



中国社会科学院社会学所
农村环境与社会研究中心

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development process ——A case in Inner Mongolia**

Li Fu (傅 丽)

School of Social Science & International Studies
University of New South Wales

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Local people: A role needs to be further identified in the development process —A case in Inner Mongolia

Li Fu (傅 丽)

(School of Social Science & International Studies
University of New South Wales)

Abstract: There is a near consensus among development theories and reflections on practice, that local people and communities have a vital role in the development process because of their knowledge and traditional practices, particularly in environmental and natural resource management. However, little qualitative research has been conducted to explore the implications and extent of local people's impacts on development on social and political contexts. This paper argues that 'local people' is an extendable concept. It is not an amorphous or a homogeneous group. Rather, local people are varied in their interests, relationships and social and political contexts. By analysing the impacts of stakeholders on a grassland management program in Inner Mongolia, this article suggests that local participation could have both positive and negative impacts because of diverse interests and internal power relationships. These impacts are embedded in a unique social and political context. A number of problems and tensions may result in local people not being as integrated into development processes as hoped for, such as the marginalisation of poor groups. This paper argues that the role of local people in the development process needs to be mapped with regard to their various impacts of different stakeholders. The paper concludes with an assessment of resource allocation as key to achieving just development processes and simultaneously making local participation more effective.

Key words: local people; development; stakeholders; environment; grassland management;

2

Introduction: two maps

In March 2003, the author had a chance to conduct a research for an grassland management project in Inner Mongolia. During the field work, the author was surprised by two maps of local village. One was an official map in household 'Grassland Responsibility and Management Certificates'. It showed the place and area of the every household grassland. The other one was a local map drawn by a local herder in interview during the Participation Rural Appraisal, which showed where the actual herding were. These two maps were divergent.

This interesting phenomenon inspired the author to explore the implications and the deep reasons behind these two maps. That was the origin of this paper. With the chance to work as a short-term expert for this grassland project, the author spent several months which last one and half year on this research with the methods of participated-observation, depth- interview and extensive literature research. Drawing on these data, this paper discusses the implications of local people's impacts on development interventions and

argues that uncritical and un-analysed local participation may generate more difficulties and could not achieve the hopeful social justice.

To explore the implications and extent of local people's impacts on development, the paper first presents a review of the literature on the role of local people. It argues that 'local people' is an extendable concept. It is not an amorphous and homogeneous group, but is a sum of diverse constituent parts that are quite varied in their interests, relationships and social and political contexts. Then it analyses the social and political context and outlines the Australia funded grassland management project. These backgrounds are where the stakeholders' interests and relationships and their impacts embedded in. The main body of this paper is analysing the shaping of these two maps, which present and analyse the different impacts of the local participation and the deep reasons behind these phenomenon. The paper closes with a summery and discussion on how to identify the role of local people in development process.

4

The paper does not attempt to expose or evaluate the project, or to have a broad critique of the region's development policies, or to discuss a better way to regulate the grassland. Neither does it intend to deny the vital role of local people in development process. Instead, the paper highlights some concerns and divergence of the impacts of local people and emphasizes distinguishing the real group who really need to be facilitated in development program activities.

The author keeps conducting field work since the participation of a garland management project in this area in 2003. The recent time is in July in 2008. The most data used in this paper are from this field work.

The role of local people in development theory and practice

Since the Second World War, development theory and practice have been experienced a long time of debate and discussion. Among these theories and practices, there are vary opinions about the role of local people in the development process.

There is a period that the role of local people was overlooked in development theories and practices, especially in many macro development theories, such as modernization theory (Rostow, 1960; Berman,1982; Hulme, D. and Tuner,1990; Heferman & Semlaer, 1992), world system theory (Wallerstein,1979) and globalization theory (Held & A.Mcgreg,2000; Held, 2000; Schuurman,2001). Many macro development theories focus on a macro and global perspectives and intend to find and discuss systematically trends of the whole world. Local people are considered as passive recipients rather than positive respondents in the development process.

