

# Policies and Strategies for Pastoral Development in Ethiopia; the case study of Borena Pastoral Communities

Mohammed Yimer

Department of Civic and Ethical Studies

College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Arba Minch University

Email: [mohammed.yimer@amu.edu.et](mailto:mohammed.yimer@amu.edu.et)

## Abstract

*The paper discusses a review of Policies and Strategies for Pastoral Development in Ethiopia, taking the Borena pastoral community as a case study. In Ethiopia, despite decades of pastoral development programs and a plethora of policies designed to improve livelihoods, the vast majority of pastoral people still face a multitude of problems. Thus, this paper tries to raise policy and strategy areas that create development gaps and recommend alternative strategic policy options. It employs both primary and secondary data. The primary data is gathered using interview conducted between the officials of pastoral development office of SNNPR; while the secondary one is collected using mainly from the various national and international published literatures on the issue under discussion and from the documents of the development policies and strategies of the Ethiopian government. Provided that there are a number of unaddressed contemporary pastoral development challenges, the paper insists*

*that the existing pastoral policies and strategies need to be redesigned and reframed in a way the following problems could be reversed. policy issues such as conflict and gender empowerment, frequent drought, rangelands deterioration, expropriation of grazing land by government and investors, low levels of pastoralist involvement and lack of appropriate research and extension services which consequently contribute to the downward trend of development in the Borena pastoral community. Despite its central role and contribution to the society, pastoralism has been attacked as outdated and unproductive system by development policy planners. Hence, it is unsurprising that pastoralists in Ethiopia face not just unfavorable physical and environmental factors but also long years of neglect and the failure of development policies and strategies to satisfactorily reflect their views and interests. Land administration and use policies and laws that superficially address pastoral issues have not been sensitive to pastoralist traditions and hence pastoralists do not benefit from investments made in*



*their lands. Even though the government has listened to the needs of pastoralists, challenges still remain in addressing their complex needs. Cognizant of the problems discussed above, the paper argues that pastoralists should seek to work with the government to create contingency plans for drought, successful early warning and rapid response mechanisms. A very important and indispensable policy issue that the paper needs not to pass unnoticed is the issue of land tenure. Among others, this issue has two critical implications for the pastoral community in the study area. In the first place, it is inconceivable to think development in pastoral areas without taking water and range land resources as entry points. Secondly, land tenure policies are issues that can override the above mentioned bottlenecks to pastoral development. Therefore, importance of appropriate land tenure policies is highlighted in the paper. Furthermore, legal supports for pastoral policies in the area of conflict, gender mainstreaming, mobile education for those who continue to be mobile are issues the paper discussed widely. Finally, the paper concludes suggesting context specific recommendations for the eventual transformation of such a pastoral society in the Borena area.*

*Key words: Pastoralism, Borena, Pastoral Mobility, Development Challenges, Ethiopia*

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Ethiopia has the largest number of domestic livestock in Africa and much of it originates in the country's pastoral zones. These areas contain approximately 30 percent of the national population or 9.3 million cattle, 52 percent or 12.4 million sheep, 45 percent or 8.1 million goats and close to 100 % or 1.8 million camels (Catley 2009:2). Aklilu (2009) in his background note argues that animals in the export sector originate almost exclusively in the pastoral lowlands.

Despite the attraction of development policy planners very recently, political and economic marginalization, extreme and worsening levels of poverty and food insecurity, and conflict and insecurity, which are very common among the Ethiopian pastoral communities, until now, government address these challenges have been inadequate: they are biased, do not consider pastoralist realities or circumstances and have been ineffective. Even at the regional level, The African Union Commission, together with UN OCHA, launched the Pastoral Policy Initiative in July 2007 to address the challenges with the objective of developing a policy framework to address the challenges and needs of pastoralist communities, and serve as an advocacy tool and mechanism to attain the official recognition of pastoralists, protect their livelihoods and promote continent-wide commitment to the political, social and economic development of pastoralists. (Brussels Development Briefing no.26,p.2)

Pastoral communities in different parts of the country face common problems and challenges - among them lack of access to



social services, poor infrastructure and recurrent droughts. The marginalization of pastoralists is reflected not only by a lack of basic infrastructure and a lack of or poor access to basic social services (education, health services, water both for humans and animals) but also by a lack of appropriate policies. Pastoralists are politically marginalized partly because of the absence of coherent institutions to represent them. The political marginalization of pastoralist societies is reflected by their low level of participation in policy formulation and in various institutions of decision-making that affect their life. Marginalization is most severe for women who are given little share of the limited resources and services; their participation in public decision making is extremely limited.

The arid and semi-arid rangelands of southern Ethiopia (Borana rangelands) are almost entirely occupied by a pastoral population, which employs a communal resource system for livestock production and some traditional grazing enclosures (local name-kallo) that emerged in recent decades. These enclosures are relatively new trends that allude to a new dimension in the dynamics of community based resource management and could account for 9–18% of the total land area of the semi-arid Borena (Kamara et al., 2004; McCarthy et al., 2003). Part of the communal land was and continues to be converted into commercial ranching. The development of ranches has been based on the ranch models applied to the semi-arid areas of developed countries such as the United States of America and

Australia (McCarthy et al., 2003; Oba, 1998).

Experiments from the past, however, showed that many attempts at 'privatisation' of the communal land in the form of ranching have failed to stimulate livestock production (Oba, 1998). Recent surveys also confirmed that there has been an increase in crop farming activities in the communal lands (Alemayehu, 1998; Solomon, 2003), which transfers parts of the communal grazing lands to private use and reduces available land for grazing.

