Namibia relevant government, policy and NGO personnel were also invited to attend in-country policy meetings.

Rationale

The rationale behind the community feedback meetings was to report back findings to communities in all study areas, and to facilitate discussion and comment on the transfer of best practices between communities in neighbouring countries.

The meetings focused on the transfer of project findings between parties at local and regional levels. For example a meeting in Bokspits, SW Botswana would include findings from other locations in the region as well as comparison with research findings, where appropriate, from across the border in South Africa. Comments from the meetings were collated and incorporated into regional and international policy meetings.

Kgotla meeting in Khawa, SW Botswana



Community Meetings

The meetings varied in different areas according to community preference, logistics and research findings.

The aims of the meetings in all areas were:

1. Present key findings from PANRUSA research including locally specific findings as well as drawing on relevant experiences from neighbouring study sites.
2. Afford communities the opportunity to comment, correct and feedback on any aspect of the research or findings.
3. Facilitate discussion between parties (government, NGO, community) on key issues identified in 1 by giving participants the opportunity to highlight issues which should be taken forward to regional and international policy meetings co-ordinated by the PANRUSA project.

Meetings were organised with the generous help of our many collaborators and research partners in all the study areas.

Community meeting in village hall, Logageng, NW Province, South Africa



Meeting Format

All meetings began with a prayer and formal introductions. We started by reminding people who we were, what we were doing there and explained the purpose of the meeting.

We then gave a regional introduction identifying the three common regional factors that people identified as having shaped through time their present day livelihoods. This reflected the different stories of people's lives as told in the interviews.

To report back our main findings we then focused on 3 themes.

- The rangeland and farming environment (inc. farming practices such as fencing, use of fertilisers on arable fields etc)

Using visual aids to help introduce the PANRUSA research team. Bokspits Kgotla, SW Botswana



- Farming as a livelihoods (how people manage or not to get an income from farming or related activities)
- Policy frameworks and changes (e.g. stories of land allocations and local interpretations of land policies, safety net policies etc)

Community feedback

We emphasised that the findings came from the information people had told us in interviews and meetings, and therefore should reflect their own lives and interpretations of events. We stressed that we wanted comments on what we had understood or emphasised correctly, where we had misunderstood issues and what had perhaps changed since our previous visits. Communities were told that these feedback sessions would contribute directly to both national and international policy meetings and that we would ensure that their priorities and concerns were on the agenda for discussion.

Briefing Note 13 gives full details of the priorities and concerns expressed by the communities in the feedback meetings.

PANRUSA was funded by the UK Government Department for International Development, and conducted by researchers at the University of Sheffield, UK, in conjunction with researchers from Africa.

The PANRUSA website is <http://www.shef.ac.uk/panrusa>
Staff can be contacted by email at d.s.thomas@sheffield.ac.uk
d.sporton@sheffield.ac.uk
c.twyman@sheffield.ac.uk
Fax: +44 114 279 7912



Views expressed in this briefing note are those of PANRUSA and not necessarily of DFID
PANRUSA Briefing Note 1F, July 2001