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Pastoralism on the Margin

By John Markakis



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Summary

Pastoralism is an ancient mode of mobile livestock production that makes extensive use of grazing lands in the lowlands of the Great Rift in eastern Africa and the Horn. Pastoralists in this region inhabit an arid dryland terrain that does not support continuous crop cultivation and cannot sustain large population numbers. Freedom of mobility over large tracts of land is essential to pastoralist production, and it was a prized prerogative of the people in the pre-colonial period. Although pastoralist communities never formed states of their own in the region, they lived in a rough equilibrium with centralized states created by agrarian societies, yet preserved a fiercely defended autonomy.

Colonialism deprived pastoralists of autonomy and freedom of movement by enveloping them within the boundaries of states established in a new geopolitical pattern. Mobility was further constrained within each state by district boundaries, game parks, nature reserves, quarantine zones and tribal grazing zones. To promote commercial agriculture, the pillar of the colonial economy, large tracts in the pastoralist zone were opened to cultivation through irrigation, depriving pastoralists of land and water. The result was to undermine the material foundations of the pastoralist economy and to damage the fabric of pastoralist society, a process that was accelerated by widespread conflict in the drylands during that period. No investment or technological innovation was brought to the pastoralist economy, nor were any 'modernizing' processes such as communications, education, health care, transport or urbanization introduced into the pastoralist milieu. As a result, when independence came, pastoralism was isolated on the margin of the African state and society.

Independence did not halt the decline of pastoralism; it accelerated it. The states in eastern Africa and the Horn retained the colonial blueprint of the economy, promoting commercial cultivation for export, often on irrigated dryland previously used for grazing. Large areas in the pastoralist domain were designated hunting blocs, national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, etc., from where mobile herders were either excluded or were restricted in their activities. Land was taken from the pastoralist zone without consulting or even informing the inhabitants; pastoralists' rights to land were not recognized in law until recently in any of the states in the region.

There was little more investment or technological innovation brought to the pastoralist zone in the post-colonial period than earlier. Inadequate resources and the difficulty of adapting the conventional systems of educa-

tion and health care to serve mobile communities hampered state efforts. Development plans focused on improving livestock production for the domestic and export markets, largely ignoring the needs of the people themselves. State policy throughout the region has been to urge the pastoralists to adopt a settled mode of life, in order to benefit from services such as education and health care, and facilities such as communications and transport.

The erosion of the material base of pastoralism accelerated due to an adverse climatic trend in the region, which increased the incidence and duration of drought, bringing famine and disease to humans and livestock. Loss of animals impoverished households, forcing them to seek supplementary or alternative sources of income. Migration, often leading to settlement and part-time cultivation, are the preferred options, and a massive shift to agropastoralism has occurred throughout the region. Migration has proved to be a major source of conflict among pastoralists, and between them and settled cultivators.

Dispersal, migration and impoverization have further shredded the fabric of pastoralist society, weakening its solidarity and potential for political assertion at a national level. Furthermore, these developments have had a serious impact on women pastoralists, most of whom continue to have little say in their communities' decision-making and few have rights to land.

Recently, with the appearance of democratic practice in the region, pastoralists have gained a degree of representation at the national level. This is a promising start, although it has yet to bear fruit. The potential to influence state policy is greater at local government level, especially where there is a significant degree of decentralization and local autonomy.

Endemic conflict in the pastoralist zone has accelerated its decline and immensely complicated development efforts. Conflict occurs at several levels, from widespread, commercialized animal theft, to political rebellion and secessionism. Given the pastoralist position along state boundaries, conflict in this zone often spills across borders and aggravates inter-state relations in the region.

An upsurge of interest in pastoralism occurred in the last decade of the twentieth century, which raised its profile and put its plight on the national political agenda. This was initiated by international organizations and funding institutions, which compelled the states in the region to take note, and provided the money for a massive proliferation of local and international non-governmental organizations with an interest in pastoralist affairs.

East and Horn of Africa



Introduction¹

Due to the nature of land in eastern Africa and the Horn, people have had to devise ways of sustaining themselves. Essentially, it has been a process of adaptation to, rather than of, the environment. The people tilled the land where it was possible to do so and herded livestock where it was not, often managing to do a bit of both. By and large, this is still the way things are done.

Mobile livestock production occupies a distinct ecological niche in this region of Africa. Pastoralists lived and thrived in this environment since ‘God created the world’ as they say, making the most out of nature’s meagre endowment. Pastoralism is more than a mode of production. It is the highly imaginative and original system of intricate modes of social organization and patterns of culture. It is a way of life, a fact that is often discounted by those who seek to ‘develop’ pastoralism into a ‘modern’, efficient mode of commercial production. This way of life is not uniform in the pastoralist milieu. There is a huge variety of social and cultural creativity; one needs only to think of the linguistic wealth that exists in the pastoralist zone. Yet this variety is another fact that a blanket approach to development fails to take into account.

Directly dependent for survival on a sparse natural resource base, pastoralists are obliged to be efficient managers of it, and theirs is one of the very few surviving civilizations that can claim to have lived in harmony with nature. Harmony did not prevent frequent crises caused by the vagaries of nature – animal and plant disease, drought, human epidemic – for which the pastoralist societies developed coping strategies to ensure survival despite losses.

Many consider that the traditional pastoralist production strategy is no longer efficient, and that pastoralists are no longer prudent managers of natural resources. Pastoralists’ detractors accuse them of despoiling their habitat. It is true the material base of pastoralism has been undermined, possibly beyond recovery. Crises have increased in frequency and intensity, and pastoralists are no longer able to overcome them without assistance from

outside. In a situation of sustained crisis, conflict has become endemic, pitting herder communities against each other, against sedentary neighbours and against the states that claim pastoralists as subjects. How this state of affairs came about is the subject of this report.

The pastoralist niche

The pastoralist zone occupies the floor and flanks of the Great Rift in eastern Africa and the lowlands of the Horn. The characteristic features of these territories are a climate that ranges from semi-arid to arid, high temperatures and low elevation. Aridity occurs where the rainfall is insufficient to replenish the loss of moisture: less than 500 mm a year makes for aridity, 500 mm to 750 mm for semi-aridity. According to this criterion, the entire coastal area of the Horn is arid; as are all of Djibouti, Somaliland and southern Somalia, save for the inter-riverine valley; three-quarters of Eritrea and Kenya; and more than half of Ethiopia and Sudan. Uganda is far better endowed by nature. However, a large part of the so-called ‘cattle corridor’ (see later) in that country receives less than 1,000 mm a year and experiences high evaporation rates.²

Drought is a frequent visitor to the region, which the pastoralists regard as ‘an act of God’. A rough collation of recorded incidents in the previous century suggests major incidents occur every 10 years. Anecdotal evidence suggests that drought cycles have shortened from five to 10 years in the past, to three to five years at present. Droughts are remembered because they are usually accompanied by famine.

What all of this means is that crop cultivation using locally available technology cannot be relied upon to sustain a sizeable human population in the arid region. It does not mean that cultivation is not pursued, but it is a precarious and unreliable enterprise. Pastoralists cultivate opportunistically to supplement their diet when rain and

Table 1: Land

Country	Total Area (km ²)	Arid Land (%)	Crop Land (%)
Ethiopia	1,098,000	52	13
Kenya	582,646	72	4
Tanzania	942,784 (mainland)	40	6
Uganda	251,500	51	11

SOURCE: WORLD BANK, WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT, 1994, 1995.

terrain permit. Pastoralists also engage in other economic activities, such as trade in animals and animal products, and rare species of flora and fauna, and the collection and sale of honey. Men hire themselves as guards and guides, and their animals for transport in the caravan trade. However, whatever other activities they may engage in, these are accommodated to the demands of mobile livestock raising.

In the arid region, livestock production requires constant or periodic movement in search of pasture; a factor that differentiates this form of livestock production from those practised by farmers and ranchers. A wide variety of forms of pastoralism are practised in eastern Africa and the Horn. They range from pure nomadism without settled habitation or cultivation, now increasingly rare, to the settled mode of communities who live in homesteads and villages and combine transhumance with cultivation.

The double imperative of the pastoralist mode of production is extensive land use and freedom of movement. The herd must have access to dispersed, ecologically specialized and seasonally varied grazing lands and watering holes, to provide for the distinct foraging needs of different livestock species and to afford a margin of safety against the normally erratic pattern of rainfall. Such a grazing ecosystem requires considerable space and at least one permanent source of water. Even so, the need to move outside of it may arise due to conflict, drought, flood or livestock disease. Although symbiosis is not unusual, the need for extensive use of land and unfettered freedom of movement makes pastoralists difficult neighbours even among their own, and a perceived threat to settled communities of cultivators.

The twin imperatives of extensive use of land and freedom of movement over it determine the pastoralist conception of land rights. Theoretically, land and water are the 'gift of God' and all people have the right to use them. In practice, communities may claim proprietary rights over valuable grazing lands and water sources, from which other communities may or may not be excluded, depending on climatic conditions, inter-community relations and season. Those claiming such rights must be prepared to defend them; thus self-defence is an obligation that turns male pastoralists into warriors. It follows that such rights are claimed by men, not women. In the constantly shifting spatial pattern of pastoralism, access to land is a perennial bone of contention, and never more so than at present.

In contrast to the collective nature of land rights, herd ownership and management are the domain of individual domestic units, that is, households. Households or larger herding units may roam over communal land and use unimproved water sources, so as to guarantee access to both dry and wet season grazing. Access to improved

water sources – dams, ponds, tanks, wells – is controlled by those who invest labour or money to improve them, and they can demand payment for water. Pastoralist rules for resource use, therefore, display a combination of collective and individual features appropriate to their niche.

Similarly appropriate is the segmented character of pastoralist social organization, which endows smaller units – clans, sub-clans, lineage groups, homesteads – with virtual autonomy to manage their own affairs, while paying nominal obeisance to higher levels. Within these units, households are bound in a densely woven fabric of reciprocal rights and obligations that serve to enhance survival, maintain solidarity and redistribute wealth. Livestock herding partnerships, the sharing of bridewealth payment and reciprocal gift giving are some of these rights and obligations. The practice of giving animals from a large herd to those who have less makes economic and social sense. A large herd in one place is susceptible to disease and overgrazing. It is sensible to thin it out by gift giving, thereby accumulating 'social capital' and anticipating reciprocity.

Segmentation often determines the pattern of conflict when resources are scarce. The usual strategy is to move to greener pastures, and that means intruding into land normally used by other segments of the larger group. This may be normal practice in good times, at other times it can result in conflict. More often than not, clashes in the pastoralist zone involve groups that belong to the same larger unit ('tribe' or 'ethnic group'). For example, the Turkana in Kenya comprise 15 clans, each claiming a grazing territory. 'Negotiations must precede accessing grazing land and watering points of other clans. Where this is not done, conflict is bound to occur.'³ Ethnicity has no political meaning in the pastoralist world. Most groups identified by that label have seldom, if ever, acted in concert. Clan is perhaps the highest level where meaningful solidarity and coordination is manifested.

The common impression outsiders have of pastoralism is of an anarchic world where a permanent state of warfare reigns over land and animals, while neighbouring cultivators live in terror of nomad raids. Had it prevailed, such a state of affairs could not have endured for long, nor would it have allowed any group to prosper. Although conflict along these lines is not uncommon, a symbiotic relationship sustained by cultural ties, inter-marriage, political and military alliances, and trade is not uncommon either among pastoralists, and between them and cultivators. However, unlike intra-community conflict that is regulated by enforced customary law – blood payment being the best known example – inter-community conflict is difficult to mediate. Ephemeral agreements can be made but they cannot be enforced, save by more conflict.

*'Killing a fellow Pokot tribesman is an atrocious crime that leads to the punishment of the whole clan or the extended family of the culprit [...]. However, it is not a big deal for a Pokot to kill a person from another tribe.'*⁴

The pastoralist production unit is the household. The division of labour in this unit is based on gender and age. Male adults manage the herd and the household, and make decisions in council for the community. The harder tasks involving long distance herding fall on the young men, who are also responsible for the defence of the family and its herd from wild animals and raiders. Men also take care of water sources and water the animals. Women are in charge of tasks such as building and transporting the family shelter, fetching firewood and water, milking the animals and watering the small stocks, preparing food for the family and sterilizing and storing the milking implements. They also take care of young animals kept around the homestead. Female engagement with livestock takes place at a lower level of skill than that of the male, yet it is crucial and time consuming. In return for female labour, men pay a high bridewealth price; as much as 100 cattle among the Maasai. This does not go to the woman, but is shared within her kinship group.