The rangeland management system in southern pastoral areas of Ethiopia is strongly based on the management of water. There are two major water sources in these areas, namely deep wells (local name-tullas) and water ponds. Tulla wells and rangelands that surround them are intensively used during the dry season. Water ponds are a mechanically excavated seasonal source of water and their development emerged in 1980. The capacity of the water ponds varies between 6000 and 10 000 m<sup>3</sup> (Oba, 1998). The aim of such water development programs was two-fold, namely to reduce pressure on the dry season rangelands and secondly to increase the use of the wet season rangelands. These aims, however, were not achieved because the water ponds attracted permanent settlement, leading to the abandonment of the wet-dry seasons grazing patterns. Consequently, rangelands served by the perennial ponds were overstocked, causing a severe environmental degradation in some of the areas (Oba, 1998). Such rangelands, characterized by different systems of grazing resource usage



and management of the communal grazing lands based on the water resources, can offer an opportunity to study changes in species composition and response of grasses to prolonged and intensive disturbance (Abule et al., 2005a; Gemedo-Dalle et al., 2006).

Drawing on extensive regional expert consultations conducted since 2007, the African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa, which was adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2011, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is the first continent wide policy initiative which aims to secure, protect and improve the lives, livelihoods and rights of African pastoralists. The policy framework is a platform for mobilizing and coordinating political commitment to pastoral development in Africa, and emphasizes the need to fully involve pastoralist women and men in the national and regional development processes from which they are supposed to benefit. The framework also emphasizes the regional nature of many pastoralist ecosystems in Africa and therefore, the need to support and harmonize policies across the Regional Economic Communities and AU Member States. Turning these strategies and aims into concrete results remains a challenge (.ibid)

Pastoralism in the horn of Africa, where a significant portion of the pastoralist communities exist, historically, has been marginalized, both geographically and politically. This was tied with the legacy of colonialism in the region. The creation of colonial states frequently cut pastoralists off from their traditional places for grazing,

water and markets. (CAADP Policy Brief 06, p.4) Colonial policy promoted agriculture in highland areas and livestock development in the lowlands based on ranching. Colonial attitudes and misunderstandings about pastoralism, economics and mobility tended to be reinforced by governments after Independence. They are still very evident in many countries - in land policies, in resettlements of pastoralists to make way for more 'commercial' investment, and in allocations of development support and services.

But the Ethiopian case is different and the political marginalization was tied to the lack of attention and awareness on the part of the government concerning the value and contribution of the pastoral livelihood to the national economy. Hence, it was very recently, that pastoralism has attracted the attention of development planners. However, the pastoralists are suffering from violent conflict and drought and the related humanitarian crises and famines are defining characteristics of pastoralism in many parts of the country, especially the Borena pastoral communities till now.

Though the Ethiopian pastoralists are known for their livestock production, they are not competent with the livestock trade with other countries in the horn of Africa, largely due to the inadequate attention given from the part of the government. For instance, in a study conducted on Livestock traded in selected Greater Horn countries in 2010, pastoralists in Sudan contributes: 1,500,000 pastoral sheep, 200,000 camels, 100,000 goats, in Barbara, Somaliland :

1,570,000 sheep and goats, 136,000 cattle, 97,000 camels while in Ethiopia it contributes 472,000 livestock only, which is the least one. (ibid).

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The need to go through the topic Policies and Strategies for Pastoral Development in Ethiopia taking the Borena pastoral community is justified by the increasing vulnerability of the study area under discussion. In pastoral areas of Ethiopia resources depletion and population growth have created competition for resources and almost inevitably, conflicts (IIRR and DF 2010, p.39). The pastoral communities in Ethiopia, though their contribution is high, have been marginalized and were given insignificant attention from the part of the government in the long history of the country. Due to this fact, the expected contribution of the pastoral economy to the national development has been reduced from time to time. The large livestock sector which constitutes forty percent of the total livestock of the country is suffering from frequent drought in the pastoral areas.

We find the various pastoral societies of the country in general and the selected study area, Borena pastoral community in particular in a state of complex problems which stem from lack of clear policy frameworks that can eradicate such problems. Hence, it is this point that made the researcher to go through the existing policies and strategies and try to suggest achievable and context specific recommendations to the government

development policy planners, NGOs and other concerned bodies.

### **1.3 Objectives**

1. To review the main policy frameworks that support pastoralism and the good practices and experiences.
2. To explore the impact of the national policies on the transformation of the pastoral society in the Borena Areas.
3. To identify the challenges and opportunities for the development of pastoralism in the study area?
4. To forward sound policy recommendations to stakeholders (i.e. development policy planners and the pastoral communities themselves).

### **1.4. Materials and Methods**

Hence, the officials of the Borena zone have got the chance to forward their perceptions regarding policies and strategies on their livelihood, development activities, land issues and others. Thus, the researcher collects all what is reflected in the interview and used a direct reflective interpretation. Finally, the data has been triangulated and discussed and presented.

#### **1.4.1 Sources of Data**

The paper utilized both primary and secondary data. The primary ones include, key informant and interview among the officials of the pastoral development office of the Borena zone and observation in the study area. The secondary data includes document analysis the published data



contributed by international scholars towards the promotion of pastoralism in eastern Africa.

### **1.4.2 Description of the Study Area**

The Borena zone is one of 13 administrative zones within Ethiopia's Oromya state. It is located in the Southern part of the state (between 3°36' – 6°38' North latitude and 3°43' – 39°30' East longitude) and borders Kenya. Yabello is the capital town of the Borena zone and lies 570 km south of Addis Ababa. The zone covers 48,360 km<sup>2</sup> of which 75% consists of lowland. The zone frequently is exposed to droughts. The zone consists of eight districts covering 275 "Gendas" (the lowest administrative unit). There are 19 urban centres, of which 10 have town administration. The zone is inhabited by almost 1 million people (CSA, 2008).

