

## **The Mismatch between Policy and Practice and the Future of Pastoralism in Tanzania**

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### **Abstract**

This paper seeks to examine the mismatch between policy and practice as well as its implication on the future of pastoralism in Tanzania. It is basically a desk research involving a review of documents related to policies and programmes on land and livestock issues in the country. Findings have revealed that despite policies and programmes aimed at modernizing and transforming pastoralism this production system is still marginalized and faces a myriad of challenges which threaten its existence. This paradox is best explained by the mismatch between policy on land and the realities that pastoralists face on the ground. Policies do not reflect pastoralist realities and circumstances and instead they undermine access and rights to land which are critical to pastoralism. It is concluded that unless policy makers redress their misconception pastoralism will continue to face a bleak future.

**Key words:** Marginalization, Modernization, Pastoralism, Pastoral Mobility, Tanzania

## **1. Introduction**

Globally, pastoralism occurs on about 25% of the earth's land area, mostly in drylands of the developing world, where intensive crop cultivation is physically not possible (FAO, 2001). According to the International Livestock Research Institute (2013), pastoralism contributes between 10 and 44 percent of the GDP of African countries. Pastoralism in Africa has an immense potential for reducing poverty, generating economic growth and managing the environment (Kisiangani and Aziz, 2011). From an ecological point of view, livestock convert grass into protein in areas where other agricultural activities would be risky (Fratkin and Means, 2003) and it is actually considered the most efficient way of using resources in dryland and marginal areas. This is made possible because pastoralists have an intimate knowledge about their environment and thus, play an important role in protecting biodiversity, promoting tourism, and managing grazing lands, which have the potential to sequester significant quantities of carbon (Smith, 2012).

In Tanzania, the importance of pastoralism to the economy cannot be overemphasized, but for decades now, it is still marginalized, and is facing unprecedented myriad of challenges which threaten its existence. This pressure results from a combination of inappropriate policies, demographic pressure and ecological changes. Such has been the pressure on pastoralism that researchers nearly worldwide are contemplating on the future of this production system. These challenges have become even more evident despite the policy drives to transform and modernize this old-age culture and production system. This paradox is best explained by the fact that the national policies meant to transform pastoralism are prejudiced against its very nature. Therefore, it is the interest of this paper to bring out the mismatch between policy and practice and how this situation enables us to understand the predicament of pastoralism in Tanzania.

## **2.0 Policies and Programmes for Modernization of Pastoralism: Conceptualizing Modernization**

Modernization is a multi-faceted process and has been perceived differently by different stakeholders. What constitutes modernization from the perspective of policy makers is actually different from the perspective of the pastoralists and it is this difference which explains the persistence of friction between the two sides. For example, for the perspective of pastoralists' modernization refers to an intensification of pastoralism from within, with the use of indigenous techniques inherent to pastoralism that are not necessarily linked to mixed farming although both systems may be mutually beneficial. Citing the experience from Far North Cameroon, Unusa (2012) also argues that modern pastoralism evolves partly as a result of the ingenuity the traditional pastoralists deploy to overcome challenges to viable pastoralism and to ensure the sustainability of their livelihood. In response to these challenges, the traditional pastoralists have developed coping strategies

ranging from new production techniques through a change of lifestyle resulting from livelihood diversification. The application of these new production techniques and a change of lifestyle and livelihood of the traditional pastoralists are the primary components of the pastoral modernization process (Unusa, 2012).

Policy planners conceptualize modernization of pastoralism as involving sedentarisation of pastoralists into permanent settlements where they would produce high quality animals. Modernization has also meant encouraging sedentarisation as well as advocating the replacement of the traditional system (Nunow, 2000). Other measures include improving livestock production and facilitating market integration of pastoralists. Influenced by such perceptions attempts to modernize the pastoralists in Tanzania have embraced a wide range of measures including coming up with an alternative production system for pastoralists rather than to leave them 'roaming about with unlimited numbers of poor quality herds' (Brown,

1963). Such differences at conceptual level largely explain the mismatch between policy and practice in terms of the required interventions on pastoralists.