Women in pastoralist society are most likely to be subordinate to and dependent on men. 'How can men and women be equal in a household?' asks a man in Tanzania. 'There will be chaos.' Another man adds: 'Women are brought up to take what their fathers, brothers, husbands or sons allocate to them.'⁵ While the labour power of both sexes is fully engaged within the household, control over household assets – other than milk and its byprod-

ucts, including the making of *ghee*, which are managed by women – is exercised in patriarchal fashion by the male household head. Women are also excluded from the councils that make decisions for the community.

Women's inheritance rights vary among groups. The best that can be said is that nowhere are they equal to men's, and in some groups, such as the Pokot, women do not have any rights. In case of divorce, husbands keep all of the children except babes in arms, and women leave home with few possessions. Among the Afar, a divorced woman takes with her only the livestock given to her as presents by her husband during their marriage.

In the pre-colonial period, pastoralists lived in a state of rough equilibrium with their sedentary neighbours. Nowhere did they establish a state of their own, nor acquire one through conquest.⁶ Many reasons are cited for the absence of political superstructures in pastoralist societies, including high mobility, lack of surplus, low population density, marginal role of trade and self-reliance in defence. One school of thought holds that the pastoralist mode of production neither needs nor can afford state institutions.⁷ Reflecting the segmentation of pastoralist social structure, political authority among them is diffuse and decision-making democratic (albeit among the men). Pastoralist political practice varies in form but not in essence, and is characterized by a high degree of diffusion of political authority, patriarchy, and a high degree of local unit autonomy. Dyson-Hudson⁸ considers what he calls 'low investment in politics' a form of organizational flexibility appropriate to highly dynamic, poorly predictable conditions. No doubt it was so in the past. Nevertheless, it served the pastoralists badly when conditions were fundamentally transformed by colonialism 100 years ago.

Colonialism and independence

Colonialism and decline

Although colonialism was least concerned with the pastoralists among its subjects, its rule had fateful consequences for them. With few exceptions, colonial boundaries were drawn through the pastoralist domain which, in the absence of settlement, was considered unclaimed by anyone. Ethiopia expanded prodigiously at the same time, occupying vast stretches of the lowlands, and doubling its territory and population. The result was the partition of many pastoralist communities among two or more states. In the worst case, the Somali were apportioned among five states; the Afar among three; the Beja, Borana, Karamojong, Maasai, Nuer and others between two states. Pastoralists throughout eastern Africa and the Horn found themselves literally on the margins of every state. People were cut off from their kin, traditional leaders, markets and places of worship. As a result, the economic viability, political integrity and social solidarity of pastoralist society were gravely and permanently impaired. The fragmentation of the pastoralist domain proved an enduring legacy of colonialism, and the fracture of pastoralist communities has never healed; a historic injustice that awaits redress.

The pastoralist imperative of free movement was challenged also within the boundaries of the new states, because it defied the administrative, fiscal, political and security imperatives of the state. In effect, it challenged its very existence. Consequently, large-scale spontaneous population movements, common in the past, came to a halt. Provincial boundaries and tribal grazing areas were drawn to limit the scope of movement within each state. The herders were constrained to stay within the area allotted to their group on pain of heavy fines and confiscation of livestock. Tribal grazing areas tended to strengthen the group sense of ownership over defined tracts of land, with a reluctance to let others 'trespass'. The gradual curtailment of spontaneous movement disrupted the natural process of adjustment that maintained a balance between people, land and livestock. In conjunction with concurrent developments described below, it was to have a pernicious effect on the fragile lowland ecology and the pastoral economy.

Prominent among these developments was the expansion of irrigated cultivation that encroached upon land that had been devoted to livestock production. This took place along the many rivers that drain the east African and the Ethiopian highlands, all of which cross the low-

land pastoralist zone on their way to the sea. In pre-colonial times, irrigated cultivation had very limited scope in the region, and did not seriously interfere with the needs of livestock for passage and forage in the river valleys. As we will see later, various irrigated cultivation schemes began their intrusion into the drylands during the colonial period. Frequently, such land was near permanent water sources, the last refuge of people and animals in the dry season. Furthermore, population growth during this period compelled cultivators to bring more land under cultivation. More often than not, such land was withdrawn from grazing.

The rights and requirements of the mobile herder communities over this land received scant consideration. The common attitude of the colonial authorities was expressed by Charles Elliot, governor of the East Africa Protectorate, when he expropriated Maasai land – the largest single land grab of the period – for European settlement. He wrote:

*'I cannot admit that wandering tribes have a right to keep other and superior races [sic] out of large tracts merely because they have acquired the habit of straggling over far more land than they can utilise.'*⁹

The concentration of capital investment and technological innovation in commercial agriculture established its primacy in the colonial economy, leaving pastoralism in a position of relative insignificance. Capital was not attracted into a mode of production where the producer was not easily deprived of the means of production, that is livestock, nor did the state seek to direct investment in a sector of low potential return. As the colonial governor's office put it regarding Kenya's Northern Frontier district: 'It is useless to put schemes of expenditure in an area which is costing the Colony a great deal and yielding practically no revenue.'¹⁰

As a result, the pastoralist mode of production retained its pristine nature to the end of the colonial period. Even so, the pastoralist economy did not remain unaffected by developments that often had an adverse effect on it. Such was the effect of the abolition of the slave trade; the ban on hunting and trading in ivory and game trophies; the fading of the caravan trade that ended the demand for transport animals, guards, guides, handlers; and the proscription of the arms trade. All these were supplementary sources of income for the pastoralists.

Following the introduction of elementary veterinary services in the 1930s, livestock numbers increased considerably in many areas towards the close of the colonial period. Although local outbreaks continued, there was no repetition of past pandemics, like the rinderpest scourge that swept through the region in the 1880s. The gradual reduction of the scope of epidemic disease removed a natural check on the inherent propensity of the pastoralist economy to expand herd size. The result was a livestock population explosion.

Market take-off did not increase commensurably to relieve the resulting congestion, save temporarily thanks to military demand for meat and transport during the Second World War. Urbanization raised local demand, but there was little increase in exports. For example, there was little change in the number of animals exported from Somalia in the first half of the century, although the number of flock animals in that country doubled during that period.¹¹ Likewise, there was no change in the number exported from Kenya's Northern Frontier district.

The reluctance of pastoralists in eastern Africa and the Horn to embrace the capitalist marketplace introduced by colonialism is the subject of enduring debate dogged by misunderstanding. Animals play a prominent role in social relations in many pastoral societies, so much so that in the eyes of many outsiders this role tends to obscure their value in economic terms. Hence the suggestion that pastoralist reluctance to part with their animals springs from socio-psychological needs. Pastoralists trade animals when the need arises and the terms of trade are right, but they do not raise livestock for the market. In capitalist logic this does not make sense. Pastoralists much prefer to accumulate livestock as protection against the vagaries of nature and to accumulate 'social capital', which represents status and influence in their community.

Critics of this notion have fought to rebut the charge of economic irrationality, and chosen to do so in terms of economic logic. They have sought to explain the pastoralists' avoidance of the market in market terms; that is, in terms of access, 'opportunity cost', 'profitability of exchange', 'profit investment opportunities' or terms of trade, etc. In doing so, they forget that traditional pastoralism is a mode of subsistence, not a mode of commodity production; in other words, it is not designed to produce for the market. Occasional involvement in trade does not alter the fact that pastoralist production in eastern Africa and the Horn is not a commercial venture, put briefly, it is aimed at overall household survival. Herds are maximized as protection against natural and security risks, and in order to maintain an optimum balance between species, types and quality of animals, and as a form of social capital in intra-community relationships.

Livestock proliferation occurred at a time when the pastoralist zone began to shrink due to the encroachment of cultivation. The inevitable result was overstocking, overgrazing and ecological degradation. Signs of this ominous trend were noticed as early as the 1940s, and were mentioned in official reports concerning northern Sudan and Kenya.¹² Constriction and degradation of the pastoralist zone, accompanied by the loss of complementary economic activity and supplementary sources of income, affected the pastoralist economy vitally by destroying the delicate balance upon which production depends. In the pre-colonial period, sedentary and pastoralist communities lived in a state of rough equilibrium. Colonialism imported superior technologies for agricultural production, and shifted the balance irretrievably against the pastoralists. Promoted by investment and modern technology, commercial cultivation became the mainstay of the colonial economy, while the pastoralist zone was marginalized.

Needless to say, that zone saw nothing of the social and cultural advances of the colonial period. Even elementary education and health services did not appear in the lowlands until the twilight of the colonial era, while modern transport and communication facilities are conspicuous by their absence today. Remoteness and isolation were often reinforced by the practice of declaring pastoralist districts 'restricted' for security and other reasons. Travel to and from these districts required permission, and movement of livestock was prohibited. Kenya's Northern Frontier district and Maasailand, the Ogaden in Ethiopia, the Karamoja district in Uganda, and southern Sudan were restricted for long periods.

Marginalization affected both the social and political structures of pastoralist communities. One result was what has been called 'sedenterization by impoverization'. Male members of families whose herds could no longer sustain them sought alternative occupations, turning to agricultural labour, menial work in peri-urban slums, or joined the police and the military. Young men who could not afford bride prices turned to raiding. Group cohesion was weakened and traditional authority undermined. Tribes divided by state frontiers developed parallel, rival political hierarchies. Even provincial boundaries tended to have this divisive effect. Some pastoralist chiefs benefited from association with the state and sought to profit from trade and cultivation, while others settled in towns, losing influence over the herders.

Not surprisingly, disaffection and dissidence were the prevailing pastoralist attitudes towards the newly established states. The herders, as Gellner¹³ put it, proved 'state resistant', and in the process gained lasting notoriety for their 'rebellious' and 'warlike' nature. Taxation, an unwelcome novelty, was a common provocation. Unlike

cultivators, who value the protection they get in return from the state, pastoralists who were never subject to state authority before found this imposition irksome, and it became a frequent cause of conflict. Aversion to taxation was not simply an atavistic reaction. It was related to the fact, as the colonial governor of Kenya admitted, that ‘very little has been done for them’, and recommended that ‘practical steps for helping the tribes [...] ought to precede taxation’.¹⁴

The state relied on a variety of methods to secure a modicum of control over the pastoralists. Force, the ultimate resort, was often and brutally used. ‘Pacification’ campaigns were a staple feature of colonial and Ethiopian rule in the lowlands. Continuous, yet never successful, efforts were made to disarm the pastoralists. Livestock confiscation was considered the most effective form of punishment, because it deprived the herders of their most valuable possession, and the proceeds were used to pay for the cost of the campaigns. Expelling them from their grazing grounds, imprisoning their chiefs, preventing them from entering the towns and sealing their wells were other forceful ways of dealing with them.

Independence and marginalization

The decline of pastoralism was not halted or slowed by independence and African self-rule; it was accelerated. This was inevitable since the economic development strategies of independent African states closely followed the colonial blueprint. The expansion of export-crop production was considered the shortest route to economic development, and irrigation the most effective method for achieving it. Commercial agriculture widened the lead it already had over other sectors, and encroachment on the pastoralist domain advanced rapidly, as new irrigation schemes were founded and old ones expanded. The Gezira irrigation scheme in Sudan soon doubled in size, and was followed by similar schemes in Rahad, Khasm el Girba and the Kenana sugar scheme, the largest in the world. Smaller schemes were started in the Juba–Shebele valley in Somalia, and a giant one was planned at Bardhere to quadruple the area under irrigation in that country. Cotton plantations multiplied on the Awash river valley in eastern

Ethiopia, and also appeared along the Tana and Ewaso Nyiro rivers in northern Kenya. This was only the beginning of what was envisaged for the future.

