



## Pastoralism and Development in Africa: Reflections ten years on

The edited book, *Pastoralism and Development in Africa: Dynamic Change at the Margins*, was published ten years ago. We are now launching an [open-access version of the book](#) together with commentaries from book contributors and others.



The original book was written in the aftermath of the devastating Somali drought of 2011, while the relaunch occurs when the Greater Horn of Africa is in the grip of a long-term recurrent drought, which is having major impacts on pastoral systems, exacerbated by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The book emerged from a conference in 2011 convened by the Future Agricultures Consortium and Tufts University and held at the ILRI campus in Addis. The conference had participation from a wide range of researchers working on pastoralism. One of the sessions at the conference involved a reflection on how things had changed over the past decades since the landmark publications on pastoralism in Africa from *Pastoralism in Tropical Africa* in 1975 onwards. We concluded that indeed much had changed, but there were also important continuities. Despite the persistent proclamation that pastoralism as a system of production and way of life is dead, pastoralism continues although in multiple new forms.

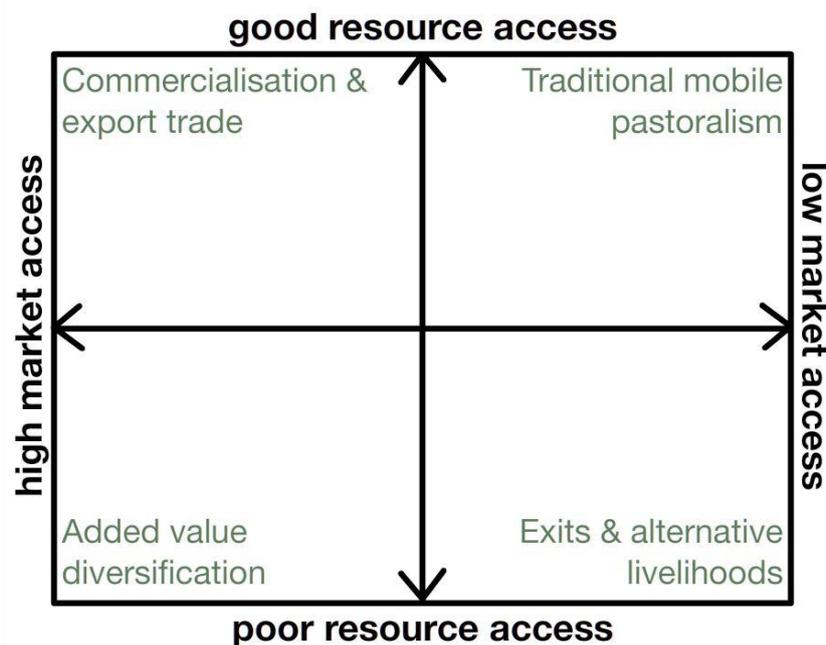
In the decade since the publication of the book, there have been some important new changes in the pastoral areas of the Greater Horn of Africa, the geographical focus of the book. We invited our commentators to reflect on these, highlight which ones they thought were the most significant.

As the commentaries highlight, these have included the expansion of livestock commercialisation, facilitated by the mobile phone technology revolution; the growth of small towns in pastoral areas affecting where pastoralists live, how they are educated, their access to health care and importantly their patterns of mobility; land issues persist as processes of enclosure and territorialisation increase, often supported by the state in alliance with external players, resulting in insecurity of tenure for pastoralists over open rangelands; the continued extension of external investment in pastoral areas, with the growth of 'green energy' being particularly important in the past years, even if some of the large-scale 'land grabs' that were so prominent in 2012 have since failed; and finally the acceleration and intensification of conflict in certain areas, exacerbated by unresolved political questions around borders and increasing pressure on resources due to expansion of farming and other investments.

Of course, none of these developments are new and all, in different ways, were highlighted in the book a decade ago, but all are intensifying and affecting how pastoralism is practised and by whom. A key theme of the book is how there are increasingly multiple pastoralisms as different people pursue different activities as part of a wider pastoral economy.

In chapter 1 of the book we present a simple diagram of potential trajectories of pastoralism, affected by changes in access to resources and markets.