With the failures and problems of many well-known and spectacular failure of top-down, expert-driven mega-development projects managed mostly at the national and international scale by nation-state and multilateral development banks, many scholars began to realize the role of local people and this quickly became a main trend in development theories and practice in 1990s. These projects were thought as mostly antidemocratic, socially unjust and ecologically destructive. For a instance, the North eastern Brazil Integration Development Program (Polonoroeste) held by World Bank in

1980s was criticised that it was nearly a disaster for local people because it exacerbated deforestation rates and human suffering, ignored the local conditions and destroyed local productions and culture (Hecht and Cockburn, 1990; Browder, 1994; Purcell and Brown, 2005). Another sign is the Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 (Purcell and Brown, 2005: 279). This document argues that “indigenous people and their communities and other local communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture, and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development (United Nations- Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1992: Principle 22). This document aroused and reflected a keen interest in local participation among scholars and policymakers concerned with environment and development.

Thus, throughout the 1990s and into the new century, researchers working on a range of development issues have increasingly argued that one key to achieving social justice and ecological sustainability is local knowledge and local participation (Peluso, 1992; Fairhead and Leach, 1996; Sundberg, 1998; Tsing et al., 1999; Perz, 2001; Scott, 2001;). In theories, with the discussion of local people, there is an increasing salience of the struggle between neoliberal globalization and its opponents. Over the past 30 years, neoliberal capitalism has become increasingly hegemonic by pursuing a strategy of globalization. Many assume that the best resistance to neoliberalism is counter-strategies of localization. They consider localization as a way to resist the increasing power of corporations (Mander and Goldsmith, 1996; Hines, 2000), and re-establish local places as bases for subaltern resistance to globalization (Escobar, 2001) and in the pervasive labelling of ongoing demonstrations against organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank as ‘anti-globalization’ protests rather than anti-corporate, anticapitalist or anti-neoliberal protests. They believe that localization leads to social justice and sustainability (Purcell and Brown, 2005). With the trend of localization, the decentralisation also quickly becomes a current fashion which is built on the assumption that it will result in decisions that reflect local needs and priorities (Devas and Grant, 2003).

In practices, Participation Approach has been widely used in development projects and related organizations. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) applications include natural resources management, agriculture, poverty and social programs, and health and food security. It describes a growing family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act. PRA has sources in activist participatory research, agroecosystem analysis, applied anthropology, field research on farming systems, and rapid rural appraisal (RRA) (Chambers, 1994).

In recent years, there are some further researches about the issues of local people and local participation because of the emerging problems. For the local knowledge, the ‘myth of primitive ecological wisdom’ of indigenous knowledge is criticized. It suggests that the primitive (of environment) is not an inherent ideology of indigenous people. It is created by several factors such as small population and relative isolation (Milton, 1996). Furthermore, the using of indigenous knowledge has emerged many problems including emanating from a focus on the (arte)factual; binary tensions between western science and

indigenous knowledge systems; the problem of differentiation and power relations; the romanticization of indigenous knowledge; and the all too frequent decontextualization of indigenous knowledge (Briggs, 2005).

For the participation approach, some scholars argue researchers and practitioners falsely assume that localized decision-making is inherently more socially just or ecologically sustainable. Localization leads to a complex set of social and environmental outcomes, rather than a guarantee of just or sustainable outcomes, all of which are the result not of localization itself, but of the diverse and undetermined agendas of those empowered by localization (Purcell and Brown, 2005). Participation can succeed for specific kinds of projects and programmes in favorable circumstances, but is unsuitable for many others. It commonly fails in contexts where local conditions make co-operative and collective action very difficult, or where it is manipulated by implementing agencies to justify their own actions or poor performance (Brett, 2003).

The debate of the role of local people in the development process still exists currently. It is really true that local people have a vital role in the development process. Moreover, no matter scholars realize it or not, the impacts of local people always exist. However, little qualitative research has been conducted to explore the implications and extent of local people's impacts on development interventions. Local people could respond to any external interventions by means embedded in social and political contexts. They should participate in development planning and decision making. Nevertheless, the local participation does not inherently mean successful development and social justice. First, 'local people' is an extendable concept. It does not only refer to one person or one group. On the contrary, it often includes many groups with complicated relationships. Second, these complicated groups could bring different impacts. Both positive and negative will result in local participation. Third, since it is embedded in social and political contexts, it is related to political and power relationship. It also determined the orientation and results of local participation. A number of problems and tensions may result in local people not being as integrated into development processes as hoped for, such as the marginalisation of poorer groups. The next parts will argue this opinion by presenting a case of grassland management in Inner Mongolia.