In conjunction with the highest rates of population growth in the world (see table 2) and the onset of a prolonged period of adverse climatic conditions, the exclusive focus on export-crop production – crops that the population of the region does not consume – created an enduring food crisis in the final quarter of the last century. Highlighted by widespread famines in the Horn, it gave rise to a global concern for ‘food security’, and to an unshakeable conviction that irrigation is the most effective means of ensuring it. *Kenya’s Development Plan, 1989–1993*¹⁵ declares ‘irrigation development will make a major contribution towards the attainment of the objectives of agricultural growth’. An official statement in Ethiopia asserts the country ‘cannot satisfy the food demand of her rapidly increasing population unless measures are taken to develop significant irrigation schemes in the future’.¹⁶ Plans for extending existing schemes and launching new ones are announced regularly in eastern Africa and the Horn, where all countries claim to have extensive potential for irrigation.

The countries of eastern Africa and the Horn have high reported rates of population growth, ranging between 3 and 4 per cent annually; the result of a downward trend in mortality rates, while fertility rates remain high. Kenya’s population increased fivefold between 1948 and 1990, and is projected to reach 100 million in 2055. Ethiopia, whose population was estimated at less than 20 million in 1950, now has over 70 million people, and is expected to approach 150 million in 2055. Uganda’s population increased fivefold between 1948 and 2002, rising from 5 to 24.7 million. At this rate, Uganda’s population will double in less than 25 years to reach 55 million by 2025. Tanzania’s population nearly tripled between 1967 – when it was 12.3 million – and 2002, when it reached 34.6 million.¹⁷

The result of population growth without a corresponding increase in cultivated area or significant change in the technology of peasant production is a rise in population density on cultivated land, and a corresponding decrease in cultivated land and productivity per head. This is the trend throughout eastern Africa and the Horn,

Table 2: Population

Country	Population/Year (millions)	Population/Year (millions)	Population/Year (millions)
Ethiopia	32.8 / 1975	71.0 / 2003	89.8 / 2015
Kenya	13.7 / 1975	28.4 / 1997	37.6 / 2015
Tanzania	12.3 / 1967	34.6 / 2002	49.3 / 2015
Uganda	10.8 / 1975	24.7 / 2002	38.7 / 2015

SOURCE: UNDP, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT, WASHINGTON DC, 2002.

illustrated in the case of Uganda, where density went from 48 per km² in 1969 to 126 in 2002. Arable land per head fell from 5.2 ha in 1931 to 0.8 in 2000. 'Per capita food production is less now than in the 1970s.'¹⁸

With the partial exception of Kenya, the technology of peasant production has not changed significantly in the countries of eastern Africa and the Horn, and the rate of productivity increase in the peasant sector barely matches the rate of population growth; in Ethiopia it has consistently fallen behind. Population pressure is pushing peasant cultivation into lands of marginal quality and even lower productivity. The area of cultivated land in the region has expanded in two directions. Up the flanks of

mountains where forests are cleared, and down the escarpments into drylands formerly used for grazing. State planning in Kenya has focused on the latter regions that comprise three quarters of its land and contain about a quarter of its population. The Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) development programme was launched in 1979 to promote dryland farming, using drought-resistant crops, small-scale irrigation projects and ranching, in land that was used by mobile pastoralists. Barring a revolutionary change in peasant agriculture, this massive encroachment into the pastoralist domain cannot be resisted, and the implications for the pastoralist economy are ominous.

Conservationism and pastoralism

Concern with the preservation of forests, valuable species of flora and fauna, and wildlife has triggered another major intrusion into the pastoralist zone. Beginning in a moderate way under colonialism, the designation of animal sanctuaries, controlled hunting areas, game parks and reserves, nature reserves, protected forests and 'wildlife corridors' spread wildly after independence. Prior to independence, Kenya, the leader in this field, had four national parks and six game reserves. By the end of the last century, it boasted 26 national parks and 26 national reserves, plus a number of animal sanctuaries and nature reserves, occupying no less than 7.5 per cent of its total land area. An additional 3 per cent of Kenya's land is protected forest. Concern with preservation is spurred by economic considerations.¹⁹ Tourism provides Kenya with 30 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings. A major part of the preserved terrain is dryland. Tanzania is trying hard to emulate its wealthier neighbour. More than one quarter of its landmass is given over to parks and game reserves. Tanzania has 13 national parks and 19 game reserves. The largest two – Ngorongoro and Serengeti – are sited in pastoralist land. Ethiopia has nine national parks and 10 game reserves and sanctuaries, nearly all of them in the lowlands.

The independent African state has shown no more consideration for pastoralist rights to land than its colonial predecessor. Decisions over vast areas of land are carried out by executive fiat without consultation, or even communication, with the people who live there. For example, the Mkomazi Game Reserve in north-eastern Tanzania was designed for 'multiple use' when it was established in 1952, meaning parts of it were available to cultivators and herders. In 1987, the government ordered the pastoralists to leave the reserve because wildlife numbers were declining.²⁰

To pacify communities adversely affected by conservation schemes, governments make a show of passing on (small sums of) money from the tourist revenue to the local communities. The Samburu National Reserve on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro river forced many Samburu herders to move out of the area by blocking their access to the river. Soon, tourists came to outnumber the indigenous peoples within the reserve. The sharp contrast between the affluence of the tourists and the poverty of the local people led to attacks on tourists, making police protection a necessity for visitors to the area. In the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, the government sought to compen-

sate the pastoralists for the disruption to their way of life by imposing an additional charge on tourists for the benefit of the local council. How much of that reaches the herders themselves is uncertain. Taxes and other levies on tourism activities are primarily transferred to the state, but there are also some contributions to the local economy.

*'However, only a tiny fraction of the tourism turnover remains in the local area and only a small proportion of the local population benefit directly from tourism.'*²¹

In 1993 the Tanzanian government committed itself to transfer 25 per cent of the revenue from hunting to the areas where hunting takes place. 'In reality, this money never reaches the actual villages or communities, instead ending up with the district council.'²²

Designed to protect natural resources, the conservation schemes have deprived many pastoralist groups of valuable land and water sources. National parks normally exclude human settlement and livestock foraging. Game reserves and controlled areas allow multiple use, yet still have disadvantages for mobile herders. Arusha region in northern Tanzania is an extreme example. Much of it is taken up by the Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Manyara, Serengeti and Tarangire national parks, the Liolondo Game Controlled Area, and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA). Covering over 8,000 km², the NCA takes up about half of the Ngorongoro district, the homeland of the Maasai. Classified for multiple use, the NCA bans cultivation, although in practice minor plots are tolerated. Grazing is not allowed in some parts, livestock is barred from some water sources and salt licks, pastoralists are not allowed to use fire as a means of pasture management, or to collect resin in the forest. Serengeti National Park excludes all but game-viewing tourists. Another extreme case is Karamoja in Uganda, where 36 per cent of the area is designated game and forest preserves, and the remainder is a controlled hunting area.²³

Land is continuously appropriated within the pastoralist zone by state enterprises. The Kereyu in Ethiopia lost two-thirds of their land to the Wonji Sugar Estate.²⁴ The Barabaig lost some 14 per cent of their land to the National Food Corporation of Tanzania, international seed companies and wheat farms.²⁵ In Loliondo, Tanzania Breweries Ltd took 10,000 acres of Maasai land to produce barley.²⁶ Large tracts in Uganda's 'cattle corridor'

were taken by ill-fated ranching projects. With the coming of liberalization and conditionality, the states in the region came under heavy pressure to make land available for private investment in agri-business. The following comment on Uganda is applicable to the other states.

*'A trend is, therefore, emerging in which Government irregularly seeks to change land use in PAs (protected areas) so as to accommodate the desires and interests of private developers.'*²⁷

The cumulative impact of land loss has been to render pastoralism unsustainable in its pure form in many areas. There is simply not enough land or water, nor the required variety of pasturage and forage, to maintain a herd of the size and quality needed by the average household. Fewer animals and lower quality spell impoverishment. In the NCA the observed trend is a decrease in the number of cattle per family; a loss partially balanced by an increase in the number of flock animals per family.

*'The pastoral economy has changed from a cattle based to a small stock-dependent livestock economy. This implies a process of impoverishment, and it is experienced as such by the Ngorongoro Maasai themselves.'*²⁸

Migration is one strategy of coping with impoverishment. Households and homesteads move with their livestock to other parts of the country far from their own homeland. Maasai from north-eastern Tanzania have been moving southwards as far as the coast, and can be found at the other end of the country near the border with Zambia. Their Barabaig neighbours have moved in large numbers into Dodoma, Shinyanga and Singida districts.

Sedenterization is another strategy. It takes several forms. One is to remain in the region and become increasingly dependent on cultivation while retaining a depleted herd. Another is to migrate to a neighbouring district where land is available and to take up cultivation, or become a worker in commercial farms. Sedenterization via cultivation, that is, conversion to agro-pastoralism, is a rapidly advancing phenomenon throughout eastern Africa and the Horn, from the Maasai region of Tanzania to the Somali region of Ethiopia. The extent of it is difficult to gauge and, of course, it varies among regions and groups. In Ethiopia, a government statement claims that 20 per cent of Afar and 30 per cent of Somali in that country are already settled.²⁹ A Beni Amer herder in Eritrea agrees:

'In the past all Beni Amer were pastoralists, but now there are three kinds of Beni Amer men – one is an

*agricultural wage labourer, another is a petty merchant, and only the third owns livestock.'*³⁰

This is the shape of the future, as the mobility of pastoralists becomes increasingly constrained, their habitat progressively degraded, and their strategies for coping with successive, mounting crises are exhausted.

The ongoing massive shift to agro-pastoralism involves settlement of part of the household, and has serious gender implications. It modifies significantly the gender division of labour within the family, imposing additional tasks on the women who head the part of the household that settles, while the men move with the herds in search of pasture. The main additional burden women shoulder is crop cultivation in fields near the house and gardens around it. Separation from the herd means loss of rights over livestock products traditionally assigned to women, especially milk, which now men sell. Milk is also lost to the family diet. Men's cash needs have increased considerably in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia due to the widespread consumption of the stimulant *khat* (*mirab* in Kenya) in the lowlands.

Commercialization, liberalization and privatization are not the panacea they are touted to be, at least for women caught in the transition from nomadism to agro-pastoralism. Land now becomes a significant household asset, but women's rights over it are left to be determined not by legislation and the courts, but by custom and tradition. Sedenterization adds to the household's need for facilities, items and services that have to be purchased: implements and furniture, clothing, fencing and roofing, medicine and schooling. One Mbugwe woman in Tanzania says:

*'We have changed. Look at the way we dress. Look at some of us living in brick houses. We send our children to school. We used to roam, dress and live like the Barabaig, Maasai and other nomadic tribes.'*³¹

To meet the added expense, women are joining the labour force as wage workers, entering the market as petty traders, and taking up crafts such as basket and mat weaving, beer brewing, fish smoking and pottery. Where as women have crossed the line into male work, men will not do women's work.

Another form combines migration and sedenterization, and involves a change of both location and occupation by moving to urban centres to seek manual or menial employment. Maasai men in Tanzania have found an urban niche as *askaris* (night-time guards). In a study of migrants in that country, nearly half of those interviewed cited the loss of grazing land as the reason for migration.³²

Loss of land and migration has led to the wide displacement and dispersal of communities. This is not a novel development in the pastoralist world, where it is difficult to find a group whose oral history does not trace a long itinerary followed by its ancestors before they came to rest in its present location. It is the continuation of a natural process of adaptation, which has become increasingly difficult in view of competing claims to land, and state-imposed obstacles to spontaneous population movement. Already weakened, the fabric of pastoralist society is further shredded by displacement and dispersal, losing what little potential it has for political assertion. Pastoralist movement is often resisted by other communities, both sedentary and pastoral, into whose territory it intrudes, and has become a major source of conflict, itself another force that propels displacement (see below).

Sedenterization is strongly encouraged and occasionally imposed by all the states in the region. The Nimeiry

Constitution (1971, Article 21) in Sudan decreed that the pastoralists should be settled, as does the Eritrean Constitution. An official document in Uganda states:

*'In the long run, a comprehensive scheme including the provision of pasture and water could be designed to limit seasonal migration and conflict. Resettlement scheme designs similarly to those adopted by the Kenyan government for the Pokot should be considered.'*³³

Ethiopia's *Statement on Pastoral Development Policy*³⁴ forecasts:

'phased voluntary sedenterisation 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 rural to small pastoral towns and urbanisation'.

Who is a pastoralist?