## **2. Pastoralism and Pastoral Livelihoods in Ethiopia**

Pastoralists live in the least developed regions of the country, characterized by poverty, high level of illiteracy, inadequate infrastructure particularly roads, the worst served by health services and receiving the least external support. Women in these regions are considered to be in an even poorer state than men, especially in terms of health conditions. This is because the illiteracy rate is higher among women, poverty is worse, access to health services is lower and the prevalence of harmful traditional practices that negatively impact on women's health is serious and widespread. Furthermore, the

capacity to deal with the situation is extremely limited. Although the pastoral system contributes to the national economy, the constraints and potentials for its development have been ignored in government policies and programs. Sectoral policies often reflect the way of life of the agricultural highlands and neglect that of pastoralism. For instance, Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI – the general development policy of the Ethiopian government) is biased towards the highland agricultural production system and does not adequately address the pastoral and agro-pastoral production systems. Similarly, the health and education sector policies have paid very little attention to the challenges in the area of providing health and education facilities to pastoralists. Recurrent drought is a major concern in pastoral areas, reducing forage supply and causing herd mortality, resulting in food insecurity and poverty. For instance, a study conducted in Borena indicates that the average livestock holding per household decreased by 37% during the last 17 years, mainly due to drought (Mohammed Mussa & Associates 2001). This situation suggests that decline in livestock assets may lead to food insecurity and poverty in pastoral areas unless assets diversification mechanisms are in place.

Pastoralists in the past have depended heavily on livestock and livestock products for their livelihood, but also seasonally on small-scale cereal production. Thus, some Ethiopian pastoralists are engaged in one way or another in both livestock and crop production. Crop production is an emerging



system supported by government extension agents. The expansion of cropping in recent years competes in some senses with livestock husbandry. Traditional bottomland grazing areas are used for growing maize and other crops. As a result of this situation, grazing resources are shrinking. In Borena, for example, non-pastoral groups from other areas cultivate even the wet-season grazing areas. As a result, livestock are forced to concentrate in a given area causing overgrazing. This situation has led to land degradation and a change in vegetation cover from grassland to woody vegetation.

To overcome such vegetation change, Borena pastoralists have increasingly shifted from cattle to camel husbandry. This is because camels are good milk producers even in a period of drought and can be used to transport water and food aid in time of crises.

### 2.1. Government Policy on Pastoralism in Ethiopia

In general terms, the history of development policies and programs in Ethiopia shows that they have neglected pastoralism even though the system contributed to the national economy. There have never yet been appropriate pastoral development policies and programs in the country. Previous policies did not even guarantee the land use rights of pastoralists. Pastoral land is often perceived as unoccupied and underutilized. Thus, policy-makers advocate the use of such resources by investors, or settling people from high-pressure areas or even by sedentarization schemes for pastoralists

themselves. These attitudes, however, create conflict which cannot be negotiated easily by the traditional users.

### 2.2 The Pastoral Policy

As a continuation of the various government policies and programs focusing on pastoralism, a pastoral policy was developed in 2002, which is one of the indicators of the attention given to the pastoral system. The vision of the government's pastoral policy is as follows (Ministry of Federal Affairs, 2002):

- Phased voluntary sedentarization along the banks of the major rivers as the main direction of transforming pastoral societies into agro-pastoral systems, from mobility to sedentary life, from a scattered population to small pastoral towns and urbanization.
- Complementing sedentarization by micro- and small-scale enterprises development in the urban centers and off-farm activities in the rural areas.
- Undertaking integrated development based on irrigation and focused on livestock production, complemented by static and mobile education and health services as well as rural roads, rural energy and water supply, rural telephone services etc.
- Co-ordinated and concerted federal support for program



ownership by the Regional States and communities, with capacity building to enable them to lead development at all levels.

- Allowing, enabling and coordinating the private sector and NGOs to play a positive role in line with the policy direction and within the framework of the broad program and strategy, after mobilizing their own resources.
- Tapping indigenous knowledge and skills on animal husbandry and rangeland management.

The pastoral policies and strategies of the government indicate that there is a commitment to settle all pastoralists in the country. However, these policies and strategies have not recognized the fact that it is not possible to settle all pastoralists given all the different circumstances, for instance the size of the cultivable land by the river banks, the ownership and clan issues etc. The policy lacks clarity on the number of pastoralists that will be settled and the support to mobile pastoralists that will still be needed to improve the productivity of pastoralism. Previous attempts to settle pastoralists should be taken as lessons.

For instance, in 1980s and early 1990s, international NGOs in collaboration with government organizations (the Ministry of Agriculture) had implemented a settlement program in Borena zone. Most of the settlements were situated near major roads and towns. However, the program was not

successful since it ignored a range of factors including indigenous pastoral land tenure and resource use pattern (Getachew Kassa, 2000). The government in its policy acknowledges that there is a knowledge gap on pastoralism. On the other hand, it proposes that sedentarization is the solution to address the problem. The policy is thus contradictory. If there is a knowledge gap, then there is a need for consulting with the pastoral communities and designing the most appropriate policy and strategies, instead of pre-determining the solution, sedentarization (Mahmoud Abdulahi, 2003).

The inconsistencies of policies and strategies related to pastoralism are caused by a number of factors including the knowledge gap on pastoralism, and the absence of representation and participation of the pastoral communities. The newly established Pastoral Affairs Standing Committee within the parliament is expected to represent the pastoralists and be their voice on certain critical pastoral issues.

## 2.3 Three Policy Areas and Their Impact

### 2.3.1 Land use and land tenure

The wording of the constitutional clauses pertaining to the land rights of farmers and pastoralists is remarkably similar, but the reality has been quite different. Within the ultimate control of land by the state, the gradual codification of land rights has improved the tenure security for farmers who pay land tax and now can often register their use rights. In contrast, the land rights of



Ethiopian pastoralists have become less secure over time. Specific laws to implement pastoral land rights have not been developed.

Ethiopia does not need a wholly new or ‘modernized’ system of pastoral tenure. Instead, it needs to build upon existing customary systems and clarify their relationship to government – a process of legal and administrative evolution, not radical change. To do this, Ethiopia needs specific laws that put into practice the pastoral land rights that are enshrined in the country’s constitution.