## **2.1 A Historical Perspective of Policies and Programmes on Pastoralism**

Strategies to transform pastoralism into a modern sector can be traced from early colonial period to the present and four major periods with corresponding policies can be discerned. These are the colonial and post-independence period, villagization and post-economic liberalization periods. All along, the negative connotations of pastoralism of being a production system with very low productivity have led to policies with some deficiencies and contradictions which in effect have contributed to the loss of land to other land uses. Therefore, pastoralism has been singled out for the heaviest dose of developmental intervention whose goal has been to change their way of life to sedentary life and make them embrace agriculture in lieu of pastoralism

(Kaare, 1996).

### **2.1.1 Colonial policies**

Colonial laws were motivated by the colonial regime's interest in exploiting raw materials and in order to control the resources, colonial governments needed to control the land and inevitably this had significant impacts on pastoral land and pastoralism in general. Most significant was the enacting of the Land Ordinance in 1923 which declared all land in the country, as being public land. All rights of this public land were placed under the Governor of the territory, to be held as rights of occupancy for certain duration.

Policies implemented in Tanzania during the colonial times were based on the commercial ranching models developed in the 20th century in the United States (Sayre and Fernandez-Gimenez, 2003). The drive towards modernizing agriculture witnessed the colonial governments launch land policies with the intention to transform the rural areas from the 'traditional' modes of land use to fit the needs of a

‘modern’ and monetized economy (Sundet, 1997). However, the implementation of these models had no bearing to the realities on the pastoralists. The colonial policies also enacted laws on wildlife and conservation both of which had significant impacts on land for pastoralists. Under the impression that pastoral land are reserves awaiting proper allocation large game reserves created by the British, including the Serengeti Park and Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania in 1954 were all cut-out of the rangelands (Sendalo, 2009). Therefore, colonial policies failed because they did not match with the realities on the ground, but all the same, left the pastoralists a marginalized group.

### **2.1.2 Post-independence policies**

During the post-independence period development policies continued along the lines established under colonial rule. Large-scale settlement schemes were given the highest priority. For example, from 1961 to 1967, Western aid and international development agencies initiated programs to

transform localized subsistence pastoralism into market-oriented commercial ranching (Fratkin, 2001). Local governments were also encouraged to curtail pastoral herding on communally held lands and promote private ranching of beef as well as dairy resources, under the assumption that private landowners were better managers of their resources impacted by these changes (Fratkin and Means, 2003). For example, the state in collaboration with USAID and World Bank funded the Maasai Livestock and Range Management Project, to construct cattle dips, dams, and roads designed to encourage the Maasai to sell more animals and beef (Fratkin and Means, 2003). In addition, the Range Development and Management Act, No. 51 of 1964, Cap 569, was meant to create a legal framework to regulate land use in pastoral areas and to find “a more effective use of grazing land through total communalization of the land” (Ojalammi, 2006).

The nationalization and demarcation of pastoral resources and settlement of

herders had a damaging effect on customary pastoral land use patterns (Niamir, 1990; Lane and Moorehead, 1993). In addition, the division of communal rangeland area into discrete administrative units tended to exclude pastoralists from access to resources. Therefore, while the policy moves in the independent nation had the intention to resettle the pastoralists it was against the principles of a production system which has been developed to suit areas of spatial variations of resources.

### 2.1.3 Ujamaa/Villagization policy

In 1967, Tanzania proclaimed the Arusha Declaration in which the *Ujamaa* policy - a form of 'traditional African socialism' was adopted. Under the *Ujamaa* policy, all land was considered as public land, with the President serving as trustee for the people. Customary land rights were abolished, and district and village governance systems was established and this move contributed to tenure insecurity as it reorganized rural landholdings and settlements in large parts of the country (Igoe and

Brockington, 1999). The process of resettling the rural populations had no benefits to the pastoralists, instead, Maasai *engangs* (homesteads) were burned, cattle confiscated, and the populations was forced into "livestock villages" controlling grazing and water resources (Hodgson, 2001).

At the peak of implementing the *Ujamaa* policy, the Wildlife Conservation Act No. 12 of 1974 was also enacted. The Act entrusted the President with the power to declare any area of the country to be a Game Reserve. The Minister responsible for wildlife could declare any area to be a Game Controlled Area. Under this law the government was granted powers to variably dispossess pastoralists of their right to manage and access their lands and was silent on what should happen by way of compensation or other benefits. The alienation of pastoral lands for wildlife purposes was based on the underlying notion that pastoralism is not the most efficient use of land (Anjert, 2012). As a result, pastoralists continually lost land to other users, as their lands continue to be converted to farmland and to

conservation in game parks, game reserves and game controlled areas (Mattee, 2007).