The shift towards agro-pastoralism is related to dietary change from animal protein to a cereal- or grain-based diet. This is the result of a reversal in the human/animal ratio that increasingly reduces the capacity of the herd to sustain the household. It is not only a reduction in livestock numbers per household, but a lowering of livestock quality and productivity as well. This is not a recent trend. Over four decades ago, an observer had this to say about the Baragayu of Tanzania:

*'Baragayu supplement their diet of meat and milk with the following foods: maize flour, beans, squash, cassava, potatoes, bananas, rice, sugarcane, ground-nuts. During the dry season, when milk is scarce, vegetables and grains may comprise the bulk of Baragayu diet. At such times Baragayu could not exist without these non-pastoral foods.'*³⁵

It is a rapidly growing trend. Dietz³⁶ wrote of the West Pokot in 1979:

'Looking at the food base of the western Pokot, measured in terms of calories or protein, by 1979 most households could no longer be regarded as primarily dependent on subsistence pastoralism, despite the fact that they regarded themselves as pastoralists.'

Twenty years ago it was estimated that the Maasai in Tanzania relied on grain for 53 per cent of their food requirement.³⁷ A recent study of the Maasai in Tanzania's Simanjiro district estimates that, at present, milk provides only 14 per cent of the daily food requirements. They cultivate grain that lasts them for three months, and have to buy it for the rest of the year.³⁸

This raises the question who is a pastoralist? Past efforts by social scientists to define pastoralism were defeated by the inventiveness and sheer variety of pastoralist forms of adaptation to the demands of their environment. Nowadays, it is accepted, as Baxter³⁹ put it, that pastoralism is a mode of perception as well as a mode of production. Basically, pastoralists define themselves. They know who they are. And there are those, of course, 'who are sedentarized but plan to resume herding'.⁴⁰

The fashion nowadays is to define mobile livestock producers according to their diet, that is the degree of their dependence on crops or animal products for their

subsistence.⁴¹ A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) document applies a slide ruler computation, according to which a household that gains more than 50 per cent of its income from livestock using unimproved pastures is classified as pastoral, while one that gains more than 50 per cent from cultivation is classified agro-pastoral. Pastoral systems can be nomadic or transhumant, agro-pastoral transhumant, or sedentary.⁴² A more refined formulation includes land use and market involvement as relevant variables.⁴³ Pastoralism that depends essentially on animal products and does not trade is now a rare form. Pastoralism that consumes or even grows crops, and sells milk, hides and skins to purchase them, but still does not produce for the market, is common. Market participation in this case is a coping strategy, not conscious commercialization. Pastoralists who use the open range or ranching system to produce for the market practise the latter. Full commercialization involves the privatization of pastures and water sources; wage labour; and market inputs such as veterinary facilities, medicines, machinery, fencing materials, etc.

In the context of livestock production, pastoralism is only one of several production systems. In Uganda, for example, five livestock production systems can be distinguished: mobile pastoralism and agro-pastoralism, settled livestock, livestock/crop, commercial livestock, dairy production.⁴⁴ Another marked, but little commented upon trend in the pastoral milieu, is social differentiation. One dimension of it is herd size. Among migrant Maasai in Tanzania, a rich household can have more than 500 cattle and 200 flock animals. A household in the middle group may have 100–300 cattle and 10–30 flock animals. A poor household does not have enough animals for its requirement. The wealthy accumulate stock, cultivate land and hire help. The poor cultivate land and work for others.

Population data on pastoralism are based entirely on guesswork; not least due to the difficulty of counting people on the move. Ethiopia's first national census (1985), for example, did not even attempt to cover the lowland districts. Pastoralism is not included as a category in any national census, consequently approximate figures can only be deduced from district population data. Even these will prove misleading given the difficulty of defining exactly who is a pastoralist. As far as guesses go, the following given by a specialist body is as good as any:

*'The pastoralist population of sub-Saharan Africa is estimated at more than 50 million, while Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya and Uganda support around 20 million pastoralists.'*⁴⁵

Of the countries in eastern Africa and the Horn, Ethiopia is by far the most populous and has the largest pastoralist population amounting to some 10–12 per cent of the total, that is 7–8 million, representing at least 20 ethnic groups.⁴⁶ The bulk is found in the Somali and Afar regional states in the eastern lowlands, another concentration is in the Borana zone of Oromia regional state and South Omo zone in the Southern regional state, and the rest live along the western border with Sudan.

Kenya's arid zone contains some 25 per cent of its inhabitants. The size of the pastoralist population is roughly extrapolated to some 6 million people, repre-

senting a mosaic of ethnic groups living in three provinces – North Eastern, Eastern, Rift Valley.⁴⁷ Uganda's pastoralist zone, known as the 'cattle corridor', stretches from the border with Tanzania in the south, to the Sudan border in the north and the Kenyan border in the east. Pastoralists live in 29 out of the country's 56 districts, which contain 40 per cent of the total population.⁴⁸ With the exception of the Karamoja group, which had over 900,000 inhabitants in 2001, pastoralists are mingled with sedentary communities, making it impossible to specify their number.⁴⁹

Tanzania's pastoralist population is thinly spread in the north and consists mainly of the Barabaig, Baraguyu and Maasai groups. The Ngorongoro district has a population of some 120,000, nearly all of them Maasai.⁵⁰ One estimate puts the pastoralist population at 3 per cent of Tanzania's total.⁵¹

Livestock development

Development planners and international funding agencies have not ignored the economic potential of the lowlands; there are extravagant hopes of expanding livestock production, improving quality and increasing market take-off in the pastoralist sector. *The East African Livestock Survey*⁵² made the expansion of beef and dairy production for domestic consumption and export a priority, and recommended Western-style capital intensive ranching as the appropriate method.

Negligible in comparison with other productive sectors, state investment in pastoralism after independence went mostly to promote commercialization through the improvement of dips, holding grounds, stock routes, water supplies and veterinary services. A widely applied approach was the so-called ranching and fattening schemes devised to exploit land and labour in the pastoralist domain at low cost. Young animals purchased from pastoralists are fattened in feedlots for the market, with labour drawn from herder communities. Thus, land and labour are withdrawn from traditional livestock production, which is expected to bear the costs and risks of reproduction, while it is being deprived of the profit realized from the marketing of mature animals.

Another approach, tried among the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania and the 'cattle corridor' in Uganda, is to involve pastoralists in cooperative ranching ventures, whose main goals are to maintain land productivity by limiting livestock numbers, and to increase market take-off through the sale of surplus animals. Concern with the 'carrying capacity' of land, the 'livestock/pasture ratio' and 'overstocking' – buzzwords of the time – ignored the essential requirements of the people themselves, that is, the 'livestock/human ratio', the size of the herd in relation to family requirements. Not surprisingly, the schemes failed. In Kenya, pastoralists either left the ranch when their herds exceeded the set limit, or sent surplus animals to be kept elsewhere, but not to the market. When the schemes were dissolved in Kenya, the tendency was to divide the land among the participants, who then fenced it and claimed it as private property. This set in motion a trend towards the privatization of pastoralist land, which the Kenyan state strongly encouraged. In 2000, there were 321 group ranches in Kenya, of which only 84 were operational, and the rest were being sub-divided or were dormant.⁵³

In Tanzania, where land is nationalized and privatization was not officially encouraged in the past, the Range

Development and Management Act (1964) ordained the formation of ranching associations, only two of which were ever formed. In 1970, a similar project was launched by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Maasailand in Tanzania with the immodest goal of increasing production 100 per cent over 10 years. The project was abandoned in 1980, 'a dismal failure largely because of official misconceptions about pastoral socio-economic system which run against all the evidence'.⁵⁴ Having tried in vain early on to persuade the Maasai to form ranching associations, the Tanzanian government then launched Operation Imparnati ('permanent habitation') to settle them in 'ranching villages'. In a more practical spirit, the government set up the National Ranching Corporation in the 1970s, and shifted to the establishment of large-scale, state-managed ranches for meat production and dairy farms, which absorbed 80 per cent of the total livestock development budget provided in the third five-year plan (1976–81).

*'The impressive expansion of the ranch sector has, however, yielded poor results. It has neither produced the meat needed for the urban market, or the profits expected.'*⁵⁵

Pastoralist squatters overran ranching schemes in Uganda in the 1980s, while the country was mired in civil war. A restructuring programme was launched in 1989, which sub-divided most ranches and allocated land to squatters. At one time there were 500 ranches in Uganda, by 2000 only 50 remained.⁵⁶

The first range development scheme in Ethiopia, designed and funded by the World Bank, was launched in the 1960s. Focused on stimulating livestock production and market take-off, it concentrated on improving access roads, veterinary services and water supplies in the eastern and southern lowlands. Three more projects followed in the 1970s and 1980s, funded by the World Bank and the African Development Bank. Today, all that is left of this effort are the rusting hulks of broken machinery, pumps and vehicles strewn on the range.

*'Evaluations of these projects paint a picture of almost uniform failure: millions of dollars have been invested in development activities, often with no discernible impact.'*⁵⁷

The list of proffered reasons for the failure of pastoralist development schemes in the independent states of eastern Africa and the Horn is long. To say that African planners and administrators were no more knowledgeable or sensitive to the nature of pastoralism than their colonial predecessors, and that their actions were, by and large, extensions of flawed policies, projects and methods initiated by colonial administrations, is to encompass a multitude of sins.

*'The most striking feature of development schemes in the post-colonial period is their acceptance of many of the policies of the colonial administration. They can to a great extent be viewed as continuations of those policies set in motion prior to political independence.'*⁵⁸

To say that these policies were designed primarily to promote livestock production and not the welfare of the producers explains much as well. To say further that the intention was to increase meat production on the cheap for the benefit of urban consumers and for export, which means the pastoralists were to gain least, is an additional explanation. That pastoralists, male or female, had little to do with the design of these schemes goes a long way towards explaining why they came to grief.

Because state interest has focused on animals, there is no shortage of livestock statistics compiled by official and unofficial bodies. While their accuracy is untested, they are summarized in tables 3 and 4.

Undoubtedly, pastoralist livestock production makes a significant contribution to the economies of the states in eastern African and the Horn. The question is how much of a contribution? First, it is quite impossible to differentiate between pastoralist and peasant livestock production. Second, a sizeable cross-border trade that evades detection

and taxation seriously distorts country specific data. Third, within each country the bulk of livestock trade takes place in the bush and rural markets, where it is neither reported nor recorded, in order to avoid payment of market fees, hide and skin inspection fees, licence fees, slaughter fees, transit fees, veterinary fees, and other exactions. 'Livestock are the most repeatedly (and perhaps the most taxed) agricultural commodity in the region.'⁵⁹ The available official figures are given in table 5 (see p. 18).

Cross-border livestock trade predates colonialism and remains lively, resilient and impervious to the obstacles placed on its path by custom controls, grossly inadequate transport and communications, officialdom, perennial insecurity and state borders. This trade follows the logic of the region's natural economy, which the geopolitical pattern imposed by colonialism on the region violates. It strives to meet demand through the shortest route in order to minimize cost, because normally animals are trekked to markets with considerable weight loss on route. Pastoralists are heavily involved in this trade as producers, labourers, traders and transporters.

Kenya is the main destination of cross-border trade, which enters its territory from all the points of the compass. It is estimated that about 26 per cent of the country's meat consumption comes from this source, and another 46 per cent comes from its own pastoralists.⁶⁰ The markets at Mandera and Moyale are supplied from the Borana and Somali regions in Ethiopia, and the Garisa market from Lower Juba in Somalia. Animals are also trekked from Monduli and Ngorongoro in Tanzania, though Kadjado district, to Nairobi.

The pastoralist contribution to the national economy is underestimated because it is a low cost, low input-low output system of production and its products are undervalued in monetary terms. According to one calculation, 'over 95% of the inputs for traditionally reared, exten-

Table 3: Livestock population

Country	Cattle (millions)	Sheep/Goats (millions)	Camels (millions)
Ethiopia	35	30	0.5
Kenya	13	16	1.0
Tanzania	16	14	—
Uganda	6	7	—

SOURCE: FAO, YEARBOOK, VOL. 48, ROME, 1995.