### **Recognition of livestock mobility**

Mobility, a key to pastoral risk management in drought, has been particularly controversial in Ethiopia. The government has moved from an explicit goal of sedentarization to one that encourages ‘necessary measures to be put in place to encourage pastoralists to settle voluntarily’ (Ethiopia 2005), but this remains a long way from viewing mobility as a positive response that should be supported by policy. Mali provides an example of a comprehensive set of laws to preserve livestock movement that can have relevance for Borena pastoral lowlands of Ethiopia. Pastoral routes are classified as part of the public domain and under government protection (Article 52), and movement is sanctioned for purposes of nomadism or transhumance ‘across the whole national territory’ subject to restrictions on protected areas and animal sanitation requirements (Articles 4, 5 and 14). This policy measure would be worth considering for pastoral areas of Ethiopia,

especially in Borena pastoral community of Oromya Region where seasonal movements often entail long distances.

### **Protection of pastoral resources**

Losses of pastoral lands have occurred on three major fronts: to irrigated agriculture, wildlife and conservation interests, and agricultural encroachment both by farmer pastoralists themselves and by neighboring non-pastoralists. The Ethiopian pastoralists in general have developed customary common property land tenure systems which are well documented. Without legal guarantees, pastoralists have no security of tenure if individuals or outside interests wish to use their land. Commercial development, extensions to the road network, improved security, and population pressure that has forced farmers to leave the highlands have increased the ability of outside interests to appropriate pastoral property.

### **2.3.2 Settlement and sedentarization**

To be effective, increased investment in Borena pastoral areas would need to be matched by fundamental changes in some long-standing aspects of Ethiopian pastoral policy. Settlement policy is one of these. The problem is not that Ethiopia has a pastoral settlement policy, but that it has a settlement policy that does not acknowledge the critical importance of mobility. By rural Ethiopian standards, pastoralists tend to be reasonably well off (Davies and Bennett 2007). Reasonably well off pastoralists have no reason to want to become poor peasants, and since Ethiopia already has a surplus of poor peasants, the national economy has

little to gain from creating more of them. Simply settling people is no solution.

### **2.3.3 Market-related Policies**

A variety of studies have indicated that formal live animal and meat exports are almost exclusively reliant on livestock obtained in pastoral areas. Recognizing that the live animal and meat export markets are dependent on animals produced in the lowlands, there is a strong case for public investment in certain market-related infrastructure, such as market feeder roads. Connecting producers and consumers / processors is a critical step. Legese et al. (2008) and Aklilu (2002) provide some specific suggestions. Besides standard and obvious steps (water, shade, fencing, ramps in markets and roads connecting markets) but noting that unless these are identified as real needs they may not have any impact. Other activities such as building up and regularizing feed markets, improving availability of consumer goods in markets next to livestock

Markets, ensuring regular and strategically defined market days, and moving market transactions from dyadic negotiation to auctions should be investigated.

Like many pastoral groups of Eastern Africa, these communities live in areas that are arid or semi-arid with low precipitation and erratic rainfall. Moreover, the area is prone to frequent droughts that often affect the pastoralists and their livestock. Together, the population of these three communities is estimated around two million (Personal Communication with SNNPRS officials).

The pastoral groups of the region traditionally depend on the common property resources consisting of pasture, water and mineral licks. Each has management rules that regulate access and responsibilities. Customarily, land is the

collective property of the pastoralists and managed according to specific rules.

Pastoralists are confronted with many natural as well as man-made problems but the paper will focus only on the latter. In Ethiopia, the man-made problems that pastoralists are facing have their roots in the relationship between the pastoralists and the state in a historical perspective.

Pastoralists have always been left on the margin of development. The general public and the decision makers who come from the farming communities often misconceive their production system, particularly mobility and flexible land use systems. Among other things, pastoralists are said to be wanderers, engaged in habitual moving without aim (Key informant Girma Tegegne)

The second problem is that their lands are often taken from them by the states or private schemes because the latter think that the land is empty. These have resulted in displacement of pastoral communities leading to livelihoods crises.

In general pastoralists share all of these problems and in fact, the customary resource tenure rights have come under serious threats.

### **1. Loss of traditional pastoral lands to commercial ranches.**

These include Dambala Wachu Ranch (12000 hectare, Sarite Ranch (17, 000 hectare), Walensu Ranch (25, 000 hectare), Dida Liban Ranch (4000 hectare), Dida Tuyura Ranch (above 4000 hectare), Agirte Ranch (about 800 hectare) and the proposed Melbana Group Ranch, which covers 56 square kilometers of rangeland (Key informant, Nuru Yesuf).

In some cases, the community has lost access to many ritual sites because of the



establishment of private ranch at ritual grooves (e.g. Dida Liban Ranch). Although some of these sites are temporarily under the de facto control of the community, economically powerful and politically well-connected individuals or groups from the up country may take them from the pastoralists at any time.

From experience in other parts of Ethiopia so far, it seems that there is no guarantee against land loss. The problem may be worsened if the land privatization policy, which many international and national forces are pushing today, is adopted.

## 2. Loss of Huge rangelands

Range Lands along with water wells, that are both economically and culturally crucial particularly for Borena pastoralists, have been arbitrarily annexed to a competing region.

The water well complexes of Gofa and Laye are examples. As a result, the right holders have lost their property. While this has already resulted in violent conflicts (which are claiming lots of life) between right-holding pastoral communities and the new occupants, the conflict is not resolved yet.

Some few years ago, Ministry of Mines put for sale, a salt lake from which the pastoralists get mine mineral licks for their livestock. Although the traditional leadership seriously objected the attempt and the community at large and thus put on hold, people still suspect that the same may happen again. Because from experience at other parts of Ethiopia, there is no guarantee for land loss (Key Informant, Hassan Redi).

