



# Pastoralist Voices



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Photos: OCHA

## For a Policy Framework on Pastoralism in Africa

AFRICAN UNION AND THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Pastoralists across Africa have called for a continent-wide policy framework that will begin to secure and protect the lives, livelihood and rights of pastoralists across Africa. The African Union has responded to this call and has begun formulating a Pastoral Policy Framework for the Continent.

**Pastoralist Voices** is a monthly bulletin that supports this process by promoting the voices and perspectives of pastoralists, and facilitating information flow between the major stakeholders in the policy process including pastoralists, the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and international agencies. To subscribe to **Pastoralist Voices** please write to: roceainfo@un.org

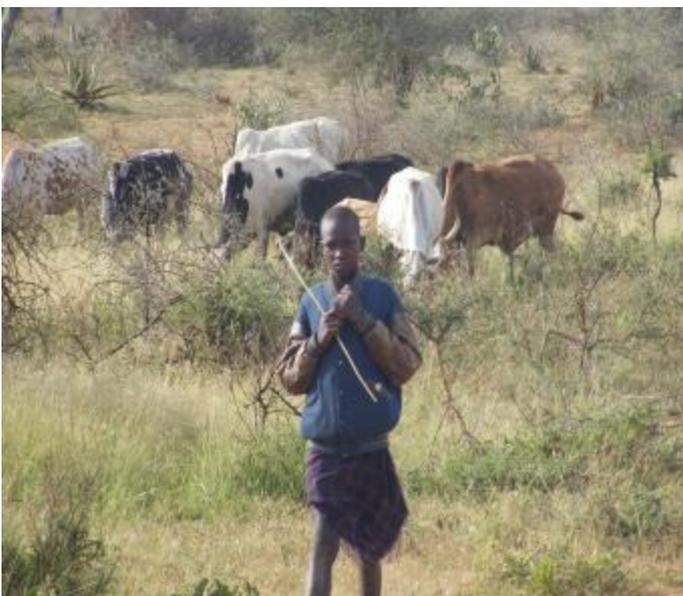
### PASTORALISTS GETTING PREPARED TO MITIGATE THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

*This edition focuses on mitigating humanitarian impacts of climate change on pastoralist communities in Central and East Africa*

The UN Central and East Africa Regional Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched a year-long process to promote preparedness to reduce and/or mitigate the current and future vulnerability of pastoralists to climate change in the region. The consultation with pastoralists, representatives from the humanitarian and development community was launched on January 27-28 with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

### Arriving at a consensus on the Humanitarian Impact of Climate Change on pastoralists in Central and East Africa

There are three salient scenarios on the current and potential impact of climate change on pastoralists in Central and East Africa. **CONT PAGE 2**



Nomad boy—Karamoja, Uganda **Photo: OCHA ROCEA**

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### Pastoralists explain Climate Change impact in their communities



Women pastoralists Chumviere Isiolo-Kenya **Photo: OCHA ROCEA**

Pastoralists from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Southern Sudan, and Tanzania stated clearly at the consultation that climate change is already taking its toll on their communities and this impact is compounded by other factors. High on the list are policy marginalization, encroachment of pastoral lands for others uses, and the curtailment of pastoral mobility.

Peter Ekai, Turkana pastoralist from Kenya explained that Samburu and Turkana communities have been experiencing unrelenting drought since 2003 that has continued to intensify. 'Clashes over water and pasture have significantly increased in the drought-affected pastoralist areas of North-Eastern Kenya.' Ekai notes that one of the worse periods in his community was in 2006 after the failure of 2005 October – November short rains.

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*Arriving at a consensus on the Humanitarian Impact of Climate Change on pastoralists in Central and East Africa*

The first and more reoccurring is that climate change will have significant negative consequences for pastoralists. These will include loss of livestock through heat stress, loss of land to agricultural encroachment as the rise in rainfall raises the productive potential of arid areas, an increase in frequency of flooding, and the spread of human and livestock diseases that thrive during the wet season.

A second scenario argues that climate change on its own will not have a negative impact on pastoralists. The argument is that the pastoralist production system is already an adaptation to hostile environments. But pastoralists face a number of challenges - political and economic marginalization, inappropriate development policies, and increasing resource competition - that hinder their way of life; these challenges will stifle their ability to adapt to changes in their external environment.