Table 4: Livestock population in the drylands

Country	Cattle (% of total)	Sheep/Goats (% of total)	Camels (% of total)
Ethiopia	25	73	100
Kenya	50	—	100
Tanzania	n/a	n/a	n/a
Uganda	50	42	—

SOURCE: YACOB AKLILU, 2002; CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS PASTORAL TASK FORCE, 2003, 'STRATEGIZING OF INCLUSION OF PASTORALIST CONCERNS IN THE PEAP' (JINJA, UGANDA).

Table 5: Livestock contribution since the year 2000

Country	GDP (% of total)	Export Value (% of total)
Ethiopia	20.0	10.0
Kenya	10.0	–
Tanzania	3.5	–
Uganda	9.0	8.0

SOURCE: COUNTRY STATISTICAL DATA.

sively grazed ruminants come from the sun and soil, and cost the producer nothing'.⁶¹ Moreover, pastoralist producers are under no obligation to maintain hygiene standards; to package their produce; or to pay for transport, tariffs, or taxes; therefore, there is no value added to the product. Livestock byproducts such as feeds, glues, horn, pharmaceuticals and wool are also not accounted

for as a pastoralist contribution. Finally, statistics do not show the non-monetary contribution of the pastoralist sector; chief among them being to the tourist industry, but also in terms of control of bush and weeds on the range, manure and traction power.⁶² ASAL territory in Kenya is said to account for more than 80 per cent of ecotourism interest.⁶³

Disparity in development

With the exception of Kenya, the countries of eastern Africa and the Horn are among the poorest on earth. Even so, they have all made considerable strides in the provision of social services and physical infrastructure for their people, particularly in communications, education, health and transport. However, there are marked disparities in the distribution among regions and population sectors.

There is a gross disparity in access to education in all the states in the region. Kenya approaches universal enrolment in the primary level, with its Central province reaching 91.2 per cent. By contrast, North Eastern province enrolment is 20.5 per cent. The districts with the lowest rates of enrolment are all in the pastoralist zone. North Eastern province has the highest percentage of young people (aged six to 24) who have never attended school – 72 per cent for males, 85 per cent for females. In Turkana district only 7 per cent of the 20–24 age group have had primary education, while the figure in the most advanced districts is around 50 per cent.⁶⁴

In Ethiopia, the national average gross enrolment rate for the primary level is 64.4 per cent. For the Afar and Somali regional states it is 13.8 per cent and 15.1 per cent.⁶⁵ In Uganda, the national primary enrolment rate is 64.6 per cent, while in the pastoralist districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapipirit it is 12 per cent, 9 per cent and 9 per cent respectively.⁶⁶ In Karamoja district the illiteracy rate is 79 per cent, and the drop-out rate at primary level is 86 per cent. Gender disparity in education is staggering. The Somali regional state in Ethiopia has the lowest (10 per cent) gross enrolment rate for girls at the primary level in the country.

Health statistics are even more disparate. The under five years mortality rate in Addis Ababa is 113.5 per 1,000 live births, in the Afar region it is 229.3. In other words, nearly one quarter of Afar children die before they reach their fifth year.⁶⁷ In northern Uganda, infant mortality between 1995 and 2000 rose from 99 to 106 per 1,000 births, meaning that one in nine children die in their first year, while the national average was 83. 'Ngorongoro leads in maternal deaths' was a recent item in *The Guardian* of Dar es Salaam.⁶⁸

HIV/AIDS

Since the mid-1980s when the first cases of HIV/AIDS were reported, the disease spread rapidly reaching epidemic proportions by the end of the last century in all the

countries of eastern Africa and the Horn. The rate of infection rose above 20 per cent of the adult population in Uganda by the late 1980s, and had taken nearly one million lives and left 1.7 million orphans. In a successful campaign of education, it was reduced to 6.1 per cent by 2001.⁶⁹ The rate of infection in Kenya stood at 14 per cent in 1999, that is, one-seventh of the adult population. An estimated 1.5 million Kenyan adults have died of it since the 1980s, and 2.2 million are infected with the virus at present. HIV/AIDS accounted for 35.5 per cent of male deaths and 44.5 female deaths in the 15–59 years age group in Dar es Salaam in the late 1990s.⁷⁰ The rate of infection in Ethiopia is estimated at about 10 per cent of the adult population, that is about 7 million people.⁷¹

The epidemic has a widespread multiplying effect throughout society, the full impact of which has yet to be felt. It has already reversed hard won gains made in the second half of the last century. Average life expectancy projections in Kenya were reduced from 65.4 years in 1995 to 54.7 years in 2000. Likewise, in Tanzania they were reduced from 52 years in 1990 to 48 years in 2000. Women are far more likely to be infected than men. Research in Kenya has shown that the rate among young women (15 to 19 years) is five times higher. The male/female infection ratio in Uganda is 39/51.⁷²

HIV/AIDS prevalence is higher in urban than in rural areas; the rates in Kenya being 17.5 per cent in urban centres and 12.2 per cent in the countryside. Nevertheless, no district is free of the disease, and this includes the pastoralist zone. The findings of a study⁷³ carried out in the Maasai-populated Kadjado district are considered representative of pastoralist groups in that country. According to it, all the pastoralist districts fall into a 'low prevalence' category, meaning they have a rate of infection equivalent to 40 per cent of the urban rate. Livestock traders are suspected of being the main conduit of transmission, because they have a high incidence rate of sexually transmitted diseases. Yet the Maasai call HIV/AIDS the 'Swahili disease' and believe that they are immune.

The same study lists the conditions that are conducive to the spreading of HIV/AIDS in the pastoralist zone: insecurity, lack of education and information, lack of testing facilities and condoms, poverty, etc. are familiar enough. In Ethiopia, the lowest use of modern contraceptive methods is in the Somali region.⁷⁴ Apart from a fairly high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases in the pas-

toralist zone, other conducive factors include ethnic prejudice, female genital mutilation, polygamy, wife inheritance and wife sharing. Still other factors are subsumed under the low status of women and the difficulties they face in managing their relationships with men, including insisting on condom usage. Male promiscuity, the sexual exploitation of young girls and underage marriage to older men are all factors. Rape in conflict situations and in refugee camps is also an important factor.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy exercise carried out in all the states of eastern Africa and the Horn at the beginning of this century obliged the governments in the region to acknowledge the plight of marginalized and disadvantaged sections of the population, including castes, hunter gatherers, pastoralists, women and youth. The marginaliza-

tion of the pastoralists was documented, quantified and placed on the political agenda. Referring to it in the new spirit of frankness, the *Kenyan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* admits: 'These regions have the highest incidence of poverty and the least access to basic social services.'⁷⁵

When asked about lagging development in the pastoralist zone, those who have the power and responsibility to make decisions give stock technical answers. The basic problem they see is the wandering mode of the pastoralist lifestyle that cannot be served with conventional structures of education and health. Another problem is the tenuous link with the market, which renders uneconomic the provision of physical infrastructure in the lowlands. Insecurity is yet another common problem that inhibits state and private investment.

Land tenure

Extensive use of land is the determining factor of pastoralist production, and whether or not mobile herders have access to adequate space will determine the future of this mode of production and way of life. Yet, land is a factor over which pastoralists have no control. In eastern Africa and the Horn various land tenure systems have existed and coexisted – African and European, customary and modern, communal, private and collective. Land in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda is collectively, that is, state owned, and land that is not privately owned in Kenya is held by the state in trust. None of these systems accommodates, let alone recognizes, pastoral rights over unimproved, unsettled land and the waters that cross it. Under colonialism such land was considered state (Crown) domain. African rule has made not the slightest difference in this respect.

*'If the colonizers were guilty of ignoring customary rights generally, the indigenous African officialdom is similarly guilty of ignoring pastoral tenure with the same air of prejudice, indifference, ethnic chauvinism and discrimination.'*⁷⁶

Obviously what matters is not the nature of the land tenure system in a country, but the provisions it makes for mobile livestock producers.

Obligated by dire economic need and compelled by international donor conditionality, the states in eastern Africa and the Horn have embraced economic liberalization and the accompanying free market prescriptions. Privatization being the categorical imperative of liberalization, governments in the region are dismantling the public sector of the economy to make room for private enterprise. Since the coming of the Structural Adjustment Programme in the 1980s, these governments have been under intense pressure from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to privatize land in order to create an 'enabling environment' for investment.

The World Bank's vocabulary of land tenure does not mention 'ownership' but 'land rights', not 'private property of land' but 'security of landed property', not a 'market for land' but 'access to land'. According to the World Bank, 'security of property' is required to motivate people to make improvements on the land; consequently, it is essential for economic growth and necessary for credit, insurance, investment and property transfer. Interestingly, international financial institutions promote land privatization in the context of the poverty reduction pro-

grammes they have imposed on African governments in the 1990s. 'Securing land rights is of particular relevance to vulnerable groups such as indigenous populations and herders,' claims an unpublished World Bank policy report.⁷⁷

So far Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda have resisted pressure for the wholesale 'liberalization' of land tenure. However, all three found it necessary to move in that direction in order to foster an 'enabling environment'. Tanzania and Uganda enacted new land laws for this purpose, while Ethiopia modified its land policy. These moves were made in the new atmosphere of transparency and public participation, and under scrutiny by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), domestic and foreign, and their patrons. In the consultations for the poverty reduction strategy, governments were forced to listen to a great deal of criticism from civil society, pastoralist advocates included. Thus, they were obliged to address the issue in new legislation.

The Land Act in Uganda (1998) recognizes customary, freehold, and leasehold systems of tenure. Amended in 2004, it provides for the issue of certificates of customary tenure to any person, family or community holding land under customary tenure. A communal land association may be formed by any group of persons to apply for land under customary tenure, lease or freehold. In theory, it is possible for pastoralist households, homesteads and communities to apply for land under communal tenure. Administered by the Uganda Land Commissioner, district land boards, and local land committees, the scheme has yet to be implemented due to lack of funds. Assuming that communal land associations can function as intended in pastoralist communities, the acid test will be the amount of land an association can claim.

The Land Act (1999) in Tanzania was enacted to create 'conditions for the operation of an efficient and equitable land market'. It declares the Presidency the trustee of the country's land, and vests administrative authority on an all-powerful Land Commissioner. A provision that caters to pastoralist interests provides for the creation of corporate forms of tenure, similar to the communal land associations in Uganda, and ordains that pastoralist requirements must be met when land management decisions are made. Nevertheless, it imposes the same limit – a maximum of 2,500 ha – on pastoralists, peasants and urban dwellers alike, which hardly meets the requirements of mobile livestock producers.

Land tenure in Kenya is based on English property law, which does not recognize the communal system as understood and practised by pastoralists. Most of the lowlands are Trust Lands administered by local district councils. Real power over land management, however, rests with the state executive hierarchy; in this case the President of the Republic, who can allocate Trust Land at will; the Minister of Local Government, who can impose government decisions on district councils; the Commissioner of Lands, who has wide administrative authority over Trust Land; and the Minister for Lands and Settlement, who can declare any Trust Land an 'adjudication' area to be subdivided and privatized. The process of auctioning the range to individuals in freehold is gaining momentum in Kenya, as pastoralists join the scramble for fear of being left without any land.

The Land Reform in Ethiopia (1975), which nationalized all land, mentioned the nomadic areas only to exempt them from the 10 ha maximum limit per household imposed on cultivators. The government that came to power in 1991 modified the system to give cultivators more security through the right of inheritance, and to provide land for industry and agri-business on the basis of leasehold. The federal Constitution enacted in 1995 enshrines the right of pastoralists 'to free land for grazing and cultivation as well as the right not to be displaced from their own lands' (Article 40). It vests authority over land management in the regional governments, which means there can be variation in arrangements adopted by the regions, as long as they do not violate the basic principle of state ownership. Presumably, in the Afar and Somali regions, where mobile herders are dominant, and Oromia where they are numerous, the pastoralists have a better chance of retaining the customary arrangement of land use.

To reiterate, what matters is not the system of land tenure, but the provisions it makes for extensive use of land by pastoralists. Despite the recently awakened concern for the plight of these peoples, there is an obvious unwillingness by the states in eastern Africa and the Horn to grant this right unequivocally and permanently. Nor are they likely to do so in the future. Pastoralists are small minorities who claim vast areas of land in states where the peasant majority is mortally threatened by land shortages. Land is the main resource, and the state is not going to surrender control over it. Much of the pastoralist habitat comes under loosely defined rules of customary tenure. New legislation does not strictly define customary tenure, leaving it vague and subject to interpretation and adjudication; tasks that are assigned to the state executive, not to elected bodies or the courts.