## 3. Pastoral land is being seriously encroached on by the expansion of unsustainable agriculture.

The pastoral areas are less suited to crop production due to physical aridity. However, the government is implementing in the pastoral areas rural development approach

that is designed primarily for the crop-producing highland areas. The approach does not take into account environmental and social peculiarities of pastoral areas. The outcome of the expansion of farming and other exclusive areas in the rangelands are curtailment of mobility routes, evolution of private land 'titles' in the common property regime and land use conflicts within the community.

## 4. Inadequate institutional representation

Until very recently, there was a total lack of government institution that represent pastoralism. Pastoral production system has not been included in any school curriculum, which clearly shows all experts are ignorant of pastoral production system except life experience of those with pastoral background.

Recently, however, few NGOs are merging who are concerned about pastoralism. At regional level also Oromya Regional State has set up a Pastoral Development Commission but it is quite new to make experience.

In sum, despite some positive developments in terms of policy initiatives with regard to institutional representation, a lot remains to be done in addressing the multifaceted pastoralist problems.

(1) Irrigation and other land uses versus pastoralism;

(2) Land tenure and the importance of mobility and flexibility;

(3) Settlement and the issues associated with pastoral sedentarization; and

(4) Trade and especially the question of overseas export versus regional/unofficial cross border and domestic marketing.



## **Drought Cycle Management**

Here we report the cause of livestock deaths in the Pastoral Risk Management (PARIMA) study area of southern Ethiopia and the reason cited by the owner for the cause of death. Clearly the driving factor here is the drought losses that occurred in the first half of 2000, with negligible losses coming in other periods and from other reasons. Abebe (2009) provides a summary of drought cycle management (DCM) and livestock based emergency interventions in pastoral areas of Ethiopia that can be used to help pastoral households cope with events such as the one illustrated above for the year 2000. He notes that there has been growing interest in this approach, but that it has really only been since 2005/2006 that it has been attempted in Ethiopia. The set of components that are needed for a drought cycle management plan are: 1) drought early warning; 2) drought preparedness and contingency planning; and 3) policies to support drought resilience.

### **Drought early warning**

With drought early warning a surveillance, analysis, and reporting system is put in place to attempt to monitor and forecast drought events. Sandford identified around 33 early warning systems that had been developed for Ethiopia (2002). Many were found to be limited in their impact as they were not clearly linked to response measures, were remotely sensed and technology driven, were not linked to community monitoring and response, and had no clear triggers that led to specific actions.

## **Drought preparedness and contingency planning**

Drought preparedness and contingency planning addresses many of these problems. It sets up a set of steps to be taken in response to a drought prediction, with a clear link between policies and triggers. It also has developed a funding strategy for these policies in advance of the event, rather than having to appeal for funds when the drought has already taken hold. Ethiopia still is working toward having this in place. Dawit (2009) argues that the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund is not easily accessible at the local level, leading to it being accessed only twice since its creation in 2000. As it is managed centrally and funds are largely based in Addis Ababa, this limits the effectiveness of the program.

### **Policies to support drought resilience**

The planning should build in policies to support drought resilience. Barton et al (2001) identify policies that support pastoral land tenure, strengthening pastoral institutions, and improving market infrastructure and access as long term policies that will also improve drought resilience. Mobility, a key to pastoral risk management in drought, has been particularly controversial in Ethiopia (Getachew G. and *et.al* 2007).

### **Land Tenure**

The wording of the constitutional clauses pertaining to the land rights of farmers and pastoralists is remarkably similar, but the reality has been quite different. Within the

ultimate control of land by the state, the gradual codification of land rights has improved the tenure security for farmers who pay land tax and now can often register their use rights. In contrast, the land rights of

Ethiopian pastoralists have become less secure over time. Specific laws to implement pastoral land rights have not been developed (Ibid, 8)

**Table 1 Contrasting views of development in pastoral areas**

Issue	View from outside	Views from pastoralist areas
Mobility	Nomadism - a stage in the development process, pre-sedentarisation	Mobility of livestock, people, labour, finance - essential for modern livelihoods
Climate and Environment Change	Villains in environmental degradation, and victims needing support for climate adaptation	Respond to non-equilibrium environments and climate variability as a way of life
Markets	Uneconomic, weak, backward – need to be formalised and regulated, value chains upgraded	Vibrant commercial trade, cross-border, linked to regional/global markets, constrained by states
Agriculture	Route to settlement and improved livelihoods	A temporary stop-gap. Needs to be flexible to support pastoralism and locally controlled – no land grabs
Technology	Backward, requiring modernisation (range management, fences, breeding)	Appropriate technology, mixing old (mobile pastoralism) with new (cell phones, internet)
Diversification	Way out of pastoralism, coping strategy	Complements pastoralism, adds value, provides business opportunities, reinvestment of new income in livestock
Socioeconomic groups	Homogenous, tribal	Highly differentiated, different socioeconomic groups
Gender	Regressive, anti-women	Women as key innovators, agents of diversification, promote peace through trade networks
Youth	Dangerous, idle, impoverished – engaged in banditry and raiding	Connectors to new economic activities, use new political fora to negotiate for pastoralists

Source: FAC CAADP Policy Brief 06 / March 2012



## **The Role of Mobile Education in Borena Pastoral Community**

### **Pastoral Filed Schools (PFS) in Ethiopia**

There are about 50 Pastoral Field Schools across in Ethiopia. In 2010, FAO in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia established six pilot Pastoral Field Schools in Borena Zone of Oromya National Regional State. In 2011, the PFS approach was expanded to three regions - Afar, Somali and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples regions.

### **Role of NGOs**

NGOs implementing PFS in their interventions include IIRR, VSF-Germany, VSF-Suisse, Oxfam GB, Save the Children International, Pastoral Concern, COOPI and Liben Zone Pastoral Development Office. At local level activities are implemented by local communities in collaboration with local authorities and the respective regional Pastoral Areas Development Commission and Bureaus.