Figure 1: Pathways of pastoralism



In exploring different settings across the Greater Horn of Africa, we identify changing pathways of pastoral development, as well as the shocks, stresses and drivers that affect their evolution. In the last ten years, the different categories of pastoralism (and many shades of grey in between) still exist but, as the commentaries highlight, we have seen perhaps a greater differentiation within pastoral settings, with rising inequality between those with large herds (of large stock) and those with few (mostly small stock). This has a gender and generational dimension too, as men and women take on different roles in pastoral production.

As different pastoralists ‘move up’ or ‘move out’, different livelihood combinations and trajectories are seen, with some accumulating while others lose out. The role of external actors, whether private investors or the state, is increasingly evident. Absentee pastoralists who may or may not have a pastoral background are increasingly important, with the pastoral economy – now more accessible and with more opportunities thanks to better infrastructure and mobile phone connections – becoming more commercialised.

However, this does not mean that mobility and other so-called ‘traditional’ pastoral practices are no longer important. Far from it; as the commentaries suggest these sources of adaptation and resilience become more and more significant as climate change, conflict and increasing resource scarcity in particular places affects pastoral production.

On the policy front, there have been some positive developments, with a greater recognition of pastoral development by some national governments, and investments in pastoralism emerging as a priority in some decentralised, federal settings. In certain places, progress has been made in registering community land, although new problems may arise. Given the importance of humanitarian interventions in pastoral areas, the development of guidelines for more appropriate responses in relation to livestock systems has been important. Meanwhile, a more regional perspective has emerged with organisations such as IGAD taking a lead, while aid donors and others invest across countries in a more integrated way.

The shifting political economy of the region, as affected by geopolitics as well as changing trade relations, will continue to affect how the pastoral ‘margins’ are treated, as several commentaries note. As global powers – both established and emergent - compete for influence and investment

opportunities, the stability of nation states in the region becomes crucial, with secessionist movements and others being seen as potential ‘terror’ threats. Political contests at national level, especially as refracted through ethnic identities, equally influence pastoral areas, which often are sites for contests over land and resources.

There will continue to be voices who proclaim the end of pastoralism, but there is little doubt that in another decade’s time, if we reflect again on changes in the Greater Horn, pastoralism in some new forms will continue to exist. In the dry rangelands of pastoral regions, pastoralism remains a successful production system and perhaps especially so in the context of climate change. As the investors behind the earlier ‘land grabs’ for large-scale agricultural investments found, alternatives to extensive livestock systems are difficult to establish and highly costly to manage. Other incursions into pastoral areas will no doubt continue, with the expansion of conservation areas and ‘green energy’ being driven by international agendas around biodiversity and climate change. Yet greater recognition of the value of pastoralism in dryland areas helps show how pastoral systems can promote biodiversity conservation in rangelands and are effective at adapting to climate change with low emissions.

As we found a decade ago, there is no single pastoral system – differentiation along contrasting pathways will continue, pushed by different shocks and drivers, with winners and losers emerging. A development agenda for pastoral areas that takes account of this ‘dynamic change at the margins’ and involves ‘seeing like a pastoralist’ rather than a state, investor or development agency remains imperative, even if under increasingly constrained and challenging circumstances.

## **Commentaries**

### **Ikal Ang’elei, Founder and Executive Director, Friends of Lake Turkana, Kenya**

Ten years ago, there was a clamour for land law reforms, including legislation governing community lands. States have passed land legislation over the last ten years to recognise, secure and protect the community and pastoralist lands. However, there is increasing evidence that many communities that are titled have further sub-divided or are in the process of sub-dividing community lands to individual titling, fragmenting pastoralists’ commons production and increasing vulnerability for pastoralists.

In areas with plentiful resources, there are perceived benefits to titling; however, while there is evidence of reduced pastoralist production due to the loss of land, there is no evidence of tangible benefits for communities. With effective, collective “communities” undermined, the effectiveness of negotiation of community registration is hampered. In addition, the enactment of new legislation that further devalues or, in the case of Kenya, zero rates pastoral commons due to lack of crops or physical infrastructure, undermines the capacity to compete with other uses.

Building on the work carried out ten years ago, further research on how “development” dispossesses pastoralist commons – often perfectly legally - is needed. This process results in fragmentation of production capabilities through legislation and ‘community’ resource negotiations. Narratives of ‘resilience’ created through offering ‘alternative livelihoods’, which only last the project/programme period, further acts to weaken pastoralists’ production systems.