Social and political context of the case in Inner Mongolia

Environmental and poverty problem cross-stricken region

Located in northern China on the boundary between China, Mongolia and Russia, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (hereafter IMAR) is an important province in China. With the area of 1.183 million Square Km, IMAR occupies nearly 12.3% of China and is the third largest province. In 2006, it has more than 23.92 million people with 48 minorities including Mongolian, Hui and Man peoples. IMAR is the most important area of animal husbandry of China. The pastoral area occupies one fourth of the pastoral area of China. The natural resource of IMAR exhibits great geographical and ecological diversity.

However, since 1990s, IMAR has been experiencing more and more serious

environment degradation and grassland desertification. Every Spring since 1998, Beijing has been plagued by dust storms that are a direct result of large-scale desertification in the poverty-stricken regions of western and northern China. Inner Mongolia is one of the biggest contributors to this problem. This environmental problem has attracted international attention (Ho, 2005:157).

Population growth, overgrazing, natural disasters and inappropriate regulation are considered as the main reasons by many researchers (Williams, 2002; Ho, 2005; Taylor, 2006; Wang, 2006). An old herder recalled times in their youth when the grass was more than 1.5 meters high and they could not see each other when riding horses across the steppe. Today in this area the herbage height is less than fifty centimeters in early summer. Fifty years ago the population was 50 people and the sheep numbered 1,000. There are now over 600 people and 20,000 animals. IMAR is one of the most arid regions in China because of the big difference between average precipitation and evaporation. These disasters aggravate environmental degradation and desertification. Drought and sand storms have occurred nearly every year since 1990 as well as frequent snow disasters.

Overgrazing of the grassland has not increased much income for herders. On the contrary, the poverty problem is not less serious than environmental problems. Actually, poverty and the destruction of the natural environment are inextricably linked (Ho: 157, 2005). While IMAR has experienced economic development in recent decades, the level of development it has achieved is much lower than that in east and south China. The poor situation is worse in those desertification areas, especially in the semi-agriculture and semi-pastoral areas. In some national-level poor villages of the research site, the average annual net income per person is no more than 700 RMB in 2002. In family level, the poverty is represented by shortage of food and livestock, poor housing condition, owing debt (loan with high interest rate), etc. Even in some better families, one enduring disease of the family member would lead them to a serious poverty (IMGMP field report, 2003).

Environmental and poverty problem are closely related to each other. On one hand, degradation of grassland reduces the resource used by herders. On the other hand, in order to obtain more income to improve the poverty situation, the only way for herders is increasing the numbers of livestock, which increase the pressure of the grassland using and make the environmental problems more serious. Both environmental and poverty problems are threatening people life in Inner Mongolia.

Policy-driven transformation

As most other areas in China, Inner Mongolia is also in the process of economic and social transformation. In the research area, the main driving of this transformation is grassland policy.

Historically, Mongolians were a nomadic minority in the north of China. They lived off herding livestock on grassland. They maintained a nomadic lifestyle till the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The resource of grassland remained in common using. During the Maoist times, with the start of communes, all lands and

livestock became the collective at the level of communes. Many Han Chinese migrated there and some land was used for agriculture. So that is why there are semi-pastoral and semi-agricultural areas in Inner Mongolia.

China has had no long-term grassland policy. However, with the rising population pressure and the search for short-term economic gains unleashed by reform, the problems of “tragedy of commons” based on the collective structure became more and more apparent. Since 1980s, reform was started all over China, with the success of the *Household Responsibility System* in agricultural reform, the government started to implement the same logical policy in pastoral areas. The logic here is that people will manage and protect the grasslands better if the land is allocated to individual. The *Grassland Law* was formally promulgated in 1985 and is still under revision. According to the *Grassland Law*, under the principal that grassland is owned by either the state or the collective, households and collectives are allowed to lease the use of grassland for the “long term” in a similar vein to the agricultural lease system. Currently, the lease term is generally from thirty to fifty years. It is called the *Pasture Contract Responsibility System*.

The changing of land policy and have been shaping the local people’s life including economic activities, and social relationship. First, the market-orientation economic is emerging. This grassland policy reform is actually an adopted privatization. Comparing to the Commune in Mao Times, people could have their private production material. Therefore, most their production are oriented by market. For example, the price of cashmere was very high around the year of 2000. This market change stimulated the increasing of a special goat. Although this goat destroyed the grassland very seriously as they eat the roots of grass, most herders still increase the number in order to get more profits.

