



Strengthening pastoralists' voice in shaping policies for sustainable poverty reduction in ASAL regions of East Africa

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Structure of presentation

- **The paradox of pastoral marginalisation: enduring perceptions shaping policy**
- **The origin and context of a policy oriented training course in support of pastoral civil society**
- **Course content: challenging myths with empirical research**
- **Pedagogic approach: empowering participants to argue their case**
- **Future plans**

Enduring perceptions shaping policy

“There is one over-riding stumbling block that is the system of uncontrolled communal land tenure which permits of the fiercest competition taking place for every blade of grass and every drop of water....pasturage, the life-blood of animal husbandry, is the common property of all and consequently little effort is made to improve or indeed preserve it”. (Director of Veterinary Services, Tanganyika, 1948. Quoted in Lane, 1998)

Forty years later....

“The practice of grazing private livestock on communal land constitutes the single major constraint to improved management of the natural pasture land. The inevitable result of this system of livestock production is that the cattle owners keep excessive numbers of livestock which in turn leads to over-grazing, soil degradation, low fertility and high mortality rates”. (An official of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, 1989, Tanzania. Bilali 1989, quoted in Lane 1998).

Cycle of inappropriate policy

Perceptions

- Mobility is backward
- Pastoralists degrade the environment
- Pastoralists contribute little to national economy

Poor policies:

- Sedentarisation
- Ranching
- De-stocking
- Privatisation of land

Problem

Poverty, conflict, environmental degradation

Because...

1. Knowledge Gap

Policy makers & Practitioners do not understand the dynamics of Pastoralism

- i. Research not readily available or accessible
- ii. Northern ideologies continue to shape development policy
- iii. Pastoral Peoples are unable to articulate the rationale of their systems to practitioners and policy makers

2. Power Imbalance

Pastoralists marginalised by government because

- i. Few in number & perceived to occupy land of little economic value
- ii. Are not organised

Origins and context of the training course

- **Emerging pastoral civil society movement – but still weak**
- **Challenges of building the capacities of PCS:**
 - **Lack of enabling environment at national level**
 - **Heterogeneity among pastoral groups – difficult to build consensus**
 - **Poverty, conflict**
 - **Lack of appropriate tools to support endogenous processes of empowerment among pastoral communities**

Training course in policy education for self-determination

Course content: challenging perceptions with empirical research

Two interrelated modules:

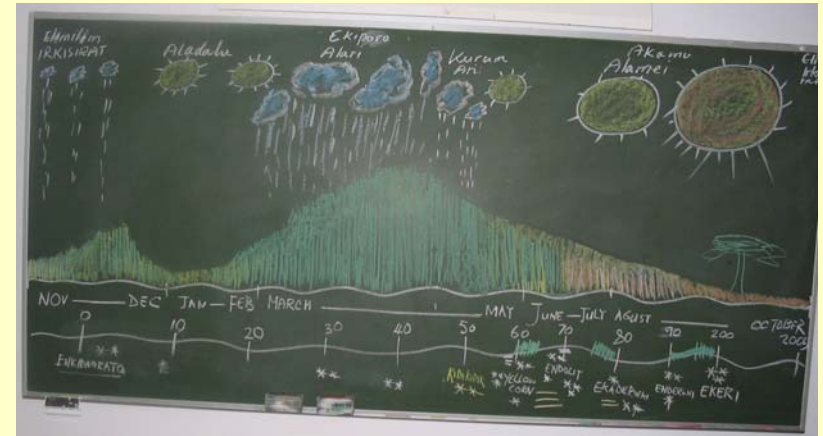
- **Module 1: dynamics of pastoral systems in East Africa.** A “system” regulated by ecology and complex modes of social, political and economic organisation with livelihood and risk-spreading strategies well adapted to dryland environments.
- **Module 2: policy challenges and options for pastoralism in East Africa.** Analysis of current reforms on land and natural resource management (e.g. wildlife, water, range management) within the context of PRSPs, national poverty reduction strategies, decentralisation and increasing privatisation and foreign investment particularly in land and natural resources, and the constraints and opportunities these present for pastoral communities.

Pedagogic approach: empowering participants to argue their case

- **Self Discovery.** Participants re-structure their knowledge base through facilitated self-discover. New information added onto a structure that is fully understood, rather than being the basis of the training itself.
- **Bringing together participants of various backgrounds.** Mixing age, gender, class and education allows for information sharing and empowers certain categories.

Pedagogic approach: empowering participants to argue their case

- Using visuals. Powerful tool for drawing out perceptions and stimulating debate.
- Small group work and reporting to plenary. Fosters peer group learning, breaks the perception of the facilitator as the person who has all the answers, and strengthens capacities to make arguments.



Future plans

- **Adaptation of the training to local contexts:** to reach pastoral, agro-pastoral and agricultural communities and local government authorities.
- **Adaptation to current policy reforms:** to reach current decision makers at national level (MPs, Ministries, donors).
- **Mainstreaming within national and regional training and research institutes:** to reach future policy makers.