### **Fynn Simone Rettberg, Germany**

Based on research in the lowlands of Ethiopia I see two trends that have gained importance recently.

First, processes of territorialisation, previously a dominantly governmental strategy in its effort to develop the pastoral frontier, have increased among pastoralists in the context of loss of grazing areas, insecure land rights and poverty. Within the Awash Valley of Ethiopia the strategic establishment of

settlements in highly contested areas and sedentarisation have become major political-economic strategies to make territorial claims and secure access to land.

A further trend is the emergence of capitalist social formations in the context of increasing land dispossession through enclosures. The rise in economic inequality, social fragmentation and the deepening crisis of political legitimacy among political leaders are symptoms of this development. With the increasing encroachment of the state in the pastoral frontier and the expansion of its infrastructural power beyond the development corridor along the Awash River a powerful class of wealthy local politicians and entrepreneurs has emerged.

Together, these dynamics underline the need for a critical agrarian political economy perspective in the context of understanding the impacts and influences of development-oriented investments in pastoral settings.

### **John Letai, Land Rights Specialist, Kenya**

With the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution and the enactment of the Community Land Act in 2016, the pastoralist land governance system in Kenya is changing. Trust lands and Group Ranches are changing to community lands so as to adhere to the requirements of the Act. However, there are various hurdles to change as much land is still being controlled by County Governments. Neither the Act nor the Regulations provide a clear way of defining community lands based on community of interest. The big issue is definition of community boundaries that is leading to conflict as each interested community lobbies to extend its boundaries in order to accommodate growing populations of humans and livestock as well taking care of wet/dry season grazing areas. Other development interventions such as conservancies and infrastructure being developed by devolved governments are also affecting pastoralists.

In Laikipia, which was the focus of my contribution to the book, the trends over the last 10 years have seen more smallholder farms. Many are held by absentee landlords and settled by displaced pastoralists. They are being consolidated into larger holdings and sold to investors, either individuals or investment companies. This has meant that the squatter pastoralists have to move out of these lands and squat somewhere else, shrinking the land available to them to graze their livestock. These lands are then fenced off with electric fences and the investors lobby the national government to establish police patrol camps to provide security to the so-called investors to fend off invasion or illegal grazing from pastoralists during the dry seasons or periods of resource stress. Those who have acquired these lands include very senior people in government, investors of white origin either working as expatriates in Kenya, in embassies or acquiring land through the help of their friends already having huge tracts of land in Laikipia.

The increase in the frequency of drought and effects of climate change has seen a movement of pastoralists from neighbouring counties of Baringo, Samburu and Isiolo into Laikipia. At the moment Laikipia is hosting pastoralist livestock from Marsabit, Wajir and even Mandera. This increase in population coupled with climate change, drought and acquisition of land for other development interventions has led to scarcity of resources and lack of space for pastoralists and their livestock. Politics have infiltrated into these issues affecting where pastoralists can settle or search for pasture and water. These scenarios have led to an increase in armed conflicts in Laikipia resulting to loss of human lives, livestock and displacement of communities. The agriculture communities often lose their crops to illegal grazers and the big commercial ranches can be invaded or illegally grazed at night.

The national government has deployed security agencies in Laikipia who shoot and kill pastoralist livestock using armoured vehicles whenever found within the big commercial ranches or conservancies. restrictions of pastoralist movements with their livestock are also being employed and more police patrols to monitor pastoralist movement being engaged. Even movement to Mt Kenya and Aberdares is being restricted. The four failed rainfall seasons have seen pastoralist to date lose approximately 60% of their livestock.

The above trends have had a negative impact on pastoral livelihoods and social well-being. Some of the other effects include dropping from schools by pastoralist children, increase in communicable diseases and malnutrition.

**Salau Rogei, Social Development/Environmental Consultant, Kenya**

The book, organised around key thematic variables that depicts the precarious nature of pastoralism in the region, is helpful in thinking about recurrent crisis in fragile ecologies. From insecure land tenure and climate change to changing land use systems, the book's findings have been vindicated over time and across space. Ten years on, pastoralists continue to be subjugated to the periphery and edged out of their traditional livelihood systems. This is happening due to increased encroachment by and through mega-development projects into the pastoral margins. The erstwhile desolate, isolated frontiers are quickly gaining a premium as the envious eyes of enterprising entities, local and international corporations and privatised government corporations are cast on the resource rich pastoral landscapes.