Second, the social relationship is changing. In most villages in Inner Mongolia, there is nearly a kinfolk association, where all families have some direct or indirect blood relations and/or marriage relations with other families. People here have a strong identification with the community. In daily life, people take part in activities according to kindred and the activities help to maintain and enhance the consciousness of kindred. It is very common that neighbors help each other. However, with the grassland policy reform, the identity of privatization rather than the identity of community is strengthening. The difference between rich and poor is emerging and bigger.

The official map: different interests, similar result

Different stakeholders

Before explaining the shaping of the official map, it is necessary to analyse all stakeholders involved in the project and current grassland policy implementation. They are the key factor to determine the shaping of both maps.

In the local government level, as with the administrative divisions in other provinces in China, there are four levels of administration divisions in the IMAR: provincial government, prefectural-level government, county government and township government. The relationships between these governments are officially superior and subordinate. As

the project was co-operated, these level governments were involved during the project implementation as partners, especially for the county and township governments.

An important characteristic of relationship between township and village should be mentioned. Compared to other administrative divisions, the governing of the administrative village level is very special in China. This level is not formally in the administrative division system, but it has the function of managing daily life and implementing policies in the village. Generally, there is an autonomous village system in China. Therefore, the relationship between township government and village is not officially one of superior and subordinate. However, they have to inevitably depend on each other. For villages, as township governments control many resources from government, they have to depend on township government to obtain demand resources. For townships government, they have to depend on the village to implement most official policies and tasks (Zhang, 2000). Generally, Townships have a closer relationship with village than they do with the higher administration division.

During the project implementation, there was a local development agent, which referred to the project office in the Chinese parts. In this project, the Chinese office staffs were all from Bureau of animal husbandry in prefectural-level government. Most daily project work was carried out by them, but they returned their position in the Bureau of animal husbandry after the project was over.

In the village level, according to economic status, the villagers could be classified as the poor, the medium and the rich. The richest family has thousands of small animals and hundreds of big ones, while the poorest family has no livestock at all. Although the middle economic-status family take the maximum ration in villages, the difference between poor and rich is getting bigger with the reform. That means there is a big difference for them in using the grassland.

The leader of village is important. There is an autonomous village system in China, which means villagers can elect their leaders. But the leaders are always the elites of the village. Most of them have historical authority and good economic conditions. For example, in one project village, the current leader's ancestors were pioneers of this village. Both his father and grandfather were the leaders and brought many profits to this village. He also enabled the village to a better economic condition through his position and social capital. The village leader has been in his position for 15 years (from 1990 till now) though he is only 38 years old. Generally, the villagers including the rich, the poor and the leaders formed a community with great cohesion on the basis of kindred, and people here have strong identification with the community. But this status is starting to change in the social transformation context which described above.

The existence/profile of the official map

Problems of TROS grassland policy

As what have been mentioned as above, the grassland policy reform was started in

1980s. At that time, the livestock and hay field¹ that belonged to the Commune were allocated to household. But the larger areas of grazing land² were still in common using. In Chinese political and academic circles it is felt that a mix of population pressure, overgrazing, and pastoralists' lack of responsibility towards grassland has led to a "tragedy of the commons". In the process of solving this free-rider problem, or 'eating from the common rice-pot' (chi da guo fan) as the Chinese say, a heated debate has emerged about the proper land tenure structure (Hardin, 1968; Ho, 2005; Taylor, 2006). In late 1990s, Central government operated a policy which called 'Two Rights and One System' (hereafter TROS). This policy aimed to allocate the whole grazing land to each household. 'Two Rights' means ownership right and utilisation right; 'One System' means *Pasture Contract Responsibility System*. According to TROS, the ownership belongs to either the state or the collective; households and collectives are allowed to lease the use of grassland for the 'long term' in a similar vein to the agricultural lease system. It is called the *Pasture Contract Responsibility System*. Currently, the lease term is based on 30-year contract terms; land is allowed to be transferred to other parties based on market price and land can be inherited. Apart from this, collective controlled grassland will not be more than 10% of total grassland of the community.

TROS is a reference of the success of the *Household Responsibility System* in agricultural reform. The logic here is that people will manage and protect the grasslands better if the land is allocated to individual. However, different from agricultural land, grassland in the arid pastoral regions manifests a highly variable productivity. For this reason, grassland resource benefit more from communal than from privatized management regimes (Ho, 2005). Even in this case, TROS was seriously implemented in the pure pasture areas, despite some problems it brought.