Pastoralists know from long and bitter experience that neither the law of the state nor those who interpret it are on their side. In the words of one herder, 'the law does not speak the Samburu language or the Borana, or the Somali, or the Turkana, or the Maasai'.⁷⁸ Another man complained that 'only in one case out of ten will a Maasai win a dispute against a crop cultivator'.⁷⁹ Litigation initiated by the pastoralist community expelled from the Mkomazi Game Reserve in Tanzania in 1987 has not been settled 17 years later.

Gender disparity cuts most deeply in the rural sector, where women provide most of the labour but own little land. For example, in Uganda they provide 60 per cent of agricultural labour, but only 7 per cent of them own land. The prevailing situation was summed up by a woman interviewed in Tanzania:

*'Tradition and our religion say men are lords over women, so they have control over money, land, harvest, farm implements, and the lives of their wives and children.'*⁸⁰

Intense pressure from local and international organizations in the past couple of decades has forced a change of attitude on the part of governments in the region, but not without hesitation and equivocation. Tanzania's National Land Policy (1995) guaranteed women's right of access to land, but decreed that issues of land ownership between spouses could not be the subject of litigation, and inheritance of land 'will continue to be governed by custom and tradition'. The Land Act (1999) affirms that women's rights of access to land are equal to men, and protects women's rights of property control within marriage, including a requirement of consent in the disposal of family property. Nevertheless, in the section on customary land tenure it refers to clan ownership, which traditionally discriminates against women.

When it debated the Land Act (1998), the Ugandan Parliament approved an amendment providing for 'co-ownership of land by spouses'. When the Act was promulgated, the amendment was missing, to the dismay of those who had proposed it.⁸¹ However, the omission was made good when the Act was amended in 2003.

In the parcelling and privatization of ranches in Kenya, women are not given land, and the same is largely true for the ongoing adjudication process in the north of that country. In Ethiopia, the peasant associations established by the Land Reform (1975) administer agricultural land distribution. They are required to apportion land equally among households, whether headed by men or women.

Politics

‘However important ecology has been historically, its importance in shaping pastoral modes of life is in decline: the political and economic place of pastoral society in a wider national and international context is more important for the future of pastoralism.’⁸²

What then is the political place of pastoral society in the national context?

Languishing in the margins of the state and society, the pastoralist zone was bypassed by the nationalist current that swept the region in the mid-twentieth century, and was ignored by the emerging African political class that was to inherit power. The African political elite espoused the colonial prejudices intact, with a sense of embarrassment for their ‘primitive’ subjects in the pastoralist zone. Even Julius Nyerere urged the Maasai to adopt ‘civilized’ dress. As a rule, pastoralists were not involved nor represented in the anti-colonial nationalist movement. Where they did become involved, they found themselves confronting the state and suffered grievously as a result. In the Somali inhabited regions of Ethiopia and Kenya the population was attracted by the lure of pan-Somali unity and supported the secessionist struggle. As a result, they lived under harsh military rule for decades, and have yet to shed the stigma of disloyalty to the states that claim them as citizens.

The pastoralists’ aversion to state borders, and their negative experience with the state for over a century, do not contribute to a robust sense of national identity and citizenship. For many pastoralists citizenship is linked to taxation. Early on, pastoralists along the Ethiopia–Kenya border kept tax receipts in different cigarette boxes, and produced them on demand to claim citizenship where they happened to be at the time.⁸³

Conflict and the constant flow of refugees across borders further muddles the issue of citizenship. The long suffering, long divided, highly mobile Somali population of the Horn is in the middle of the muddle. It is difficult to differentiate between Djiboutian, Ethiopian, Kenyan and other Somali pastoralists, or, for that matter, non-pastoralists. Last year, Ethiopia moved to bar former high officials from the Siad Barre regime in Somalia from holding state office at the regional and federal level, and an attempt was made to issue refugees with special identity cards. By contrast, Kenya issued special identity cards to its own Somali subjects to distinguish them from other Somali. Kituyi points out the ambivalent development of

Maasai identity in Kenya. Along with a growing awareness of becoming Kenyans, the Maasai have also become aware of an ethnic, that is, pan-Maasai, identity they never had before; something he attributes to the primacy of ethnicity in the country’s political life.⁸⁴

The geopolitical position of the pastoralist zone; the wandering lifestyle of its inhabitants; their disregard for state borders or law; their avoidance of taxation; their evasion of livestock health regulations; their participation in smuggling and raiding; and their methods for settling disputes combined to create a ‘pastoralist problem’ that officialdom would rather not have to deal with, and which none of the states in eastern Africa and the Horn have been able to resolve to this day.

The recession of authoritarianism and the widening of the political arena that began in the region in the 1990s gave pastoralists their first glimpse of politics at the national level. Kenya with its fledgling democracy led the way. It has some 40 pastoralist constituencies in four provinces that elect as many Members of Parliament (MPs). Encouraged by the Kenya Pastoralist Forum, an effective advocacy group, a group of MPs formed a Pastoralist Parliamentary Group (PPG). At its strongest, the PPG had 38 members representing nearly all pastoralist communities and political parties. It was an unprecedented show of solidarity across ethnic and party lines. The Kenya African National Union (KANU) administration, which controlled 27 pastoralist constituencies, was worried enough to take measures to undermine the PPG through bribery and intimidation, and the PPG soon became dormant.⁸⁵ It was re-launched in 2003, again with the support of civil society groups.

A trusted method of suborning politicians is appointment to cabinet level office, and KANU used this to good effect to emasculate the PPG. Pastoralist representation at cabinet level has increased markedly in recent years throughout the region. Ethiopia strives for equity in ethnic representation, and there is always at least one Afar and one Somali in the federal cabinet. The state governments in the Afar and Somali regions, of course, are by and large ethnically homogeneous. A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Pastoralist Affairs was founded in Ethiopia in 2002. In Uganda, several high officials claim a pastoral background because they are Bahima, as is President Museveni, who also owns a ranch in the ‘cattle corridor’. A PPG was set up in Tanzania in 2004, and a Maasai is Minister of Water and Livestock Resources in that country.

In none of the states in the region have pastoralist politicians been able to initiate a single piece of legislation of significant benefit to their constituents.

Educated professionals from pastoralist backgrounds who turn to politics are integrating into the mainstream of society, and inevitably distance themselves from their communities. 'Many politicians [...] emphasise their connection to the Kenyan political establishment and their possible roles as intermediaries with knowledge of both Maasai and non-Maasai ways,' notes Kituyi.⁸⁶ Not infrequently, these representatives adopt the commonplace solution to the 'pastoralism problem'. It is interesting to see how many of them have come to believe that settlement is the only solution.

At the local level, pastoralist communities often comprise a majority of the population: the Afar and Somali regional states and the Borana and South Omo zones in Ethiopia; the North Eastern, Eastern, and Rift Valley provinces in Kenya; the Karamoja region and the 'cattle corridor' in Uganda; and the Arusha region in Tanzania. This raises the hope that decentralization can endow pastoralists with a degree of power over local affairs.

Pastoralists are unlikely to be able to assert their rights to communal lands in the push for privatisation that is well under way throughout Africa today. Without a shift in power from the state to local land

*users, from donors to recipients, from wealthy to poor members of pastoral society, then the current confusion and damage can be expected to persist.'*⁸⁷

All of the states in eastern Africa and the Horn have some form of elected local government, and pastoralist communities ought to be able to make their voices heard at that level. Like legislative bodies, however, local government in the region is primarily an implementing agent of central government policies. Local government bodies have little independent revenue raising capacity, and are heavily dependent on fiscal transfers from the centre. Central government officials are appointed to oversee the operations of local government and to ensure that they conform to national policy. In pastoralist regions, these officials are seldom natives of the area. In Kenya, the first Somali provincial commissioner of North Eastern province was appointed in 2000.

*All occupants of these (Kenyan local government) offices are government employees backed by the police force and government courts to enforce their administrative functions primarily as agents of the state executive.'*⁸⁸

Pastoral communities in Uganda 'are only targeted by districts for payment of tax, but are not involved in planning and decision making'.⁸⁹

Belated recognition

The first years of the twenty-first century witnessed a remarkable upsurge of interest in pastoralism and its plight in development and political circles. NGOs – local and international – with a pastoralist mandate have mushroomed, and are competing to promote projects in the drylands. Leading international organizations such as the UNDP, USAID, World Bank and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization have recently discovered the contribution mobile herders make to livestock production and to the national economies, and espoused their cause with the zeal of the convert. Under conditionality, the governments in the region are obliged to pay the issues some heed.

Appropriately, the term 'pastoralism' and concern for its plight first appeared in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) of the states in the region. The scales have dropped away and pastoralism is seen in a new, positive light. The UNDP launched a 'Global Drylands Imperative', whose initial concern is to dispel the myths and misunderstandings that demean pastoralism, and to show that 'mobility is an ecological necessity and that mobile pastoralism is often the best way to manage dry environments sustainably'.⁹⁰

Kenya's *Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, 2003–2007* devotes a chapter to the ASAL, recognizing the problems mobile herders face and their potential contribution to the conservation of the environment. Furthermore, Kenya's PRSP acknowledges that 'nomadic pastoralism has proven the most prudent production system in the ecologically fragile ASAL rangelands'.⁹¹ The relevant document in Uganda suggests: 'Government needs to recognise pastoralism as a sustainable mode of livelihood that should be developed and promoted.'⁹² Ethiopia's document promises 'special attention [...] to pastoral areas to improve the welfare of pastoral people'.⁹³

Recognition of pastoralist merits and concern for its plight on the part of governments was not spontaneous. It was the outcome of considerable pressure put on them by civil society and the international financial institutions. Initially, governments took the line that poverty reduction 'is to a large extent, an integral part of on-going macro-economic and structural reforms'.⁹⁴ Consequently, they saw no need for radical departures in their PRSPs. Ethiopia's document stated: 'For the next five years the aim is to strengthen and carry forward the existing programmes.'⁹⁵

NGOs made a concerted effort to intervene in the consultation debate that preceded the formulation of the PRSPs. A civil society organization/Pastoral Task Force brought together 14 organizations for that purpose in Uganda. A number of interested organizations formed a thematic group to lobby for the pastoralists in the preparation of the Kenyan PRSP. Pastoralist concerns were ably represented in the deliberations of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission, whose final report contains many favourable items. In Ethiopia, the newly formed Ethiopian Pastoralist Forum undertook this task. Encouraged by the international NGO community and funded by the international financial institutions, these joint efforts presented the governments with detailed proposals for policies and institutions designed to promote the welfare of the people in the pastoral zone. To raise the profile of pastoralism, a National Pastoralist Week was held in December 2003 in Kenya, and an official pastoralist day (17 June) was declared in Ethiopia.

Sadly, the results of these efforts are meagre. The advocates of pastoralism were uniformly disappointed by the inflexibly narrow official focus on livestock, which cannot widen to encompass people. For example, the Ugandan document makes a facile shift from people to cattle:

*'The immediate intervention would be the development of a national policy on pastoralism that aims at improving the quality of cattle products and encouraging farmers to become market and export oriented.'*⁹⁶

Kenya's strategy for the ASALs stated that 'improvements in livestock production and marketing [...] remain the key goal in the medium term'.⁹⁷

Governments adopted precious few proposals offered by pastoralist advocates. Nevertheless, the issue was put on the national agenda, and to a small extent institutionalized. In Ethiopia, a Pastoralist Development Department was included in the Ministry of Federal Affairs. In Kenya, the department responsible for ASAL, now renamed Arid Lands, was rejuvenated and sited in the Office of the President. These bear no comparison with the many agencies, departments, ministries, etc., devoted to improving the health, quality and marketing of livestock. 'The wind is blowing in our direction, but it hasn't rained yet' was the wry summation of an Ethiopian MP.⁹⁸

The arc of conflict

The pastoralist zone in eastern Africa and the Horn is wracked by conflict. It was never a peaceful place. Pastureland, water and access routes are perennial bones of contention in the lowlands; the control of the caravan trade routes is another. Livestock looting is a traditional practice whereby depleted herds are replenished, young men acquire their own herds and assert their manhood. Such conflict takes place between as well as within ethnic communities. In the past it followed rules designed to limit damage to life and property, and was resolved in a manner that provided for mediation and compensation, rather than retribution.