Among several factors promoting this imperial expansionism is the latest trend of green energy 'land grabs' happening in the name of responding to the global warming crisis. And while these interventions may contribute to the global objective of reducing temperatures, it increases the 'heat' from below, as pastoralists' shrinking landscapes are critical to their adaptation to a changing climate. The future of pastoralism is therefore shrouded by uncertainty especially if their adaptive capacity continues to decline in the context of climate change, increased population and escalating conflicts over depleted resources.

A major threat to sustainable futures is the uncoordinated policy regimes that makes all players – investors, NGOs, governments – do what they see, and think is right with little or a complete lack of participation by pastoralists themselves in shaping and navigating the changing development terrain.

**Luka Biong Deng Kuol, Adjunct Distinguished Professor at Africa Center for Strategic Studies at US National Defense University, Global Fellow at Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), and Fellow at Rift Valley Institute**

My early childhood in the pastoral environment and my extensive research on the dynamics of rural livelihoods during peace and conflict times in the Abyei region provide me a micro-level lens with which I can reflect on the future of pastoralism. As it lies at the border between South Sudan and Sudan, the agro-pastoral communities of the Abyei region have been exposed to complex and interwoven livelihood shocks such as climate change, prolonged civil war, counterinsurgency warfare, and local border violent conflicts exacerbated by the unresolved final political status that caused the increased vulnerability.

Despite such turbulent livelihood threats, the agro-pastoralists show a remarkable adaptation and resilience by adopting new livelihood strategies such as reverting to pure pastoralism from agro-pastoralism, exiting agro-pastoralism to specialisation in farming, more investment in social capital, and adopting innovative hedging bartering strategies. The case of the Abyei region shows that pastoralism will continue to retain its mobile traditional nature during difficult shocks such as extreme violent conflict and climate change. In a more stable environment, a gradual shift to a diversified agro-pastoralism can be envisaged, linked to commercialisation, although this requires an environment of sustainable political stability and economic growth.

**Andy Catley, Tufts University**

Ten years ago, the book reminded us of the diversity and complexity of pastoralist systems but also showed how past and future livelihood pathways could often be explained by access to productive rangeland and markets. A four-quadrant diagram in the book on resource and market access proved to

be a popular tool and was complemented by the Moving Up Moving Out analysis and other research (see Figure 1 in overview). At the time, these general concepts were widely accepted but limited data was available on exactly how many people in different areas were following the different pathways (or moving between them). In other words, roughly what proportion of people had sufficiently large herds to benefit from commercialization trends compared to those with very few animals, who were often engaged in diversified or alternative pathways?

In the last decade more data has become available - from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda for example - and shows continuing economic differentiation as market and land access continues or improves for some but not others. Human populations have also increased by between around 24% and 30% in the last ten years, and some pastoralists have faced new challenges, such as market and movement restrictions related to COVID-19. And while debates on climate change and its effects on pastoralists have often assumed drier conditions over time, in areas such as South Sudan and the Omo delta in Kenya, agro-pastoralism is changing fundamentally as rising water levels prevent access to huge areas of land for grazing or cultivation.

**Fana Gebresenbet, Interim Director, Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The previous decade brought significant changes to the landscape of and state-pastoralist relations in Ethiopia's lower Omo valley. In the previous century, the Ethiopian state was disinterested and unable meaningfully to integrate the lower Omo valley into the national economy due to the lack of infrastructure. Thanks to the drive towards sugar industrialisation, the valley is now criss-crossed by asphalted roads and there is better connectivity to the national electric grid and mobile networks. These state interventions enabled a significant advance in the presence and degree of regulatory/control capacity of the state, while simultaneously opening up the valley for capitalist production, mainly in the form of commercial agriculture.

Developments related to state building and opening-up of the valley for capitalist production however had a negative effect on the pastoralist production system. Crucial dry-season grazing areas are being withdrawn from the pastoralist production system, annual flooding is disabled due to the regulation of water by hydro-dams and the large in-coming labour force created tensions related to identity and cultural difference.

In sum, pastoralists of the lower Omo valley have been at the receiving end of a political economy and state-building project that favours transfer of wealth to non-pastoralist modes of production and pushes them further to marginal positions.

