



Trip Report: A Productive Safety Net for Northern Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands: The HSNP+ Program

Kenya: July 31 – August 28, 2009

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Left Syracuse for Nairobi via London July 31, arrived Nairobi evening of August 1st. We rented a flat for the month in the Adams Arcade neighborhood, so were taken there upon arrival. "We" is the operative pronoun here, as my family joined me on this trip to have a family visit while I worked in Kenya for the month.

We spent Sunday adapting to the power and water shortages that are currently gripping Kenya and doing some shopping. After the power came back in the evening, I spent some time getting internet access up and running, and by late evening I was able to send and receive e-mail.

Monday the second I went to ILRI and checked in with Andrew and Nobu. I also got a vehicle from ILRI, the old PARIMA vehicle, to use for transport around town. Andrew, Nobu and I looked over the computer equipment I had brought over, and we talked about the pros and cons of different hardware options. We started to come up with a plan for my time there. Given the delay in getting the computer equipment delivered, we decided to move that to the end of the visit and work on meeting DFID and going over the baseline survey first. Of course, that ran into the delay that we could not get OPM to send us an updated copy of the survey form. So for the moment, we set up the computers to test battery life to see what kinds of constraints we would face in the field.

Tuesday the third through Thursday the fifth I was again at ILRI, checking in on e-mail, and following up on some student internship reports that were coming in from Syracuse and tending to some article reviews that were due. At this point, we were blocked on multiple fronts by a set of delays. We set up a meeting with Sammy Keter of the HSNP program for Friday as a way to start resolving some of these blocks, but continued to wait for OPM to send us survey forms, wait the computer equipment to arrive from Syracuse, and wait for the programmer at Davis to finish up the Game Web version of the insurance game we were to play.

Friday the seventh, Andrew, Nobu, Sammy and I met at the ABC Java house. We finally got a chance to figure out exactly what was going on with the sites. This was the first glimmer of resolution in the visit. We got sorted out who was doing what where and what methodology was being used in each site. We went back to ILRI in the afternoon and checked our understanding of what Sammy said against each other (he speaks quietly and we were in an open air restaurant!) and used this as the foundation of a summary and plan. Friday night I worked on this (in and around power outages and internet disasters) and sent an attachment 'meeting with Sammy write up' to the larger team. I also got an e-mail from

Calum Turvey asking if the people who presented in our session at the AAEA meetings in Milwaukee would be interested in submitting to the journal Agricultural Finance Review. I contacted the other two authors and told him I would follow up.

Monday the tenth we met again at ILRI. Andrew contacted David Ferrand to find out why the DFID money had not been released, he contacted Karen to see if the survey was available, and I contacted Travis Lybbert at Davis to see how the programming was coming along. A series of e-mails on budgeting for my other project in Mali consumed much of the morning as we waited for things to move along with the Kenya project. We met in the afternoon to revisit the sampling strategy and discuss site selection. Nobu sent out some maps to the larger team based on these discussions. We came up with the proposal for the IBLI A and IBLI B approach to see if there was a way to test the extension methodology and generate an additional project finding in the shorter term while waiting for the longer term findings to come in.

Tuesday through Thursday I set up details on my coming trip to Addis (consulting for DFID on a different project) and a family weekend getaway to Mombasa. I also continued to meet with Andrew and Nobu to sort out game details. I did some online research into pico projectors, which I think may be useful for the extension effort in the field. On Wednesday, I sat for a while and took what we had been talking about and put it in the form of a workplan that I submitted to the AMA CRSP office. The budget and workplan for the coming fiscal year should now be in place. On Thursday, we finally got the survey forms from Karen, and in the evening we got the link for the finished product from the programmer in Davis. I got a chance to look them over / work with them some on Friday morning. However, the game had an issue with the security certificate that caused some delay and we had to work toward resolving this later. The survey forms required us to think some about how much we wanted to fix what we saw as problematic versus how much we wanted to make our work line up with OPM's work to ensure comparability in the data.

Monday the 17th through Thursday the 20th I worked with Peter Little and Getachew Gebru in Addis on a consulting job for DFID. The Prime Minister's economic advisor has asked for input on the future of pastoral policy in Ethiopia and we are working on that for them. I flew back to Nairobi at 4am on Friday morning the 21st, getting in around dawn.

After a rest in the morning of the 21st, I went to ILRI around noon and sorted out issues with ILRI transport for the final few days of our visit. Andrew, Nobu and I worked on the program that Travis had sent and started to identify what worked and what issues we saw for the game to make it to the field. We had a chance to revisit the timing of our schedule, and talk about the workplan as it was taking shape now that things were starting to come unblocked on a few fronts. We also discussed the feedback we had gotten from the US based team members and tried to work that into the workplan.

On the 22nd I took care of some paperwork on students at SU and caught up on budget details on the Mali project.

Sunday the 23th I met with Rachel Wheeler of IDS. We picked her up and went for lunch at the Animal Orphanage with my family. We got a chance to catch up and talk about work and life in general. We dropped her back in town in the afternoon where they had a meeting on the survey work.

Monday the 24th we sorted out the game software issues and we got the thing to work from start to finish. That was an accomplishment. We spend Monday and Tuesday testing it, and made some

suggestions for small changes for the programmer to work on. By the end of Tuesday, we felt pretty good about that part of it. On Monday afternoon, we revisited the survey forms and went over it question by question. I picked up Rachel on the morning of Tuesday the 25th, and brought her up to ILRI so we could meet with Nobu and Andrew about the survey work. We clarified a few issues we had about the survey. We also started a discussion about data sharing that we need to follow up on. We had further discussions based on feedback from the team members in the US about the field work timing and strategy based on e-mails back and forth summarizing what we discussed with Rachel and had come up with in our own meetings. Andrew and I worked some on the issue of sampling frame and subsidy schemes and sent on some issues to figure out for the larger team.

Wednesday the 26th we got a report that the computers had made it to Nairobi, but were still working their way out of customs. We sorted out further details of the workplan and began to wrap things up.

Thursday the 27th Nobu, Andrew, Helen and I met with Equity and UAP at the Equity headquarters in Upper Hill. This was a good chance to sort out who was doing what. It seemed pretty productive, and the ILO grant gave the meeting a focus. Helen was taking notes so she has many of the details. It seemed that by the end of the meeting a plan for action for the next steps was in place.

We flew out at midnight on Thursday night, back to Syracuse Friday evening the 28th of August.