During the period of *Ujamaa* policy the resettlement programmes adversely affected a large proportion of the country's population, but more disastrous effects were on pastoralism whose nature of land use was and still is, in stark contrast with *Ujamaa* principles. Therefore, the design and implementation of *ujamaa* policy had no depth of understanding of the nature of pastoral production system, and thus undermined the customary land property in the local territories.

#### **2.1.4 Post-economic liberalization policies**

From the mid-1980s onwards Tanzania adopted economic liberalization policies which actually marked a sharp turn from the *Ujamaa* policies to capitalism. These policy reforms set a goal of individualized property and commercial large-scale farming and intensified throughout Tanzania. The emphasis on privatisation led to a wave of land grabbing and the country's rangelands became hotspots for a host

of external investments. Kironde (2012) also argues that ever since land grabbing has been made relatively easy because there were loopholes in customary laws, national land policies and legislations that are exploited to facilitate state-backed large-scale land acquisition.

The National Land Policy (1995) was launched with an overall aim of promoting and ensuring a secure land tenure system in order to encourage the optimal use of land resources. However, there has been a basic misalignment of this policy with the National Livestock Policy with regard to the place of pastoralism in the agricultural production system of country. For example, the National Land Policy (1995) calls for the prohibition of the seasonal movement of livestock herds and their keepers except en route to markets, the Livestock Policy on the other hand calls for regulating pastoralism and that it will remain under the watchful eye of the state.

Sendalo (2009), provides an insightful discussion of policy contradiction in addressing the problems of pastoralists by arguing that the National Land Policy (1996) puts pastoral concerns at the periphery of policymaking. For example, while the policy acknowledges the need for security of tenure for pastoralists in pastoral land areas, the same policy blames them for encroaching into agricultural lands and causing conflicts with other communities and for land degradation.

The legal recognition of customary rights and collective group land rights are provided for in the Village Act (1999) which marked a significant milestone in land matters in the country. Therefore, although the Land Act of 1999 has the potential to provide security of tenure to local people, it has some disadvantages if customary titling is to be extended to the individualization of land holding in rangeland areas because it inevitably interferes with the communal use of pastoral resources (TNRF, 2006). In addition, the Land Act grants power to the President to transfer any area of

village land to general or reserved land for public interest. Public interest in this case may include investments for national interest. In addition, general lands have contradictory definitions: according to the Village Land Act, general lands mean public lands, which are not in the category of village or reserve lands while the Land Act defines general land as public, and includes unoccupied or un-owned village land. The contradiction threatens the security of pastoral land that is often considered idle, unoccupied or un-owned. This is because land legislation in Tanzania requires land owners to demonstrate 'use' or run the risk of confiscation. Pastoralists are disadvantaged since, unlike cultivators whose crops clearly index usage, pastoralist land use is often invisible, rendering their historical claims on the land precarious (Abbink, 2014). Therefore, pastoralists face these problems because of the weak recognition of their customary rules and practices regarding land access and land use.



The Wildlife Policy (1998) facilitated further marginalization of pastoralists by encouraging more land to be brought under conservation at the expense of pastoral activities. When the Wildlife Act (2004) was revised, it continued to advocate for the expansion of wildlife-protected areas including wetlands at the expense of traditional livelihood activities, it also recognized the role of local communities as partners in the conservation of wildlife. The pastoralists have also lost land which is sometimes categorized to be in sensitive areas. This is in accordance to the Environmental Management Act (2004) which identified various types of land that are environmentally sensitive with an objective of providing for protection, conservation and management of the environment. Virtually all lands occupied by pastoralists fit in the category of sensitive areas. The eviction of more than 1000 pastoralists from the Ihefu Swamp in Mbeya region and Kilombero Basin was part of the implementation of this Act. In these move pastoralists, lost large herds of

cattle as they were forced to settle in distant areas where no prior land use plans had been made.