**John G. Galaty, McGill University, Canada**

Let me write briefly on an optimistic note, on why the most dire outcomes of land grabbing in Africa may have proven less calamitous than I feared when I wrote the chapter published in the book.

After the Ethiopian government under Meles Zenawi allocated enormous tracts of land to international companies, many of those companies failed to use much of the land allocated, and in fact in many cases failed to establish productive farming enterprises. So the government took much of the land back! Whether it will be restored to local peasants should be a major question for future investigations. Of course, peasant resistance and outcries were one reason for this reversal. In the Kenyan case, attempts legally to dispossess a community accused by a foreign entrepreneur of 'trespassing' on 'his land' while seeking dry season grazing, the subsequent outcry politicised the case and resulted in his lodge being burned by locals, cases lodged against his claims, and his departure.

The deeper lesson is that all outside, large-scale ventures that threaten local rights and interests invariably face resistance from below, which tends to extract concessions (and perhaps jobs) or even cancellation of projects that do not rise out of negotiations and agreements with communities.

### **Hussein Abdullahi Mahmoud, Kenya**

Pastoral livestock marketing in northern Kenya has undergone phenomenal changes in the past ten years. The most remarkable innovative leap is the widespread adoption of mobile technology, particularly the use of mobile phones and mobile financial services in livestock transactions. In the early 2010s, camels from Tana River County were trekked to Moyale border town for onward shipment to the lucrative Gulf markets with little and scanty knowledge about prices, border policies and security risks.

Today, pastoral livestock traders rarely rely on single markets as mobile phones have enabled them to explore different markets locally and regionally while operating from the rangelands. In addition, the penetration of M-Pesa mobile money transfer systems deep in the rangelands has widened the options available for money transfers in real time. While a poor communication network was an impediment back then, considerable improvement in telecommunication infrastructure has revolutionized the way livestock trading is conducted in Kenya's northern pastoral counties.

What this has done for the camel trade discussed in my chapter of the book is the ever-expanding possibilities of exploring the many advantages offered by different markets and the widening choices and the ease with which to transfer money, so making commercialisation easier and more possible for many pastoralists.

### **John Morton, Natural Resources Institute, UK**

Since 2012, we have seen both progress and setbacks in pastoral development and the narratives around it. Discussions on the responsibility of the global livestock sector for greenhouse gas emissions have intensified but not always made the necessary distinctions between pastoralists and other categories of developing-country livestock keepers on the one side and Big Meat on the other. At the same time renewable energy projects (as well as fossil fuel extraction) in the drylands are an increasing part of the development landscape, another manifestation of the increasing presence of the corporate private sector, multinational and domestic, in the lives of pastoralists.

The need to diversify pastoral livelihoods is now widely agreed upon, but there is still little documentation of successful models that can be scaled out as good practice. Our understanding of conflict in pastoral areas, its complexity and its irreducibility to simple explanations such as climate change grows, but pastoral areas are still beset with violence. And, while political decentralisation has empowered pastoralists in some countries, elsewhere it has not prevented the increased grip of centralised states and the rhetoric of sedentarisation.

### **Mustafa Babiker, Sudan**

The future of dryland pastoralism in Sudan has always been a favourite topic for academic research, policy studies and public discussion. Such a concern was fuelled by, in addition to recurrent droughts, the persistent policy of successive governments favouring large-scale agricultural investments at the expense of mobile pastoralism. Over the past decade or so, roughly five million hectares of pastoral lands has been redistributed to local and foreign investors.

However, the issue of the future of dryland pastoralism in Sudan has attracted renewed attention with the creation of South Sudan in July 2011, considered as one of the most important developments in the last ten years with far-reaching implications for mobile pastoralism. It raises the important question: Is there any future for mobile pastoralism in the Sudan in the context of the possible pressures created by the impending loss of vital dry season grazing grounds in South Sudan? Unfortunately, for most observers the answer seems to be a big 'NO', a position supported by the failure of South Sudan and Sudan to agree on the vital issues of border demarcation. This is an issue with long history of political and ethnic manipulation and looks like an irresolvable dispute.

**Elliot Fratkin, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Smith College, Northampton MA, USA**

Ten years ago, my chapter in the book, “*Seeking Alternative Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas*” traced the steady decline in mobile livestock pastoralism and the increasing sedentarisation of Samburu, Rendille, Ariaal, Turkana, Somalis and other livestock peoples in Northern Kenya. While there were certain benefits to settling including providing access to schools, dispensaries, and markets, this transition was accompanied by increasing impoverishment of formerly mobile populations.

