



AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa: Key Lessons and Significance to Tanzania

Introduction

Pastoralism is a pastoral production system in which at least 50% of the gross household's income – the value of market production and the estimated value of subsistence production consumed by households, comes from pastoralism or its related activities. It is a system whereby more than 15% of household's food energy consumption involves the dairy products they produce.¹

Pastoralism is also defined as a livelihood system where people depend on larger parts (over 80%) of their daily life requirements on livestock production. It is a livestock management system whereby herds of livestock are managed by utilizing natural resources such as pasture and water sources. Pastoralism is a sustainable livelihood system regulated by ecology with complex modes of social, economic and political organization which can adapt to the environment.

Pastoralists depend on three pillars for their livelihood which are interdependent – first is natural resources, second is the herd and third is the family and social institutions. Livestock herds are gene-bank resources for Tanzania's livestock sector development. The natural resources surrounding them are utilized in a systematic manner to mitigate different natural and man-made calamities whereby pastoralists' indigenous knowledge is a major guidance.

Livestock mobility is essential for pastoralists' livelihood. It is essential in responding to variability of natural resources in time and space. While livestock herds are composed mainly of indigenous breeds with a few crossbreeds, they are also dependent on natural pastures and sometimes crop residues. Natural resources are usually managed and secured under deferent tenure regimes by a pastoral family and its institutions through a mix of common property to individual property while rules and regulation are defined at local level.

The family has been employed by the production system for many decades, with critical decisions made by local leadership systems involving the community, on their livelihood and development. However, it has been facing challenges of resource limitations, including land resources and climate change.

Pastoralism derives economic benefits from marginal land use in semi-arid and arid areas - areas which need highest investment for subsistence crop production. Pastoralists have developed a high adaptive capacity to constraints of climate change, economic and political changes.

Pastoralism as a livelihood system has been largely misunderstood by policy makers and as a result the existing national policies, development plans and strategies appear to be less accommodating for pastoralists. Indigenous knowledge remains the major guidance for sustainability of pastoralist livelihoods. However, through extensive regional expert consultations conducted since 2007, the **Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa** is the first continent-wide Policy initiative which aims to secure, protect and improve the lives, livelihoods and rights of African pastoralists. The Policy Framework is a platform for mobilizing and coordinating political commitment to pastoral development in Africa, and emphasizes the need to fully involve pastoralist women and men in the national and regional development processes from which they are supposed to benefit.²

This information brief is a summary of the African Union's Policy framework for Pastoralism in Africa looking at Tanzania's context.

¹ Swift J.(1988) Major Issues in Pastoral Development with Special emphasis on selected African Countries. FAO/UNDP, Rome and IDS University of Sussex
^a Mashingo M.S.H. Babala S. K., Mwita V. C. and Koggani D. K.. 2010. Impacts of Drought on Pastoral Livestock of Northern Part of Tanzania. Paper presented at the Pastoralism an Climate Change Adaptation in Africa Conference. Egerton University, Njoror Kenya. From 24th - 28th May 2010.

² AFRICAN UNION (2010), "POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR PASTORALISM IN AFRICA: Securing, Protecting and Improving the Lives, Livelihoods and Rights of Pastoralist Communities", Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, website: www.africa-union.org

The Policy Framework in a nutshell

The AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa is a Pastoral Policy initiative for Africa for promoting coordinated action and synergy in addressing critical issues facing pastoral communities in order to bring about tangible actions that lead to sustainable economic development of pastoral communities.

It was initiated by the African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in October 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia through highly consultative meetings involving a wide-range of stakeholders such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), national governments, pastoralists and their associations, pastoral civil society organizations, private sector and development partners.

It defines the guidelines, principles and the modalities for bringing together all the essential elements needed for better understanding of pastoral issues and for the development and implementation of interventions to address these issues. It was designed with the aim:

1. To serve as a mechanism through which pastoralist life and livelihood matters find official recognition.
2. To secure and protect the rights of pastoral people and lays the foundation for a continent-wide commitment to political, social and economic development of pastoral communities.
3. To provide pastoral people with open space for the definition and management of their own development activities, make it possible for appropriate interventions to address the problems facing pastoral communities as well as create economic opportunities for pastoral people.
4. To serve as an advocacy tool for promoting the development and improvement of pastoral communities across Africa.

The AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa is built on the principles that recognize the rights of pastoralists and that pastoralism is a way of life and a viable production system and aims to promote pastoral political and policy development processes. The policy contains guiding principles with two main objectives, and a set of strategies for each objective. The two objectives are:

1. To secure and protect the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoral peoples and ensure continent-wide commitment to political, social and economic development of pastoral communities and pastoral areas.
2. To reinforce the contribution of pastoral livestock to national, regional and continent-wide economies.

It is important to note that the AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa articulates issues related to pastoralism in each of the five regions of Africa bearing in mind diversity and capitalizing on similarities. It touches upon, among other issues, land loss and poverty, conservation of genetic resources, food security, and use of ICT among pastoralists. While this information brief is not going to analyze each of these issues at length, there is a need to take a quick look at the way some of them are articulated in the policy.

According to the AU Policy Framework, pastoralism survives *because there are so few alternative ways of living in arid and*

semi-arid areas (page 17). It goes on that in areas with relatively higher rainfall *pastoralists are under increasing pressure from farmers and in the absence of land tenure, may lose their land and way of life* (page 17). Other dangers include urbanization and setting aside of pastoral lands for wildlife conservation.

The key lesson here is that survival of pastoralists is not dependent on climatic conditions. Many, if not most pastoral communities have demonstrated inbuilt resilience and adaptation mechanisms.

Relevance to Tanzania

Tanzania ranks third in Africa in terms of numbers of cattle after Ethiopia and Sudan. Livestock resources in Tanzania include 21.3 million cattle, 15.2 million goats and 6.4 million sheep. Over 98% of them are of local breeds belonging to pastoralists and agro-pastoralists that are kept mainly under pastoral systems. These breeds are known for their ability to survive and staying productive even under harsh environments with poor feed resources and diseases³.

The AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa offers useful lessons to policy makers and development partners of pastoralists' rights as well as other stakeholders. It helps demystifying the negative perception that pastoralists suffer due to their stubbornness. It also brings about two important issues that are often overlooked by policy makers in Tanzania, namely protection of genetic resources and cultural practices of pastoralists. According to the AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa, *Pastoralist culture is part of the cultural heritage of Africa, and animal and plant resources in pastoral areas comprise one of the most important genetic resources of the continent.*

In a recent study published in the journal of *Pastoralism: Research Policy and Practice*, the annual value of pastoralist land uses to the wildlife-based tourism industry in northern Tanzania is estimated at approximately US \$83.5 million.⁴ Lifestyles of traditional and cultural communities are vital for the conservation of biodiversity. For this reason, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) whose member States include the United Republic of Tanzania categorically calls upon its members to preserve traditional practices of local and indigenous communities relevant to conservation.⁵

The AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa also confronts head-on the issue of food insecurity which is a chronic problem among pastoralists in Tanzania. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The causes of food insecurity can be socioeconomic, ecological or political.

Social-economic disparities in society make it difficult for the poorest of the poor to have sufficient access to food, in spite of its availability. Ecological causes of food insecurity are usually related to land degradation, water availability or pests. Politically-induced food insecurity may involve insufficient attention to the agricultural sector, unequal distribution of food, and economic policies that distort food markets (Laltaika 2010). There is a need to investigate whether or not policies that work against pastoralism somehow contribute to chronic food insecurity among pastoralists.

3 Dr. Victor Kekengi and Pius Kavana(2012), "Pastoralist Programme Baseline report", NBS 2011.

4 Fred Nelson "Natural conservationists? Evaluating the impact of pastoralist land use practices on Tanzania's wildlife economy" *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 2012, 2:15

5 See Article 8 of the Convention on Biological Diversity 1992.

In Tanzania at National level, it is estimated that the livestock sector contributed nearly 30% of Agriculture GDP and 3.8% of National GDP⁶ in 2011. Pastoralism contributes significantly to other sectors at national level, for instance, the roast meat industry not captured in national accounts estimated annual turnover of US \$22 million with 2.2 million people receiving some support⁷. Indigenous agro-pastoralists contribute 80% of Tanzania red meat production (red meat sector) while commercial ranching system provides less than 1% of cattle herds; an estimated 6% of the total meat production⁸. Apart from meat supply, total annual milk production is currently estimated at 1.65 billion litres; about 70% of the milk (worth TZS 701 billion) comes from the traditional sector (pastoralists and agro-pastoralists)⁹.

