

# Pastoral Mobility for Sustainable Livelihood System

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*RECONCILE*

## 1. Introduction

The concept of sustainable pastoralism defines a holistic existence both in livelihood and production system. This has to be supported by an environment that supports mobility within and across boundaries. Recent years, pastoralism and pastoralists have been forced to take different shapes and faces. New terms such as post-pastoralism which, has been shaped by new shifts in practice implies that new forms of pastoralism that have parted with the “millennial traditional pastoral ways of life” due to pastoral transformation. However there’s one common factor, that even though they are different types of pastoralism, practiced as cultural inclination or as system, they are supported in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) that are becoming increasingly interesting for private investors, mainly due to the discovery of exploitable resources such as water, energy sources, minerals and land for other non-pastoral uses.

*Is about protecting grasslands & pastoral ecosystems which support huge number of livestock & wildlife resources, which significantly contribute to the economy*



## 2. Mobility and its context of practicing pastoralism

The success of pastoralist livestock production depends on mobility in order to ensure the timely and reliable access to pastures when nutrients peak. This justifies why pastoralists depend on extensive herding<sup>1</sup>. This practice also ensure forage availability and pasture sustainability; however, their mobile lifestyles are being challenged by sedentarization

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<sup>1</sup> Pastoralism in Practice: Monitoring Livestock Mobility in Contemporary Sudan

policies. These have different concerns which, in part, are impacting the livelihood and production system of pastoralists in many ways, first; the land tenure system is changing due to the systematic high monetary value placed on pastoral land, secondly; new forms of investments altering the land use patterns both for food production and social interaction.

The presence of weak or the lack of policy and legal frameworks at the national level presents a set factor other challenges to the pastoral communities and by extension has opened the space for different levels of engagement by non-local communities in the transactions. In the other hand, where the policies or legal frameworks exists and provides clear methodologies towards secure tenure, the knowledge gap becomes the impediment. Often, pastoral community members do not have full understanding such legal instruments and thus leaning towards the traditional governance system which in the absence of defined complementarity are rendered ineffective as far as tenure security concerned.



This trend has not past unnoticed, it has defined not only local but also global debates around the condition and productivity of the world's pastoral lands and the need to recognize their importance as critical to a sustainable future for people who depend on it everywhere. The EU has enhanced its attention to the large scale investment in the ASALs, IFAD has defined work around the Inclusive Business module, preferably partnerships that do not require large-scale land acquisitions (IFAD 2010). The debate is not whether or not the investments or government development plans shouldn't or should be realized, it's more about the place for the pastoralists and recognition of the pastoral lands which, are largely rangelands and plays host to divers natural resources that are central in supporting the growth of national economies.

*A business model is the way in which a company structures its resources, partnerships and customer relationships in order to create and capture value – in other words, a business model is what enables a company to make money. Business models are considered as more inclusive if they involve close working partnerships with local landholders and operators, and if they share value among the partners.*

However, such contributions and growth of economies can only be realized if the landscape is secure. Because the self-regeneration of rangelands is support by a whole of coexistence between and amongst the humans, wildlife, livestock, plants etc. This makes the recognition of supporting mobile pastoralism as a potential methodology for sustaining pastoralism. However, it is also critical to recognize that, practicing mobile pastoralism has impacts in a degraded rangelands and can destabilize countries due to high influx of cross border movement. It can also endanger national security, compromise economic productivity, and rob the younger generation of opportunities for a prosperous future.

The opening up of a new investment frontiers in the ASALs brings many challenges that, if not quickly addressed, could put livelihood opportunities at even greater risk. Insecure land-tenure regimes in a fast-expanding space for exploiting oil and natural gas, wind power, coal,

*Investment model so far adopted amounts to development by dispossession/displacement of pastoralists*

etc. using large infrastructure attracts uncontrolled large-scale investments in these areas. Guidelines for

commercial engagement are urgently needed. Especially private investment in ASALs requires a clear framework, since the people living in these areas mainly pastoralists, who move their cattle to make best use of water and pasture are affected heavily by these investments.

Cases of large scale land acquisition or land grabbing are contributing to high commercial pressures on land on the pastoral land and livelihoods system. The trickledown effect of which is land fragmentation and conversion of usage. Essentially, they curtail mobility and stifles down the vibrancy of pastoralism in its real sense of practice.

Many important questions need to be addressed: How sustainable are these investments? What are their economic, social and environmental impacts? How are the needs of the local people being taken into account? Are policies, laws and institutions outward looking or are cognizant of the trends and the demands? To what extent are the pastoral communities involved in the formulation and implementation of some or most of these policies laws? What is or could be the role of the international and or development partners in supporting and or contributing to initiatives and processes that support sustainable pastoralism?

### **3. Conclusion**

Two observations are critical in the discourse of pastoral mobility: First; Extensive movement is a key strategy to meet nutritional demands of livestock while redistributing grazing pressure throughout the landscape. However, due to the lack of quantitative, continuous and intensive monitoring data, pastoral mobility tended to be overgeneralized as being “irrational”, which largely led to sedentarization-oriented policy-making. Second: Rotational grazing allows pastoralists to track greener pastures in arid and semi-arid environments while redistributing grazing pressure throughout the landscape. However, herding behaviors have been rarely studied rigorously due to lack of intensive and continuous monitoring of livestock movement.

- a) *Improved co-management in the rangelands:* Management of the rangelands in order to secure pastoralism has been recognized as an important approach towards addressing the different challenges that pastoralism is confronted with. In Kenya; the northern rangelands has used conservancies which includes group ranches joining together to form one big conservancy thus two types of conservancies private and community based the case of Naibunga and Olpajeta. However, the two models need a scenario building analysis to in depth understand the possible benefits for the communities in cases where conservancy model is applied strictly.

- b) Pastoral tradition water and natural resource management: Water is the lifeline of pastoralism but the paradox is, it is practised in rangelands with very unpredictable rain pattern. Success of pastoralism thus has been as a result of proper water use and management systems, traditional and often supported by government and other institutions. While the new trend towards supporting the establishment of water infrastructure is important, recognition of the systems and the role of customary systems is critical.
- c) Capacity and application of local skills and knowledge (training of animal health workers): In built capacity is critical for the sustainability of knowledge and skills, training of pastoral CSO in the past years has demonstrated that it is critical to develop capacities and institutions for sustainable change and development. The establishment of different networks in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia etc has kept the engagement with communities such community based animal health workers though it is not legal in some countries like Kenya but it has been proven that training of herders to provide first line service to animals saves more animals. This is also linked and results to local pastoral empowerment and sound capital base.
- d) Planning and mapping of pastoral lands and resources within: The world is more and more moving to the digital age. Identification of and monitoring of the trends of natural resources through remote sensing is becoming the rule of the game. As such in order to address conflict trends that are defining the face of pastoralism and pastoralists, temporal maps has the potential to facilitating targeted interventions with the ability to help practioners to understand the resource trends either residing or available in abundance. Boundaries are becoming more of concerns in the traditionally communal resources therefore in order to help the communities identify this through a more participatory way, joint mapping is important and the Rangelands Initiative through its programme in Tanzania Sustainable Rangelands Management Programme (SRMP) is a classical case. It help is isolating conservation areas and can also support conservation based livelihood system. Recognizes the existence of customary and statutory or formal institutions therefore defines governance and management of resources based on the practise. It doesn't change the social relations for pastoralist women but strengthens their roles in resource mapping.

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