This trend intensified in the 2020s due to increasing stresses from several directions, including climate change, new pandemics, and new sources of social conflict. Global climate change has led to more frequent and devastating droughts and flooding. Global pandemics, particularly COVID 19, disrupted human services, access to labor and markets. New infrastructure projects including the paving of the Isiolo - Moyale road have led to influx of down country people and changes in local economies. Population growth and social movements including religious and interethnic conflict have intensified. The most vexing problem remains changes in the climate, where for the past three years seasonal rains have failed threatening livelihood in both pastoral and agricultural areas of eastern and northern Kenya. Here, declining pasture and water resources have affected livestock migrations, leading to declines in livestock health and productivity and excess livestock deaths. These trends will most likely continue into the near future.

**Paul Goldsmith, Kenya**

There are several linked developments that deserve mention in regard to my chapter in the book, *The Future of Pastoralist Conflict*.

The first is the continuing regionalisation of globalisation reconfiguring the Horn of Africa political economy. States from the larger Red Sea corridor-Western Indian Ocean region are playing more active roles, and their new political activism is highlighted by Turkey’s military interventions including provision of the combat drones that tilted the balance of Ethiopia’s internal conflict between the central government and Tigray. The entry of these second-tier powers dovetails with the Horn’s ruling elites’ efforts to recentralise state organisation and to reverse reforms deconcentrating and redistributing executive power. The prize during this current phase of transactional governance is access to natural resources and investment in extractive industries, with critical ramifications for the rangeland areas inhabited by pastoralist communities.

We can therefore assume contested control over land and capital, alongside climate change, will continue to be the primary drivers of eastern Africa’s pastoralist conflict. We can also expect that open-source innovations such as the weaponisation of off-the-shelf drones will prove to be a key variable influencing the asymmetrical dynamics of the region’s power relations.

**Peter D. Little, Emory University, USA**

Since the book’s publication in 2012, several significant changes have occurred in the rangelands of Horn of Africa, most of which were in process well before the 2000s. Here I will address one—urban growth. Urban centres embody both good—employment for youth and sites of new universities, investments, and markets—and bad outcomes for pastoralists and pastoralism—increased poverty and inequality, encroachment on grazing lands, environmental problems and increased divisions between rural pastoralists and urban elites.

I have seen how rangeland towns and their hinterlands have become frontiers of global capitalism: commercial oil discoveries in Turkana, Kenya; hydropower and contract farming schemes in the Omo river valley, Ethiopia; global trade networks reaching deep into the interiors of southern Ethiopia and Somalia to source livestock; and wealthy tourists flying into new conservation areas of northern Kenya formed under the pretence of participatory community-based conservation. Although violence and conflict have marred the rangelands of the Horn for decades, recent capitalist expansion has

animated new configurations of violence with international investors, states, and town-based elites playing roles.

Yet, despite these challenges mobile pastoralism persists and provides valuable animal products, important sources of employment and beneficial environmental services where other forms of land use are unsustainable if not impossible.

### **Polly Ericksen, Program Leader, Sustainable Livestock Systems, ILRI, Kenya**

Climate change is now recognised as already having impacts in dryland systems, especially through hotter temperatures. The current situation in the Horn is again bleak, with several failed rainy seasons having caused severe livestock losses and food insecurity. However, investor interest is higher than it was a decade ago, and successes with rangeland management, safety nets and insurance, support for markets and local governance are encouraging. Pastoral production continues, as ever!

### **Abdiraman Abdi, Kenya**

Livestock is one of the largest and most important economic sectors in the drylands, generating nearly \$1.5 billion annually and representing between 10-30% of GDP for countries in the Horn of Africa. Due to high rainfall variability, livestock production and sale remains the most productive rural livelihood across the region. Almost 20 million men and women are fully or partially involved in the industry, including producers and extensive networks of traders and brokers, covering a wide range of economic activities including live animal sales, meat processing, tanneries, milk trade and processing, and animal health and nutrition. The breadth of the livestock sector has a defining and evolving impact on social, cultural, and economic life in the drylands. Historically an industry dominated by men, important entry points are emerging that are more inclusive and beneficial for women within the sector.