The provision contained in the new draft constitution, emerging land use conflicts, contradictions during implementations of laws and policies show increased sensitivity to the unique challenges and needs of pastoralists in Tanzania. It opened up the opportunities for securing pastoral livelihoods and land rights to be translated into actions through laws and policy by the government.

In the National Development Plans and Strategies, Pastoralism was highlighted in some plans but during policy design processes and implementation, it was not recognized. For example, in MKUKUTA I, it is stated *Achievement of sustainable and broad-based growth will incorporate the following strategic actions: Promoting efficient utilization of rangeland, empowering pastoralists to improve livestock productivity through improved access to veterinary services, reliable water supply, recognizing pastoralism as sustainable livelihood.*

How can the AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa make a difference in governance?

The AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa sets new trends towards recognizing not only contributions of pastoralism to national and regional economies but also their rights in general. To achieve this, it sets down two main objectives, a set of strategies for each objective and cross-cutting principles.

Objective 1: Secure and protect the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoral people and ensure continent-wide commitment to political, social and economic development of pastoral communities and pastoral areas.

Being home to some of the most culturally rich pastoral communities in Africa, it is expected that Tanzania would take the lead in influencing other countries. A recent gesture by the Government of Tanzania of giving free cows to pastoralists in what is known as Livestock Replenishing Initiative (LRI) seems to point to this direction. Care must be taken however to avoid even more loss among pastoralists by introducing breeds which are not suited to the local environment and thus erode the much valuable livestock genetic diversity of Tanzania.

Objective 2: Reinforcing the contribution of pastoral livestock to national, regional and continent-wide economies.

Pastoralists contribute significantly to national and regional economies in Africa. Payment of Ecosystem Services (PES) is one of the most effective ways of reinforcing this contribution. According to the Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa, *there is also increasing attention to the economic value of the ecosystem services in pastoral areas, associated with global climate change and the concept of carbon trading. Initial research highlights the potential of Africa's vast rangelands (Page 9).*



6 Ministry of Livestock Development and Fisheries report on 2011

7 IIED (2009) "Pastoral Meat value chain analysis 2009" <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G00242.pdf>; Victor Kekengi and Pius Kavana(2012) "Pastoralist Programme Baseline report"(unpublished)

8 URT, UN, IFAD, FAO September 2012 "Tanzania Red Meat Value Chain, A Diagnostic"; MLDF, 2011- <http://www.mifugo.go.tz/pastoral systems/index.php>

9 Dr. Victor Kekengi and Pius Kavana,(2012) "Pastoralist Programme Baseline report"(unpublished)

Obligation to Members States, CSOs and Local Leaders

The Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa provides an entry point for taking the rights of pastoralists in Tanzania to the next level. Strategies and principles articulated therein call for action not only to influence policy in favour of pastoralists but to come up with a National Policy of Pastoralism, and mainstreaming pastoralism in national development programmes like Big Results Now (BRN), Kilimo Kwanza, National Development Vision and so on. The Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa recommends initiating the process at a country level *with the establishment of a national steering committee and a strong national inter-disciplinary support team of experts (Page 33)*. It also recommends that pastoralists and pastoralism should be supported through all member states to dedicate efforts on designing or reviewing of national policies, frameworks, development plans and strategies that also address the followings:

- The need to recognize the rights of pastoralists
- To recognize existing economic contributions
- To recognize the potential future contributions of pastoralists to development
- To develop appropriate pastoral policies
- To fully integrate pastoralism into national and regional development programmes and planning.
- The need to improve the governance of pastoral rangeland
- To secure access to rangelands for pastoralists
- The involvement of traditional pastoral institutions is seen as central to this process.
- The protection and development of pastoral livestock, risk-based drought management, and support to the marketing of pastoral livestock and livestock products in domestic, regional and international markets.

Reference

AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa for Pastoralism in Africa 2010

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How this Information Brief will be used

It is opined that government, civil society, academia and researchers must take the lead in this process of arguing for the case of Pastoralism. The first step could be ensuring that the AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa (Swahili version that was translated by TNRF with permission from the AU) and this information brief are read (and understood) by as many stakeholders and policy makers as possible to feed up policy making processes. Researchers and academicians should disseminate this information brief and produce further evidence, research findings and facts to policy makers and technocrats on socio-economic and ecological benefits of pastoralism to the National economy and environmental conservation.