In comparison with livestock areas, the implementation of TROS in semi-livestock areas was more problematic. First, in the semi-pastoral areas, the grassland is much smaller and it couldn't be used for herding if divided up because livestock is mobile and can't be fixed in a small patch of grassland. Second, herding needs access to grassland, and water. The allocation can not ensure the access and water in every small pitch. Third, pastoral husbandry needs diversity of land and vegetation to adapt to different seasons and weather. But the allocation would destroy this diversity. These problems made the implementation of TROS in semi-pastoral areas nearly impossible. The policy of TROS is a 'top-down' approach without considering these local specifics.

Choice of stakeholders

Facing the problems of TROS, the implementation of this policy became the big difficulty in semi-agriculture and semi-pastoral area. Furthermore, all stakeholders actually were reluctant to implement this policy because of their different interests.

Firstly, there were "three kinds of households"; special policy categories defined by the government at particular times, e.g. livestock special household, technology demonstration household, and essential livestock household. Most of them are the rich of the village. These categories of households benefited from many different pro-livestock

¹ The hay field is used to grow grass for the storage of hay in winter

² the grazing pasture is used to graze the livestock

raising policies since the 1980s and own a greater amount of communal grassland than ordinary householders (in some cases amounting to 70% of total grazing land in the gacha). All land used by “three kinds of households” were on the basis of written 30-year contracts. Reallocation under TROS means they would lose much grassland they could use.

For other herders, it is obvious that the herding would be impossible in a small pitch of land if all grazing land was allocated to households. During the interviews, nearly all the herders express this worry. As one of them said, ‘If all grazing land were divided, the land would be too small. How can we herding our livestock in such small piece of land?’ This shows that, for herders, their consideration is simple: they need to make living on grassland.

However, there is a different consideration for the leaders of village and local government. The big reason is that the local government would lose their control and power of land if all grazing land were allocated directly to households. That means the households would face directly to the central government, while the power of local government would be missing. Wang (2006) discussed this issue, he argues that this simple and standard policy strengthen central government’s ability, but weaken the local’s ability. This leads to the direct game playing between villagers and central government. The collective and the concept of local community are missing. For the local government, they don’t want to lose this control ability. That is the main reason why they were reluctant to implement TROS policy.

The second reason is because of the subtle relationship between local government and village. For township government, they have to depend on the village to implement most official policies and tasks. Therefore, during the policy implementation, township governments have to consider the specific situation of villages. That means there would be a big trouble for them if the villages fight against the policy very strongly. It was the same during the implementation of TROS policy.

Thus, although these stakeholders had different interests, but they chose the same purpose: leaving the grazing land for common using. But how to reply to the inspection of central and regional governments? Similar as pure pastoral area, they also handed out the official household certifications to every household as the evidence to show the inspectors. However, the map on the official certification just stayed on the paper, nothing changed at all. Facing the outsiders or inspectors from higher government, grassland officials insisted saying that 100 percent of land has been allocated under the household contract responsibility system.

Nature of the official map

The participated research revealed that the official map was a ‘lookgood’ paper figure sent to the Inner Mongolia regional office as grassland regulators try to please policy-makers (see also Taylor :382). For the region government, they also knew the difficulties in implementing the TROS policy. Since they already got the ‘lookgood’ paper figure, they could have evidence to report to the central government. Therefore, they acquiesce in this result.

This strategy using in ‘official map’ is not a coincidence, but a popular tactic

embedded in the social contexts in China. For policy maker and state governing, standard policy is good for regulation. However, during the social and economic transformation, standard national policy is not easy to suit every local special condition in such a large country as China. Then there is a 'grey area' in policy implementation. Among this 'grey area', the standard policy could be adjusted or changed, even not implemented at all. Certainly, not all these results in this 'grey area' are realistic. It often depends on local relationship, especially the power relationship.

For the 'official map', the impact of local people could be said relative positive. Although the environmental problems still exist, at least it avoided the new problems which TROS policy could bring. Actually, after a period of inspection, the regional government recognized that the allocation of grassland to individual households was unrealistic in the agricultural area due to its limited size of land, and issued a document to pointed out that the grassland allocation in the agricultural areas must follow the principles of "suiting the measures to local conditions" and "not prescribing a single solution for diverse problems". The Notice, while persisting that household responsibility is the basic form of the grassland allocation; it stipulates, 'Other legitimate forms are allowed to exist' (IMGMP field report, 2004).