### **Borena Case Study**

The Borena rangeland was formerly acclaimed to be the finest grazing lands in Eastern Africa. However, it is currently degraded due to recurrent droughts, over grazing, denuding, bush encroachment, termite infestation, erosion of the traditional natural resource management practices and competing land use requirements. The degradation of the rangelands is detrimental to livestock productivity and pastoral food security, reducing the availability of food and milk for the local population and

limiting opportunities for generating income from sales of healthy livestock.

In the PFS session the bush encroachment is one of the agendas they discuss. Based on Pastoralists interest and the involvement of the local government, selective bush clearing was conducted at each PFS centers. Accordingly, they cleared 168 hectares of bush, estimated at ETB 84,000. They also benefited from the pasture for their livestock and priority is given to PFS beneficiaries, who are extremely poor and vulnerable households also benefited from the project. They have improved their livestock feeding and also the sites are used as demonstration trial for each PFS.

The project provided the awareness to solve pastoralist's own problems by themselves so that they are prepared for and are resilient to different forms of hazards. It has enhanced better quality community-managed sustainable grazing land, improved quality and quantity of rangeland resources which led to improved livestock body condition, increased milk supply and food availability in the target beneficiary community.

This practice also supported the reclamation of commonly reserved pastureland, which is of long term benefit in continuously regenerating the land. Moreover, sufficient grazing land has been provided for lactating cows and their calves and milk production boosted.

Currently, government and good number of NGOs are investing huge resources to curb bush encroachment problem through PSF approach.

However, much remains to be done for successful scale up and expansion of Pastoral Field Schools in Pastoral areas of Ethiopia, which include among others, the creation of an appropriate adult education system that is relevant, appropriate, accessible and compatible with pastoral lifestyles. Besides this, PFS has to be tailored to specific needs of communities so that PFS has the potential to be an appropriate extension approach for future investment in the dry land areas.

PFS is proven as the right approach to organize pastoralist communities and also to ensure gender equality but it must be outward-looking and gain access to new ideas and support. Therefore, supportive policy measures have to be taken by all stakeholders to scale it up.

#### **4. Analysis, Results and Discussions**

The policy environment of the country can be seen at different levels. On one level, national economic policies (which have higher economic growth as their main goal) impinge upon pastoralist livelihoods. The push towards market-oriented development paths by international financial institutions (Rankin 2001; Goode and Maskovsky 2001; Harvey 2003) has had negative consequences for local communities. In Ethiopia, policies aimed at encouraging private investment and entrepreneurship has been translated into loss of crucial dry-season grazing areas, particularly in the Afar and Oromya Regions (interview with Girma Tadesse, SNNPRS Pastoralist Development office). In Borena Zone, thousands of hectares of pasture land are handed over to

private investors, disturbing the seasonal migration of pastoralists and reducing available pasture land (interview with Temtim kuro; Jarso 2014). The emerging trend of establishing ranching cooperatives in Borena Zone is also a sign that private property regimes are infiltrating pastoralist customary institutions whose foundation is communal property regimes (interview with Boku Tache Dida). These two aspects intensify the competition among pastoralists for land and water.

#### **Results and Discussions**

The first and not so favorable trend so far and scenario for the future is one where land and resource rights of pastoral communities are not protected, mobile pastoralism is restricted through the appropriation of key pastoral resources and important migratory routes for non-pastoral uses (e.g., large-scale irrigation), and market opportunities are restricted to heavily-subsidized overseas trade channels.

The paper highlights four key issue areas that are most critical: (1) irrigation and other land uses versus pastoralism; (2) land tenure and the importance of mobility and flexibility; (3) settlement and the issues associated with pastoral sedentarization; and (4) trade and especially the question of overseas export versus regional/unofficial cross border and domestic marketing. The important issues of conflict, governance, and education overlay each of these four themes, often in complicated ways, and also will shape future scenarios in pastoral areas. We feel that policies surrounding land use, land



tenure, sedentarization, and trade in pastoral areas need the most urgent attention.

Widespread environmental degradation occurs as remaining pastoral herds are forced onto smaller and less productive lands, and most of the key pastoral riverine areas are taken over by large-scale irrigation schemes, which makes the entire pastoral enterprise unviable. Under this scenario conflict is endemic as well-armed pastoral communities fight to defend their lands, markets, and livelihoods, and food insecurity is widespread as pastoralists can no longer produce foods nor earn the cash to purchase them. In this near future scenario the tourist trade precipitously declines as wildlife herds disappear with the loss of open rangelands and widespread insecurity which discourages travel to these areas. The costs of food aid and humanitarian assistance also is very high and dwarves other forms of development assistance and investment in the area. Similar to what is found today (2014), towns are pockets of widespread poverty and food aid distribution and mainly attract the destitute and ex-pastoralists who can no longer make a living from a heavily-constrained pastoral sector. Most employment opportunities in towns are limited to low-waged casual labor, petty trading, and charcoal making and firewood gathering and there are few value-added industries. These towns continue to grow as impoverished, ex-pastoralists flock to them to seek food aid and petty employment opportunities and, consequently, their hinterlands experience serious environmental problems through overuse by herds of poor herders and from fuel wood

extraction and charcoal production. Women and children especially suffer under this sub-optimal scenario since they are most vulnerable to negative processes and likely to suffer serious nutritional problems as a result. With widespread poverty and the decline in pastoral incomes, enrolment in schools suffers as there is little cash to buy school supplies and books and cover school fees. At a national level consumers in towns and cities are experiencing higher prices for animal products since local demand cannot be met from the domestic livestock sector with the reduced viability of lowland pastoralism. Instead, urban consumers would have to increasingly rely on imported meats and dairy products, including powdered milk and other expensive items. Finally, the demise of the pastoral sector and its production capacity damage foreign exchange earnings as live animal and chilled meat exports also decline along with the sector. The capacity to meet both of these activities is almost completely dependent on a vibrant pastoral economy.