In the second half of the twentieth century, conflict in this zone increased in frequency and scale, and changed form. Conflict among pastoralists for pastureland, water, and access routes intensified. The conventional explanation is that these resources are becoming scarcer due to several reasons, including: changing consumption patterns that make pastoralists dependent on external resources; higher incidence of drought; an increased pastoralist involvement in trade; and the intrusion of commercial agriculture.

Northern and western Kenya could be described as a battleground. 'Most communities of northern Kenya pastoralists have virtual militia armies and an informal or clandestine but thriving arms trade is flourishing.'⁹⁹ Most groups in northern Kenya live in ethnically defined districts, with buffer zones between them that often tend to be well-watered and foraged but these zones are used by none of the groups in question. Karamoja region in Uganda has become infamous for violence and cattle raiding, and a serious 'security problem' for the state. Much of the conflict is among sections of the Karamojong. 'Once closely related sections [...] are now gravely hostile to one another.'¹⁰⁰ Karamoja is the centre of intensified cattle raiding that involves neighbouring ethnic groups in Uganda, and the Pokot and Turkana across the border in Kenya.

The nature of raiding throughout the entire region has changed fundamentally. In the past it was a communal venture, organized and sanctioned by community leaders, whose goal was to ensure optimal herd size for the group. 'Raiding as a community venture is giving way to motives that are largely individual and narrower.'¹⁰¹ The goal is individual gain. An increase in raiding incidents during school holidays in western Pokot is attributed to secondary school student involvement in raids to raise money for school fees and other expenses.¹⁰² Raided animals are taken

out of the area to enter commercial networks and cannot be recovered. To prevent this, the government in Kenya banned livestock movement across district boundaries in western Pokot.

Clashes between mobile herders and sedentary cultivators have become more frequent and bloodier. Although politically instigated, the ethnic clashes in Kenya's Rift Valley in the 1990s that took the lives of hundreds and displaced hundreds of thousands were conditioned by fierce competition for land. In March 2001, a Pokot raid left 50 Marakwet villagers dead. Uganda's 'cattle corridor' is the scene of frequent clashes between Bahima pastoralists and cultivators. In December 2000, a clash between Maasai herders and cultivators in the Kilosa district in Tanzania, killed 30 people.¹⁰³

New resources such as the contraband trade, which represents the bulk of intra-regional commerce in the Horn, have become bones of violent contention. A huge trade in smuggled manufactured goods crosses Ethiopia's borders from Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia and Somaliland, with pastoralist involvement in every phase of it. Clans through whose territory this trade passes fight to control it.¹⁰⁴ New transport links that cross the lowlands represent a new resource and source of conflict. The Afar and Ise Somali in eastern Ethiopia are locked into a bitter conflict over control of the Addis Ababa–Djibouti road, Ethiopia's sole link to the sea.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the Borana and Gerri have been fighting for more than a decade over a section of the Ethiopia–Kenya road north of Moyale.

Ironically, the modicum of politico-administrative resources brought to the pastoralist domain lately by the move towards democratization/decentralization, can also become a bone of contention. Control of state office and resources at the local level has sparked inter- and intra-group conflict. Anuak and Nuer contention for dominance in the Gambela regional state in Ethiopia climaxed in massive violence in 2003. Such contention was also a factor in the ethnic clashes in Kenya in the 1990s.¹⁰⁶

The scale of violence rose due to the introduction of automatic weaponry, and the experience in warfare gained by pastoralists enlisted in larger conflicts in the region. An automatic weapon is the badge of manhood in the pastoralist milieu, having left the spear far behind. In a region beset by conflict, there are many supply sources of such weapons, the main one being the state. The bulk of modern weaponry in the region is imported by the states for their own military, paramilitary, police and security

forces. Part of it finds its way into the lowlands through various routes. Embattled regimes arm pastoralists to combat their opponents. The arming of Arab pastoralist militias by the administration in Sudan is a current example. The Obote II administration recruited Karamojong warriors to fight against the National Resistance Army.¹⁰⁷ The state also gives arms to local communities to defend and police themselves such as, the Home Guards in northern Kenya, the Local Defence Units in Uganda and the Peasant Association guards in Ethiopia.

Other major sources of weapons are the various insurgent movements fighting against the state, which have a presence along and across state borders, and recruit pastoralists into their armies. When a regime is overthrown or a state collapses, the arms market is flooded. When Idi Amin's regime collapsed in Uganda in 1979, the Karamojong looted an entire armoury from the abandoned Moroto Barracks.¹⁰⁸ When the Mengistu regime fell in Ethiopia in 1991, an army of nearly half a million melted away with its weapons overnight. The collapse of the state in Somalia at the same time was another arms bonanza.

Pastoralists often become involved in larger conflicts in the region. Such conflicts have different origins and leadership, and goals that are not always related to the immediate concerns of pastoralists. Their common denominator is struggle over the state. They are fought under ethnic, nationalist, regional or religious banners, and aspire either to wrest state power, to create new states, or to merge with existing ones. The conflicts in Eritrea, the earlier examples of Bale and Ogaden in Ethiopia, the so-called Shifta war in Kenya, the civil war in Sudan, and the endemic conflict in Somalia are such cases. Pastoralists have proved enthusiastic recruits in the militias that sprouted throughout the Horn in the second half of the twentieth century. In many cases they joined opportunistically to get weapons for use in their parochial confrontations. Elsewhere, they responded to the call of ethnic kinship, as in the Somali region of Ethiopia, or to religion, as in Eritrea.¹⁰⁹

The material cost of the conflict is incalculable. 'Huge expenditures on security measures in the pastoral regions often utilize resources which otherwise could be earmarked for economic development.'¹¹⁰ 'Security' claimed 13.9 per cent of current expenditure in the Ugandan budget for 2001, while the share of agriculture was 1.6 per cent. Conflict depopulates land when people flee for fear of violence, and elsewhere limits the land available for grazing, due to the use of buffer zones separating the territories of rival groups. Conflict is a major cause of internal displacement and leads to the congregation of people around security centres and relief stations. One study puts the number of internally displaced people in

northern Kenya at 170,000, and at 23 per cent of the population of Marakwet district.¹¹¹ The gender and age composition of refugee populations is striking. In northern Kenya, for example, 70 per cent of the internally displaced are women and children. Even the camps that shelter these people are not safe. In September 2001, Karamojong attacked such a camp in Katakwi sub-district in Uganda, killing 17 people and looting the livestock.¹¹² Furthermore, rapes on women and girls in and around the camps are a serious problem.

Concern over state security has prompted extremely harsh state repression in northern Kenya. A veritable reign of terror was imposed on the Somali population of North Eastern province under a state of emergency that lasted from 1966 to 1991. In the words of an MP from the province, 'people have been tortured and killed for as long as I can remember'.¹¹³ In one infamous incident, the so-called Wagalla massacre of 1984, an estimated 2,000 people lost their lives.¹¹⁴ The Somali region of Ethiopia was subject to military rule from the mid-1960s to 1991. There is still a strong military presence there, as in northern Kenya. Northern Uganda, including Karamoja, remains a theatre of war between government forces and the Lord's Resistance Army.

Starting early in the colonial era, there have been many attempts to disarm the pastoralists, either by force or bribery. Disarmament has no chance of success in a region where the state cannot provide physical security. More than a century after they were brought under state suzerainty, pastoralists still rely on self-defence. However, total failure has not stopped the state from trying. Every administration in Uganda since independence has launched alternate pacification and disarmament campaigns in Karamoja. The latest Karamoja Operation was launched in 2000 'aiming at recovering illegal guns from the Karamojong through peaceful means'. The document admits that:

*'without adequate protection, they would fear to venture out in search of water and pasture for their animals as this may further expose them to armed warriors from neighbouring countries and districts.'*¹¹⁵

Conflict has always drawn attention to the pastoralist zone; recently this attention has come from the United States of America (USA). The USA considers what it calls the Greater Horn Area (GHA) that stretches as far as Tanzania, a key region in its 'war against terrorism'. Anarchy and conflict is thought to be fertile ground for terrorism to flourish, and the GHA is a 'promising' region. According to a USAID document:

'the terrorist attacks on the USA of September 11 dramatise the importance of promoting economic

growth to this volatile region to support (US) national security interests. The systemic poverty and conflict raging in Sudan, Somalia and Northern Kenya require particular attention.¹¹⁶

When funds were made available for peace-making, the states in the region began to show a greater awareness of conflict, and an increasing involvement in mediation and conciliation. A start was made on creating an institutional framework for this purpose. In Ethiopia, conflict management committees comprising administrators, community leaders and security officials were set up in vulnerable districts. A Karamoja Peace Initiative was launched in Uganda.

Cross-border issues

The pastoralist zone straddles the boundaries of all the states in the region. There are no serious border demarcation issues among them. The collapse of the Somali state has nullified the single most contentious issue of this sort. There is an unresolved issue over the Ilemi Triangle between Sudan and Kenya, and over western Pokot between Kenya and Uganda. Nevertheless, strife in the pastoralist zone produces perennial tension along state borders. Given the fragmentation of communities by frontier lines, conflict in the lowlands often spills across borders. Kin groups cross borders to help each other, and refugees from conflict and famine seek shelter across the border. As discussed, cross-border raiding is common, especially on Kenya's frontier with Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia, and looted animals are trekked across frontiers.

The larger conflicts in which pastoralists become involved immensely complicate inter-state relations in the Horn. The presence of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in northern Kenya, where it is assumed to have support among the Borana and Gabbra Oromo has exacerbated local inter-ethnic conflicts; provoked repeated Ethiopian military incursions into Kenyan territory; and strained relations between the two states, until the Kenyan government expelled the OLF in 1999. The Ogaden National Liberation Front and the Itihad el Islami operate on both sides of the Ethiopia–Somalia border and have likewise provoked Ethiopian cross-border operations. The presence of the Lord's Resistance Army and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army on the Uganda–Sudan border has brought the two states to the brink of war several times.

Governments in eastern Africa and the Horn are aware of the need for a regional approach to conflict management, but have yet to act effectively on it. In 2002, the seven member states of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) – Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda – resolved to set up a

conflict early-warning system (CEWARN) composed of national early warning and response units (CEWERUS). The first unit was set up in Karamoja district in Uganda. IGAD has a department for conflict management, and the African Union has a Peace and Security Council.

NGO proliferation

The mushrooming of civil society organizations with a pastoralist mandate – too many and too varied to be categorized – marked the recent upsurge of interest in pastoralist affairs. Nowhere more so than in Kenya, where numerous groups work at district level for conflict prevention, development, education, health, HIV/AIDS, women, youth, etc. One tally of NGOs and state agencies engaged in animal health activities counted 60 in Kenya, 20 in Tanzania, 13 in Uganda and 12 in Ethiopia.¹¹⁷

Propelled by the cash flow, the rush of civil society groups to add peace-making to their agenda outstrips state efforts. 'Conflict vulnerability' assessments are the latest fashion in the aid community.¹¹⁸ Every district in northern Kenya has a peace committee. The model is the Wajir Peace Committee established after bloody clashes in that district that involved the Ajuuran and Degodia Somali and the Borana Oromo. In the so-called Bagalla massacre of 1998, the Borana attacked the Degodia, allegedly with help from the OLF, killing over 300 people.¹¹⁹ Local professional women took the initiative to organize a peace committee that eventually enlisted elders, professionals, traders, women and youth from all ethnic communities in Wajir, and extended the scope of its activities across the border in Ethiopia. The Committee has representatives in every location that are responsible for preventing conflict and crime. When these occur, mediation takes the form of compensation.

Compensation became a contentious issue when the various communities sought to harmonize its practice. The Borana and Somali communities agreed to pay 100 camels for the life of a man, 50 for a woman. The Rendile and Samburu pay less and they found the Somali price excessive, while the Turkana take into account the loss of bridewealth and pay more for unmarried girls than for a man. The Samburu claim that they do not kill women and do not need to set a price. The matter is still debated.