TROS is absolute a Top-down policy. Lack of community participation is one of the most serious problems in decision making implementation of TROS. However, although there is no empowered participation in decision-making and implementation, local people still have capability to respond the interventions. This shows that the impact of local people always exist, no matter state, development organizations and scholars admit it or not.

Nevertheless, one thing should be mentioned is the 'official map' was just an operation among the level of local governments. Actually, most herders didn't learn so much information about the TROS implementation. During our research, rare of them could tell what TROS was. They could benefit from this because they have same purpose with the local governments. Once the purpose is different, the situation and results may be changed. This could be seen in the local map.

The local map: different interests, various impacts

The policy of TROS was not implemented in these semi-agricultural and semi-pastoral areas. However, this result only avoids problems of this policy, the serious environment problems still exist. The Australia funded project attempt to solve this problem by many means. In this parts, this paper will illustrate how the local map is and how local people and their participation impact on the project.

Allocation inequality

As mentioned above, the hay field pasture was allocated in most areas in Inner Mongolia in 1980s, while it was not divided according to people number, but a ratio between people number and livestock number, generally 6:4. After that, during TROS policy implementation in 1990s, the grazing land in larger pure pastoral areas was allocated in the similar ratio of household human-animal numbers, too. Even in the 'official map' in semi-pastoral areas, the distribution was accorded to the similar standard, too.

The ramifications are obvious: those with larger herds benefited greatly, while households without ruminant animals who want to have grazing livestock one day, and are currently dependent on marginal cropping, lost out. That was an obvious unequal allocation, but why did it happen? At least we know on main reason is the impacts of village leader. As mentioned above, village leaders are always the elites of the village. Most of them have historical authority and social capital with township government. They could control most resource from higher governments. Moreover, nearly all of them and their relatives are relative rich in the village and have much more livestock. The standard by ratio between household person and livestock numbers is just what they expected. Furthermore, as the village is nearly a kin-associated community, villagers have no clear private property cognition. Most of them kept silent for this result.

During these allocations, it is the poorer households who have no voice; neither do they have an understanding of their new use-rights. The gap between poor and rich in these areas is wider. This local interpretation of TROS has widened the gap of grassland using between poor and rich and increased rather than decreased the incidence of poverty.

The outsiders

In the local map, there is another group which can not be found in the official map and even hid in general investigation. That is the group of outsiders.

This group was found during a participatory field research of the project. In Phase Two of the project in 2003, it was found that in one village there were more than 50 squatters with about 20,000 sheep using communal grassland. These squatters occupied large area of local grassland. Further, by interview, the researchers learned that these outsiders were connected to influential persons in government or had family links to local Party leaders. Some of these illegal farms were also extra-income generating activities belonging to government agencies (including one property belonging to the former head of the Animal Husbandry Bureau). In fact, many of these squatters who had been grazing for more than ten years signed a land lease agreement by illegal rent-seeking rural township committees. These squatters should of course never have been allocated community grazing land. In the proposed grassland reform, the distribution of household User Right based on formal government boundaries does not take into consideration land already used by squatters.

Better participatory field research have revealed the extent of this problem and considered ways of dealing with it. Because the land of these squatters did not exist on official maps, it was simultaneously allocated to local herders. They occupied resources not belong to them. According to a recently issued regional government document (No. 3, 2003), all outsiders, no matter if they have agreements with local communities or not, must leave the land that they have occupied before the end of 2003. It is obvious that this ambitious order is unachievable. The project once gave a suggestion to provide a practical way to solve this problem. That is, the outsiders are allowed to continue to use the grassland if it is necessary, but, they should pay rent to the legal land users. The county Government did approve the practical proposal on handling outsiders made during Phase One.

The using of fences

After the allocation of pastures, fence was started to use to restrain livestock herding in each household's pastures. However, no matter fence is considered as a valuable resource or a symbol of private user right, the using of fence shaped and increased the inequality of grassland using in this area.