Sixthly, we expect continued pressures on pastoral rangelands and challenges to pastoralism by outside investors, neighboring agriculturalists, mining/mineral interests, and state-financed irrigation schemes. These threats highlight the need for land legislation and official recognition on common pastoral lands and these pressures are unlikely to slow down in the next 15 years. This is an area where the government must play an important role to protect pastoral lands, a protection that is provided in Ethiopia's constitution but not implemented in practice. Unless there is



land and legislation reform that recognize pastoralists' rights to their own lands and resources, we will continue to see increased conflict and insecurity in these areas and heightened ambiguities over land rights. In addition, these policy actions must be linked with a recognition of the strong economic contributions that pastoralism makes to regional economies and GDP (Little et al, 2009), to counter claims that better uses of pastoral lands bring higher returns to local and national economies.

Finally, and related to point six above, unless constructive actions are taken, conflict will continue to damage pastoral economies and development possibilities, especially in the the Oromya Region where on-going conflict has disrupted trade, food production, education and other activities. The presence of conflict will override most of the positive trends in pastoral economies discussed in this document and strongly shape future trajectories in pastoral areas unless peace is instituted, particularly among the Borena pastoral community.

### Way forward

The diversity of pastoralist groups needs to be recognized: not all pastoralists are at the same level of vulnerability. Some are well-off with stable livelihoods. Others, once stable in pastoral production, today find themselves in danger of losing their livelihoods. Still others have fallen out of the pastoral system altogether, own no livestock or land and live in shanties with no access to social amenities, depending almost entirely on relief agencies. Current policy and practice must accommodate these

different categories of pastoralists and their particular needs.

There is a need for increased political representation of pastoralists in the decision-making processes and the recognition of the role of traditional institutions. Favorable land tenure policy and legislation as well as land use planning are key tools to improve pastoralists' livelihoods especially in the context of large land acquisition trends. Further support is needed in primary veterinary care in pastoral areas, especially systems which link community-based animal health workers to veterinary professionals and the involvement of the private sector, under the regulation and supervision of national veterinary services.

More needs to be done as to capture the benefits at local level of the environmental services that pastoralism provides. Further research includes a better understanding of the complex relationship between livestock and climate change and the importance of the livestock sector to the adaptation strategies of rural poor people in Borena. The development of livestock value chains represent an economic potential but requires improved market access, reducing livestock trade barriers and non-tariff barriers, enhancing market information systems, SPS compliance and financing mechanisms. Support extension services that responds to the needs and interests of pastoralists, and which build upon their extensive indigenous knowledge are needed. There is need to invest in value addition at local level, branding of pastoral products, utilization of livestock products in urban and peri urban areas.

## Conclusion

With regard to trade, to bring the illegal cross border trade into legal status would require improving prices and ease of marketing domestically through major investments in infrastructure, including additional customs and banking facilities on the borders, and subsidies. These actions would be hugely expensive, of questionable sustainability, and might only re-direct the trade to other unofficial channels. Currently traders in Ethiopia's border areas need to traverse several hundred kilometers of territory to officially export their animals because of the glaring lack of banking facilities and customs posts. Further research on this topic, especially the benefits/costs to different actors in the system (e.g., herders and small-scale traders) and the modalities of financing and streamlining export requirements, is sorely needed.

With regard to veterinary services, Policy reform also is needed to widen the role of private veterinarians while limiting government to regulatory functions and controlling trans-boundary animal diseases rather than clinical services that can be better provided by the private sector.

The planning for drought cycle management should build in policies to support drought resilience. Recent experiences suggest that livelihood based emergency response approaches merit further analysis, experimentation, and expansion.

Settlement policies, therefore, must take into account the importance of maintaining

mobility but also dealing with growing human populations who have been forced out of pastoralism through drought or other shocks or by choice.

Concerning education, without any kind of doubt, it will be important for pastoral welfare and pastoral economies in Borena and the surrounding community in the future. It can offer a window of access to opportunity for self-development and employable skills training among youth so they can serve the community as useful citizens, who intern have the tendency to bring a gradual transformation among the pastoral community under discussion.

## Recommendation

### The Government of Ethiopia must:

- ➡ Recognize and respect pastoral mobility
- ➡ Recognize and protect pastoralists' land and resource rights, ensuring that women have equal rights to men and recognizing that pastoralism depends on freedom of movement for herds between pastures and water sources.
- ➡ Put an end to inappropriate development policies aimed at pastoralists, including encouraging settling communities through inappropriate borehole drilling and the assignment of fixed grazing lands to pastoralist communities.
- ➡ Empower pastoralist communities to influence policy and implementation at the national level, including the





planning of climate change adaptation strategies.

- ➡ Create positive diversification for pastoralists and alternative livelihoods for ex-pastoralists through investment in education for women and men to ensure salaried employment both outside of and complementary to pastoralism.
- ➡ Acknowledge and address the specific needs of ex-pastoralists in national and regional development strategies given that this group is unlikely to re-enter pastoral production.
- ➡ Provide social welfare support to pastoralist communities in the form of cash payments in place of food aid to enable the members of pastoralist communities' meet their basic needs in terms of food, health care, and education.
- ➡ Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to manage conflict between pastoral groups and others, and enable practical early warning of conflicts and rapid response through the provision of adequate funding and resources. This should build on existing traditional conflict resolution mechanisms.
- ➡ Design and implement affirmative action of capacity building in order to address multi-faceted problems that pastoralists are facing. This includes creating access to pastoral education in a manner that is appropriate to ecological and socio-economic realities of pastoral regions.

- ➡ Negotiate appropriate mechanisms within the East African Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to enable cross border migration and conflict resolution, building on experience in West Africa.

- ➡ Work with the African Union to develop a pastoral policy framework to provide co-ordinated policies of the kind outlined in this paper, with a special emphasis on cross-border issues, including livestock movement, marketing, disease control, conflict management and freeing up cross border trade in livestock products and commodities.