NGO proliferation occurred at the juncture point of several trends. One is the emergence of a small, educated, male elite resident in the pastoral zone who usually form and manage local associations. Another is the political thaw in recent years in eastern Africa and the Horn, and the opening of space for civil society intervention in public affairs. The third is the huge increase in funding from abroad for such interventions, and the fourth is the corresponding proliferation of intermediate

NGOs that design projects and bring them to the local level, cash in hand.

Inherent in this juncture are flaws and dangers for the future of such ventures. The local elite – traditional and modern – who are mostly males, are quite used to being summoned to meet NGO representatives and asked what they would like to have done in their community. Presumably the choice is that of the community, but the list of fundable projects is often predetermined and short. Bemused, they listen to the ‘experts’ – young Westerners – explain in the awesome jargon of the development ‘discourse’ the community ‘project ownership’, group ‘empowerment’, ‘inclusive participation’ based on the ‘democratic process’, ‘participatory approach’ and ‘stakeholder’ roles with ‘accountability’ and ‘transparency’ guaranteed to ensure project success.

Unless local vested interests are threatened, there is no good reason for these elites to refuse such generous offers. The deciding factor is the cash flow, and projects can be accepted primarily with that in mind. NGOs set up to raise income for enterprising individuals are the worst example of this phenomenon. The fundamental flaw and future danger is lack of ‘sustainability’ – another favourite aid concept – in most cases. Once the cash flow dries up, most projects fold for lack of local resources, human and material, to sustain them. Presumably, both sides are

aware of this fatal flaw in their plans. However, NGOs also have to sustain themselves.

The Turkana Rural Development Project launched in 1980 by the Norwegian aid agency NORAD is a case in point. NORAD invested heavily in the district with a multi-faceted project, fishing, marketing, roads, schools, water points, etc. A Turkana Rehabilitation Project was launched at the same time with funds from the European Economic Community and the World Food Programme. Money and food encouraged the community to participate, and government agencies were funded to collaborate. People congregated around project sites and relief centres that now provided them with a living. In a disagreement over the prosecution by the government of a Kenyan with Norwegian citizenship some years later, Norway pulled out of Kenya, cut off economic aid, and the Turkana Rehabilitation Project collapsed overnight.¹²⁰

The proliferation of NGOs, their lack of coordination and their lack of accountability to the communities they serve, inevitably produce fragmentation, redundancy and waste of human and material resources.¹²¹ Furthermore, the steadily expanding scope of NGO activities relieves the state from responsibility for performing its functions, reducing it to an ‘outsourcing’ agency. At the same time, the level of NGO activity is limiting the space available for local private sector involvement, the categorical imperative of aid.

Conclusion

Pastoralism as a mode of production and a way of life has entered a phase of decline that may well prove terminal.

*'Pastoral production systems are a highly efficient response to an environment which began to disappear in the early twentieth century and has been disappearing at an accelerating rate every since.'*¹²²

This is a global trend, not limited to eastern Africa and the Horn. In this region, the process of decline has aroused unusual concern because it is accompanied by disasters such as conflict, drought, famine and flood, which have drawn attention worldwide. Concern gave rise to a widespread debate about the future of pastoralism in societies that strive to emulate a model of development that has no place for it. The issue is fundamental, because if there is no place for it, why try to avert the inevitable by pumping aid like oxygen into pastoralism in the forlorn hope that it can survive?

The advocates of pastoralism have an array of arguments that can be subsumed in the following categories. One is the human rights approach that relies on a battery of international treaties and declarations, signed by the states in the region, which protect minority group rights. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) requires states not only to protect 'all human rights and freedoms without discrimination' (Article 4), but to promote them through appropriate policies and legislation. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981) have similar provisions. All the states in eastern Africa and the Horn have formally adhered to them.

Though morally impeccable, international law can be a weak reed to grasp in a region where group rights are likely to be respected only when corresponding group political power can be brought to bear on the state. As shown in this report, pastoralist communities are not well endowed in this respect, a weakness illustrated by the fact that it took external pressure to bring recent attention to their plight. Furthermore, 'modern' national law carries limited weight in tradition-bound societies. Enforcing women's rights especially is an uphill struggle, even where pastoralist women have access to the courts. One woman says:

*'You have to use lots of subterfuge to gain your rights from your father, brother or husband. Going to court just won't do. It makes matters worse.'*¹²³

A related approach focuses on the wealth and creativity of pastoralist culture, the right of these communities to preserve it (also protected by the same international covenants), and the loss to humanity's cultural heritage if it is allowed to perish. The weakness of this approach is that it countenances conventional approaches, including commercialization, as the means of 'developing' pastoralism. Yet pastoralist culture is based on a means of production that is not commercial. To change it is to change pastoralists' culture too.

Another approach relies on the universal concern for the environment, with the argument that mobile livestock production is the only ecologically sustainable land use strategy in the fragile ecosystem of eastern Africa and the Horn. Its proponents have ample evidence of areas turned into dust bowls when cultivation displaced grazing, or were rendered useless by salinity brought by irrigation. They may well prove right in the end, but that may well follow the demise of pastoralism.

Yet another approach raises the political, security and financial cost to the state caused by perennial conflict in the pastoralist zone. It claims that decline and marginalization are the root causes of conflict and it is these that the state should deal with. Correct as far as it goes, this claim has not persuaded officialdom, whose counterclaim is that the roots of the problem are the 'footloose' and 'lawless' ways of the pastoralists, and the solution to this is settlement.

The most hopeful approach lies in the field of economics, and relies in showing the contribution mobile livestock production makes to the national economies in terms of meat and dairy products, hides and skins. The economics of mobile livestock production give it an advantage over other modes of livestock production, it is argued, and given proper access to the market it can help close the widening gap in food security at home and provide for increased exports. Here, the advocates of pastoralism find common ground with a state that is singularly focused on livestock development, and share the same prescription for pastoralist development through commercialization.

Promising though this may be, the economist approach ignores the important issue that pastoralism is not simply a mode of production but a way of life and a culture as well, and the two are generically linked. Moreover, and more to

the economist point, pastoralism is a mode of production designed for subsistence and not for the market. Even though pastoralists may engage in market transactions, they do not raise animals for the market. Market transactions, and the other activities they engage in, are geared to the preservation and expansion of the herd. Commercialization inevitably will transform this mode of production fundamentally. What then will be the inevitable social and cultural consequences? The question that needs to be asked is, will this ancient way of life and culture survive commercialization?

The failure to halt the decline, let alone bring meaningful development to the pastoralist world in the past half century, has forced a reassessment of concepts, strategies and methods that have guided past interventions in that realm. It has produced claims of 'new ecology', 'new perspectives', 'new range management', 'new thinking', and yet more jargon that fails to mask the fact that this is pouring very old wine into new bottles.¹²⁴

Pastoralists know their predicament and are taking actions described in this report that can be called 'coping strategies'. These are intended to lighten the load on the range by reducing the size of both the household and the herd. Households migrate with the herd, they take up cultivation and reduce the size of the herd, they shed members who change location and way of life, and they seek supplementary sources of income to reduce dependence on livestock and herd size. Pastoralists are shifting to agro-pastoralism, compelled by circumstances, encouraged by the state, and induced by the development community. Pastoralists are drawn into the market by the need to satisfy what now have become basic needs. The shift to agro-pastoralism multiplies such needs, but also accommodates commercialization. This trend is most advanced in Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya with the exception of North Eastern province. It is sizeable also in the Somali region of Ethiopia.

Recommendations

To the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda:

1. The governments should fulfil their obligations to implement in full the international human rights treaties they have ratified, in particular the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). In particular they should fully implement as quickly as possible the right of everyone to freedom of movement (Article 12, ACHPR) and the right to freely take part in the cultural life of their community (Article 17, ACHPR.).
2. All states should fully implement the right of all peoples to freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources, as well as the right to lawful recovery of their property and adequate compensation when their property has been taken away or damaged (Article 20, ACHPR). They should particularly ensure that the rights of pastoralist women are protected both in theory and in practice.
3. In particular, each government should ensure that their recognized system of land tenure includes protection of the use of land by pastoralists.
4. All governments should set up systems (legal or other) that can fairly and effectively adjudicate on current and proposed uses of land, and past unfair seizure of land/prevention of its use. Decisions regarding the allocation of such land should be made by independent bodies and not the executive.
5. In designing electoral systems and other forms of participation, special attention should be given to the pastoralist communities, to ensure that all members, including women, are fairly and effectively represented at all levels of government.
6. All PRSPs should recognize and address the need for the protection of the culture and economic and social development of each pastoralist community.

To donor agencies:

7. Any existing and new donor project should be reviewed for any effect it may have on the pastoralist way of life, particularly land use.
8. Donors should fully support new and existing mechanisms that can fairly determine pastoralists' right to use land and compensate them for past interference with this right.
9. Any funding of education should address the particular needs of pastoralists.

To all countries and other organizations working on conflict resolution in the region:

10. A regional approach to addressing the root causes of conflict involving pastoralists should be addressed, in particular addressing issues of the use of land and resources, and participation in government.

Relevant international instruments

United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)

Article 27

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)

Article 1

1. In this Convention, the term 'racial discrimination' shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

ILO 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (1958)

Article 2

Each Member for which this Convention is in force undertakes to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof.

ILO 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989)

Article 3

1. Indigenous and tribal peoples shall enjoy the full measure of human rights and fundamental freedoms without hindrance or discrimination. The provisions of the Convention shall be applied without discrimination to male and female members of these peoples.

Article 7

1. The peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well-being and the lands they occupy or otherwise use, and to exercise control, to the extent possible, over their own economic, social and cultural development. In addition, they shall participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of plans and programmes for national and regional development which may affect them directly.

Article 14

1. The rights of ownership and possession of the peoples concerned over the lands which they traditionally occupy shall be recognised. In addition, measures shall be taken in appropriate cases to safeguard the right of the peoples concerned to use lands not exclusively occupied by them, but to which they have traditionally had access for their subsistence and traditional activities. Particular attention shall be paid to the situation of nomadic peoples and shifting cultivators in this respect.

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)

Article 12

1. Every individual shall have the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of a State provided he *[sic]* abides by the law.
[...]

Article 13

1. Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his *[sic]* country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives in accordance with the provisions of the law.
[...]

Article 19

All peoples shall be equal; they shall enjoy the same respect and shall have the same rights. Nothing shall justify the domination of a people by another.

Article 20

1. All peoples shall have the right to existence. They shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination. They shall freely determine their political status and shall pursue their economic and social development according to the policy they have freely chosen.
[...]

Article 21

1. All peoples shall freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources. This right shall be exercised in the exclusive interest of the people. In no case shall a people be deprived of it.
2. In case of spoliation, the dispossessed people shall have the right to the lawful recovery of its property as well as to an adequate compensation.
[...]

Article 22

1. All peoples shall have the right to their economic, social and cultural development with due regard to their freedom and identity and in the equal enjoyment of the common heritage of mankind *[sic]*.
2. States shall have the duty, individually or collectively, to ensure the exercise of the right to development.

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)

Article 19

Right to Sustainable Development.

- Women shall have the right to fully enjoy their right to sustainable development. In this connection, the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to:
- [...]
 - b) ensure participation of women at all levels in the conceptualisation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of development policies and programmes;
 - c) promote women's access to and control over productive resources such as land and guarantee their right to property;
 - d) promote women's access to credit, training, skills development and extension services at rural and urban levels in order to provide women with a higher quality of life and reduce the level of poverty among women.

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Pastoralism on the Margin

Pastoralism is a culture, an ancient mode of livestock production and a way of life, which makes extensive use of grazing in the lowlands of eastern Africa and the Horn. However, this culture, form of production and way of life has reached a critical point. A process that began under colonialism – the dispossession of land and the promotion of agriculture – has been continued and accelerated by independent African states in the region.

Pastoralism on the Margin shows that the material base of pastoralism has been all but eroded in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and the situation has been exacerbated by climatic change, conflict, disease, drought and famine.

The author, John Markakis, argues that the upsurge in development interest in pastoralism has done little to meet pastoralists needs, despite the huge amounts of money poured into the region. He discusses the many changes that have been visited on pastoralist men and women in the area and their way of life, and debates whether pastoralism can survive.

Pastoralism on the Margin concludes with a set of recommendations aimed at the governments of the region, at donor agencies and at bodies working on conflict resolution in this part of Africa.