Many scholars have discussed the consequences of fence using and its reason. Fences are seen as parts of the rationalizing discourse of modern livestock management and a main management tool used in dry pastoral environments (Sullivan and Homewood 2003:35-6; Taylor, 2006: 379). It is also an integral part of an emergent neoliberal market driven discourse, which endorses economic efficiencies found among modernized larger herders. The promotion of enclosures means that barbed wire fencing now come to symbolize a new notion of a traditional structure, one that historically entitles newcomers to special rights (Williams, 2002:137). In my opinion, fence using in this case study experienced a long term developing.

First of all, fencing is not a good choice for all households because of different economic status. Not all herders could afford fences in this poverty stricken area. Rich herders who could afford the cost of fence enclosed their pastures so that other herders could not use it. However, most medium and poor herders couldn't afford this expense and these grasslands were open to common. That means, rich herders could use all grasslands, but poor herders could only herd in the open areas. This constituted an unequal access to important local resources.

There is a case in one project village. In order to protect the pasture which was started to get more degraded around the village, the project sponsored some herders to move out the village. To encourage the herding households to graze their cattle outside, the project gave the households moved out some fences and helped those households to construct water wells for the livestock. But the result was those who moved out were comparatively rich households with large livestock. The poor is unable to afford the expense although they also want to get more pastures. Small households do not go outside to graze their cattle for two reasons: first, they said that grazing outside meant too high cost to bear for house building and fence buying; second, they had only a few animals and a little grazing pasture, so it was not worthwhile to graze them outside far away from the village.

After the big households moved out of the village, they enclosed all of their own grazing pasture or part of it (according to their financial situation) when they herded the cattle out. Thus the livestock of other households could not come into the pasture to graze. While for small households, there is little change in the grazing mode compared to the pattern before. Since they could not afford fence to enclose their pastures, they still freely graze their cattle close to the village. However, the grazing-out big households do not have their cattle herded on their own enclosed pasture, but outside it. They use these pastures as hay fields and occasionally as exigency for late winter feed. This result is not the project's purpose that to protect and recover the grassland around the village. On the contrary, this effectively increases community tension and places heavy pressure on common-pool resources.

Why this unequal situation could exist? The stakeholders' relationship embedded in the social contexts is a main reason. During the social context of economic social

transformation, these herders in a same village have traditional kin-associated relationship and rarely have disputation in history. They have been used to sharing the common grassland before. Since poor herders have no or little livestock, there is little organized resistance when richer households coerce their neighbors with expanding enclosures. Furthermore, although poor herders could ask for payments from rich herders who used the poor herders' pastures, they rarely did that, because mutual sharing of natural resources and other productive materials between villagers within villages takes place in a daily basis and involves more than just the use of financial capital. It also involves social capital. Moreover, instead of formal agreements stipulating substantive duties and rights, the contracts very often appear as informal and verbal arrangements, requesting more often non-cash or symbolic capital payment in a period without a definite term. As some respondents said during the interview:

"Do you feel unequal because they used their enclosed grassland and share the opened grassland with you, but you can't use their enclosed grassland?"

"No, I do not. Because the grassland is common using. Our relationship is good and we used to share it together. We have little livestock and do not need so much grassland, but they have more livestock and need more grassland."

However, with seeing more benefit from fencing, more herders started to use fences as well when they could afford it or get fencing subsidies. When author did field work in this village again three years later, there were much more fences built by herders themselves. They said they built these fences by themselves because they saw the grass inside the fencing is much better than that of outside. Then they could get more benefit from it. But these fences were built without any monitoring, that means any herders could build fences as they like, only if they could afford it. Some herder started to complaint that one of their village leaders occupied too much grassland by fencing, because they could get more fences with government's sponsor. Although the local government started to realize the bad using of fence and began to stop it, the inequality has already existed. Consequently, as fencing expand, grazing pressure and erosion intensify, while the poorer herders who mostly rely on the commons, become the losers of ecosystem decline. Furthermore, the fence using shaped local herders' identity of individual instead of community. Herder started to only care about their enclosed grassland instead of common using ones. People could see big difference with grass between outside and inside of the fences. The grass is green inside of the fences but degraded in outside.

The purpose of fencing is enabling herder to realize their responsibility to protect the grassland. However, because of different interests among stakeholders, it did not achieve this goal. Instead, the using of fences increased the pressure on common resource and the inequality of resource using.