#### **Key issues to be considered in developing strategic options for pastoral / agro-pastoral extension**

- Greater efforts are required to ensure the participation of pastoral people.
- Provide appropriate services, i.e. services that are efficient, culturally sensitive and sometimes mobile.
- Promoting resilience in the pastoral economy may be a critical way of enabling sustainable land management.
- Diversification of pastoral livelihoods to incorporate both complementary and alternative sources of income;
- Increasing equitable access to markets, domestic and international, for the full range of goods and services produced by pastoralism;
- Technical innovations to bolster the rangelands management capacities of



pastoralists, which build on the adaptive capacities of pastoralists in the face of climate change;

- Conflict avoidance strategies
- Provision of financial services and products that are tailored to the needs and resources of Pastoralists;
- Develop incentives to promote the social and economic security of pastoral communities, while respecting their knowledge systems and collaborating with customary pastoral institutions;
- Understanding the basic needs of pastoral women, the threats they face, their roles in pastoral societies and how these roles are changing.
- Supporting women's empowerment, looking not only at how to enable pastoralists to become more market oriented, but in particular at how to ensure that women capture the benefits of economic empowerment

- Focus on Capacity building (human resource trained on pastoral development specialization)
- Strengthening Partnership at international, regional, national and institutional level (strong networking among the partners & institutes)
- Pastoral oriented education /Curriculum development (based on clear understanding of pastoral systems)
- Technology that support the livelihood of pastoral community Research and policy interactions as a point of discussion
- Promotion of pastoral issues into bigger image
- Alternative comprehensive policy support on pastoral development
- Focus on Climate change and its impact on pastoral societies
- Strengthening networks organized around pastoral research and development

### Issues for Consideration for Higher Academic Institutions for Research and Community Services

- Focus on Pastoral livelihood oriented research
- Clear direction for Pastoral innovation system
- Focus on Deep Indigenous knowledge and best practices
- Creating Policy awareness for pastoral societies

### References

- Abebe, D., Cullis, A., Catley, A., Aklilu, Y., Mekonnen, G. and Ghebre chirstos, Y. 2008. Livelihoods impact and benefit-cost estimation of a commercial de-stocking relief intervention in Moyale district, southern Ethiopia. Disasters. The Journal of Disaster Studies, Policy and Management 32/2, 167-189
- Abule, E., Snyman, H.A., Smit, G.N., 2005a. Comparisons of pastoralists'



perceptions about rangeland resource utilization in the Middle Awash Valley of Ethiopia. *Journal of Environmental Management* 75

Aklilu, Y. 2002. An audit of the livestock marketing status in Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan, Volumes I and II. OAU/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources.

Catley, Andy. 2009. The Role of Veterinary Services in Pastoral Economic Growth in Ethiopia. Unpublished Concept Note for Pastoral Economic Growth and Development Study, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Coppock, D.L., 1994. The Borena plateau of southern Ethiopia: Synthesis of pastoral research, development and change, 1980–91. ILCA (International livestock Centre for Africa) Systems study 5. ILCA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Dawit 2009. Livestock and Animal Product Trade and their Importance for Pastoral Economic Growth in Ethiopia. Unpublished Concept Note for Pastoral Economic Growth and Development Study, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Davies, J. and Bennett, R. 2007. Livelihood adaptation to risk: Constraints and opportunities for pastoral development in Ethiopia's Afar region. *Journal of Development Studies* 43(3): 490 – 511.

Future Agricultures; Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa: Diverse livelihood pathways, FAC CAADP Policy Brief 06 | March 2012. (Website: [www.future-agricultures.org](http://www.future-agricultures.org))

Gemedo-Dalle, G., Maass, B.L., Isselstein, J., 2006. Rangeland condition and trend in

the semi-arid Borena lowlands, southern Oromya, Ethiopia. *African Journal of Range and Forage Science* 23,

Getachew G. and et.al 2007. Policy Options for Pastoral Development in Ethiopia. Report Number 3; Pastoral Economic Growth and Development Policy Assessment, Ethiopia

Getachew Kassa, (2000) "An Overview of Government Policy Interventions in Pastoral Areas: Achievements, Constraints and Prospects". Proceedings of the National Conference on Pastoral Development in Ethiopia. Pastoral Forum Ethiopia, February 2, 2000.

Legese, G., Haile Mariam Teklewold, D. Alemu and A. Negassa. 2008. Live Animal and Meat Export Value Chains for Selected Areas in Ethiopia: Constraints and Opportunities for Enhancing Meat Exports. Improving Market Opportunities. Discussion Paper #12. ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute). Nairobi, Kenya.

Little, Peter D. 2009. Income Diversification among Pastoralists: Lessons for Policy Makers. Policy Brief Number 3, COMESA and Pastoral Areas Coordination, Analysis and Policy Support (PACAPS) Program, Tufts University, Medford, MA.

McCarthy, N., Kamara, A.B., Michael, K., 2003. Co-operation in Risky Environments: Evidence from Southern Ethiopia. *Journal of African Economics* 12 (2), 236–270.

Mahmoud Abdulahi, (2003) "Pastoral Development Strategies and Policies in Ethiopia: A Critical Analysis and Evaluation". Paper presented at the Third

National Conference on Pastoralism  
and Pastoral Development. December 23 -  
24, 2003.

Mohammed Mussa & Associates (2001).  
Pastoral Development Program in Ethiopia.  
Consultancy report prepared for  
Oxfam Great Britain.

New challenges and opportunities for  
pastoralism in ACP countries; Delegates at  
the briefing. Brussels Development  
Briefing no.26. Brussels, 22<sup>nd</sup> February  
2012.

Oba, G., 1998. Assessment of indigenous  
range management knowledge of the Booran  
pastoralists of Southern  
Ethiopia. Part I. GTZ/Borena  
Lowland pastoral Development  
program, 98pp.

Solomon, T.B., 2003. Rangeland evaluation  
and perceptions of the pastoralists in the  
Borena zone of southern  
Ethiopia. Ph.D. Thesis, University of  
the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa,  
330pp.