Therefore ever since colonial times policy makers have viewed pastoralists as unproductive and environmentally damaging who needed to be modernized and brought into line with progressive and modern development. This misconception of policy makers and planners about the modes of pastoral land use has contributed to alienation of communal land without consulting the real "owners" and as pastoralists are pushed to the areas of low productivity it led to what is known as ecological marginalization (Elhadary, 2014). Therefore, for over a half of a century the independent government of Tanzania has perpetuated laws and policies of the colonial regime which accorded more legal and policy prominence to other forms of land use at the detriment of pastoralism, particularly the dispossession of land belonging to pastoralists.

## 2.2 What does the future hold for pastoralism in Tanzania?

Speculating into the future of pastoralism is a very challenging endeavor because of the interplay of many factors affecting this production system. In addition, the East African drylands are highly heterogeneous and complex, (Flintan *et al.*, 2013) having a plurality legal systems, governance structures, and actors (Mwangi, 2007). Therefore, pastoralism does not represent a single form of livelihood. Instead, it is an activity practiced in a variety of ways as a response to the dictates of the immediate environment and available resources (Gefu, 2006). In view of this complexity, one would not envisage a single scenario on the future of pastoralism in the country.

The debate on the future of pastoralism has attracted scholarly attention nearly worldwide. Optimists hold that pastoral production has endured and survived shocks in the past and therefore, it has the resilience to continue surviving. After all, the growing demand for livestock and its products will keep this old-age

production system alive (Hogg, 1992). The pessimists on the other hand contend that, the combination of demographic pressure, effects of climate change and unfriendly policies are likely to compromise the resilience of the pastoralists. The realities on the ground clearly show that the policy environment in Tanzania is still clouded with perceptions that pastoralism needs to be “modernized” and brought into line with “progressive and modern” development (Sendalo, 2009). These perceptions have been used as a justification for state-backed encroachment of grazing lands for the benefits of local and foreign investors. Thus, despite decades the policies and programmes designed to improve livelihoods, the majority of pastoralists still face serious hardships. These range from land alienation, degraded resources, acute poverty, conflict and insecurity, vulnerability to drought, poor social services, and limited marketing opportunities.

Judging from the trends of events one can speculate that the pastoral production system is destined for a change. Whatever the direction of

change most likely pastoralism is facing a bleak future. The combination of demographic pressure and the effects of climate change will all limit the extent of herd mobility to an extent that sedentarization will be inevitable. There are signs already as we notice a south eastward pattern of settlements in Tanzania. The coastal regions of Tanzania such as Lindi Coast, Morogoro and Tanga do not have a long history of being inhabited with livestock keepers. Today, there are numerous settlements near urban areas and along the major roads of these regions where pastoralists have settled. These pastoral settlements have been established strategically to allow the pastoralists to combine livestock keeping with an engagement in non-pastoral activities.

The shift from mobile pastoralism to sedentary life is likely to be accompanied by individualization of land. This will lead to those households with large herds to struggle to purchase land. This is likely to be accompanied by a growing concentration of livestock herds into

the hands of fewer households, thus leading to wealth differentiation based on ownership of livestock. The households that will lose the battle of owning land are likely to seek alternative livelihood system within the traditional pastoral lands and elsewhere. Among the destinations of the migrants are likely to include urban areas and roadside settlements which offer them some opportunities to accumulate wealth and attempt to rebuild their herds.

### **3. Conclusion and Recommendation**

Pastoralism is an important economic activity in the country but its full potential has not been fully exploited. Over the decades, pastoralism has been viewed as being environmentally destructive, economically not productive and incompatible with wildlife conservation in nature reserves. Although population growth, increased frequency of droughts and livestock diseases have been cited to explain the vulnerability of pastoralists, these factors only exacerbate the effects of inappropriate policy and legal environment that is

focused on modernizing the pastoralists. In addition, ever since the colonial period policies on land have been detached from realities on the ground and they have worked to the detriment of pastoralism. Continued alienation of grazing land has had negative impacts on mobility of livestock which is critical to the overall productivity and sustainability of pastoralism. The trends do not show any signs of abating and may lead to further impoverishment of the pastoralists at the end of the wealth spectrum. Therefore, unless policies and programmes on land and the livestock sector are aligned to match the nature of this production system its future looks more bleak than bright.

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