### **Abdinoor Mohamed**

The region has been affected by both new and re-emerging shocks. For example, COVID-19 disrupted livestock exports for three years in a row due to cancellation of Hajj/and Middle East trade. The current Ukraine and Russia conflict has increased food prices by 40%-50% affecting pastoralists' terms of trade. Recurrent drought shocks and the impacts of climate change are being widely felt across the Horn, made worse by desert locust outbreaks affecting pasture and agriculture productions and ongoing inter-ethnic conflicts and wider security challenges in the region. Some emerging trends include:

- There has been some progress in policy promoting a wider view of pastoralism (such as in Ethiopia regional governments like Somali Region). Kenya's County Governments and the devolution of resources and local governance in some Kenya Counties has led to more progressive pro-pastoral livestock policies (e.g., animal health service delivery, local government early responses etc.). There are of course challenges (e.g., corruption, poor leadership etc.), but some progress has been made in expanding local communities' voices and interests.
- Political changes have been important, including the Eritrea/Ethiopia re-rapprochement; a new Horn of Africa alliance (Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia). IGAD and member states have developed positive policies on resilience and actions plans (e.g., IGAD IDDRISI Framework). There is more regional integration and the adoption of a cross-border lens (moving from single country approaches to more regional lens), with IGAD and most donors having regional programming or approaches.
- Institutionalisation and adaption of early action in livelihood and livestock responses in times of droughts or crisis. Body of knowledge and experience has increased and been

institutionalised (e.g., through the Livestock Emergency Guidelines (LEGs)), while the use of crisis modifier and early response actions are now widely discussed.

- Livestock commercialisation has increased, such as through the growth of camel milk in urban and peri-urban areas; growth of new urban and peri-urban camel dairies; new models of livestock leasing; growth of an urban camel business amongst Somalis in Nairobi and neighbouring areas. Also, livestock (cattle) aggregation in Mombasa, Taita Taveta ranches (mostly Somali) is linked to supply chains in the Northern Kenya and Somalia for ranching and domestic and export market.
- A mobile technology revolution has led to the expansion of mobile and internet service connections in pastoralists regions. Some great work by Somalia and Somalia private telecommunication services and adaption of mobile payment services (M-PESA in Kenya, Somalia EvC/ZAAD) has played a critical role in facilitating diaspora remittances, as well as use by humanitarian agencies for more efficient mobile systems for cash transfers for vulnerable population.
- Growth of urban and peri-urban towns has affected pastoral livelihood options, and is linked to the expansion of education, health services etc. There has also been a growth of new infrastructure in pastoral areas, such as new roads (e.g., Isiolo-Moyale-Marsabit) and ports (e.g., Lamu's LAPPSET project and the development of Berbera Port and linkages to Somali Region and Ethiopia).

**Jeremy Lind, IDS, University of Sussex, UK**

'Dynamic change at the margins' – the book's sub-title – was an important rejoinder to depictions that pastoralism in north-east Africa was in terminal decline, driven by the impacts of global climate change and internal strife. As the region struggled in 2011-2012 with the impacts of yet another severe drought, the reliance on humanitarian aid as a response to long term vulnerabilities in pastoral areas was being questioned. While the need for longer-term approaches is acknowledged and the value of pastoralism within these is increasingly recognised, once again crisis framings loom large in debates on pastoralism and development in the region. Yet, just as was the case ten years ago, innovations and transformations driven by and happening within pastoral societies – or so called 'dynamic change' – suggest critical alternatives to dominant state and aid framings.

Despite continuing pressures from conflict, climate and disease, lives are better for many. Mobile phone networks continue their steady expansion, supporting new connectivity and commerce for places that were until recently 'off the grid'. New and upgraded roads are bringing services and markets ever closer, while cities and towns in the region continue to expand in ways that provide options for some outside of but still alongside pastoralism.

However, now as it was a decade ago, fortunes are split: a small but growing elite continues to do immensely well from livestock trade while diversifying into transport, land acquisitions, and other property. But livelihoods are deeply insecure for many – something that has little to do with pastoralism per se but rather the nature of change that favours the consolidation of wealth and power for a few. This divide refracts through other social differences – between men and women, young and old, town and 'bush'. The future of pastoralism over the next decade will continue to be written along these dividing lines and diverging pathways.

### **Read more**

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