The attempt of community-based grassland management

By referencing the lessons of the TROS implementation, the project abandoned the way to facilitate the allocation of grazing land to individual households in semi-pastoral areas. It attempted to establish community-based management mechanisms. This attempt demonstrated some positive effects, but still did not achieve the hopeful results.

The supports of two project schemes as 'Sheep Bank' a livestock rotating scheme and the

Women's Rotating Funds Scheme improved the living conditions of poor herders. By participation approach, the poorest herders were selected to get some sheep from the 'Sheep Bank' funded by the project. After raising the sheep for a period, these herders could keep the baby sheep/lamb but return the adult sheep. Women's Rotating Funds was like a minor micro credit. Supervised by project staff, the Women's Rotating Funds was managed by village women's Federation. The selected poor women could borrow some credit from Women's Rotating Funds and used it to operate 'yard economic', such as raising pigs and chicken.

The other positive result is the total number of livestock units dropped significantly in the project area. This means the pressure of grassland using is relived. Besides the reason of the serious drought in 2004, two determinant factors were related to the project: One is the implementation of policy based on community management concerning seasonal grazing (sheep) and total grazing ban (goats); the other is the project prompted policy concerning the balance between grass/feed and livestock. However, the most important factor that has caused the overall decrease in numbers of livestock is not the factors above, but the market price of livestock product and the drought. During that period, the price of cashmere was reduced, which led to the decrease massive sale and raising of goats.

Moreover, the poor and rich, although facing the same change of market price and the pasture as well, have been very dissimilar in terms of their choice regarding livestock keeping. In short, rich household generally would reduce the livestock quantity or hold the quantity of livestock without increase because of the change of market price. Their decisions look more like a result of calculating the input-output, based on market price or "rational choice". On the contrary, the poor households continued to increase the livestock quantity. 'Security concern' or 'uncertainty' is an important reason why the poor tends to increase the livestock quantity regardless of market and grassland degradation. "Security concern" means that the poor consider that only increased animal numbers can enhance the family's ability to cope with a disaster or other unexpected events (Zhu, 2006). Furthermore, poor and medium households desperately want development and reach the same level of wealth as the rich by increasing the animal quantity. Therefore, regardless of all consequences, they tend to increase the number of animals. But one thing should be mentioned is, although the livestock growth of poor herders has been much greater than other groups, their overall proportion of animals compared with other groups is still much less.

Furthermore, aiming to establish a community-based grassland management, the project attempted to establish a '*Herders' Shareholder Cooperative for Grassland Management*' (HSCGM), but it was not officially achieved when the project was over in 2006. Under HSCGM, theoretically, the herders are the managers of the grassland, so their interests are highly related to the condition of pasture. However, they are also a role to meet the request to sacrifice their private benefits in order to benefit the "public interest". In 2008 when author conducted field work in this village again, the livestock quantity was really reduced. But after interviews with part of villagers, the decrease of livestock quantity was not because of HSCGM but the serious drought. The grassland carry ability dropped rapidly and could not afford the livestock. Many herders had to sell part of livestock. With the end of the project, the HSCGM only remain the documents.

Conclusion

The shaping of both 'official map' and 'local map' shows the heterogeneity of local people and their diverse impacts. In the case in Inner Mongolia, whether in the local community level or the local government level, the 'local people' not refers to a homogeneous group but many different stakeholders with various interests. These heterogeneity and impacts are embedded in local social and political contexts, particularly the social and political relationships and related power relationships. Sometimes these impacts are integrated because of similar purpose.

For the participation of the stakeholders, the author suggests it should be classified as two types: Active-participation and empower-participation. Active-participation refers to response activities to any out side interventions such as policies and development projects. Empower-participation means participation empowered by outsiders like participation approaches in development project implementation. No matter people admit it or not, the fact is local people could response to any external intervention in their own ways. A good example is the existence of the official map. Although the TROS policy is a 'top-down' policy, local people still have strategy to response it and avoid the problems. During this IMGMP project both participation types always exist simultaneously.

However, it is certainly wrong to take for grant absolutely that everything of local people is good. The impacts of local people could be positive or negative. Not all local participation could achieve social justice. In this case of this paper, one of the negative impacts is the inequality of the poor during the allocation of grassland. Because of local power relationship, their voice was lost. Actually, this situation is usual in many development interventions. Thus, the heterogeneity of local people should be paid a special attention. To achieve a more effective and just local participation, the role of local people needs to be further identified in each development process and project case by case.

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