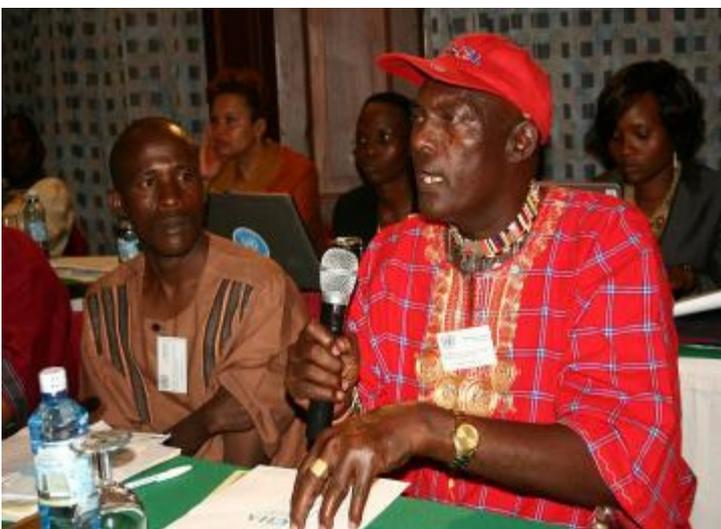
A third scenario presents a hopeful picture. It argues that pastoralists could actually benefit from climate change, as more rainfall could result in more dry-season pasture and longer access to wet-season pasture. It could also result in less frequent drought, which may mean more time for people to rebuild their assets between lean times. Conversely, climate change could conceivably lead to the creation of more dry land resources that are suited to pastoralism, thus creating new opportunities for pastoralists.

Whichever position is subscribed to, there is a common thread that runs through all three positions; and this is the issue of preparedness. 'Pastoralists will need to be prepared to either mitigate/reduce the negative impact of climate change or to enjoy the potential benefits of climate change.' Says Besida Tonwe, Head of Office OCHA Regional Office for Central and East Africa during the opening of the two days consultation meeting.

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*Pastoralists explain Climate Change impact in their communities*

The outcome, he says, was the loss of thousands of livestock due to lack of water and pasture. 'In order to sustainably mitigate the humanitarian impact of climate change on the Turkana and the Samburu communities, long-term disaster mitigation measures need to be employed urgently and sustainably if lives and future of the Turkana and Samburu communities are to be saved.'



Mogole Haibor Rendille ( R) and Peter Ekai(L) Turkana pastoralist from Kenya at consultation meeting *photo: OCHA ROCEA*

Mebratu Kifle of Pastoralist Forum of Ethiopia echoed a similar scenario for Ethiopia. 'It is very clear today that pastoral livelihoods systems have increased in their vulnerability to environmental shocks in Ethiopia. Recurrent drought and floods are becoming a characteristic of the lowland pastoral production systems' he says. 'Human populations are rising, the climate is changing and international markets are setting ever-higher barriers for access.'

Toposa pastoralist, Samuel Mabior from Southern Sudan is mainly concerned about what he describes as the 'total neglect of pastoralists and their issues in Southern Sudan'. As a start he has called for regional initiatives that could perhaps spur the Southern Sudanese government, humanitarian communities and civil society to begin paying attention to the plight of pastoralists' in the country. 'For a start, there are no reports on the humanitarian challenges faced by pastoralists in Southern Sudan. Pastoralists are simply lost in the national issues. This is the crisis we face'

Meanwhile, Pastoralists from Tanzania welcomed the consultation as it provided an additional tool and process for highlighting the plight of pastoralists in Tanzania. There are approximately 1.5 million pastoralists spread among five pastoral tribes and communities, with the Maasai being the largest and most well known in the country.

Due to increased population pressures and the diversification of land use patterns in Tanzania (i.e. expansion of settled and ranching farming, national parks, towns and settlements) access to pasture and water for livestock has diminished and has forced pastoralists to migrate to the Central, Eastern and Southern parts of the country. These migrations have led to increased tension and conflict with crop farmers, national parks and national conservation authorities.

'Inadequate recognition of pastoralism in national policies has resulted in a great deal of conflict, over land issues. But there is hope as the civil society in Tanzania have been working hard to change this' says Maasai Pastoralist Moses Ndiyaine of Indigenous Heartland Organization. 'Today the Government of Tanzania is attempting to formulate a livestock policy.'

**Humanitarian response on the current impact of climate change on pastoralists in Central and East Africa**

"The day-to-day impacts of climate change, such as higher temperatures and erratic rainfall, are increasing many people's vulnerability to hazards," Charles Ehrhart, the poverty, environment and climate change network coordinator for CARE International, told policy-makers and representatives of pastoralists from the Horn, Eastern and Central Africa, at a consultative meeting on ways of mitigating the humanitarian effects of climate change on pastoral areas.

By 2020, climatic changes would have contributed to water stress, land degradation, lower crop yields and increased risk of wild fires, resulting in a 50 percent decline in agricultural productivity. "Prolonged droughts exert the greatest pressure on household.

In the Horn of Africa alone, there are more than 20 million pastoralists currently living a lifestyle that is centered on the search for increasingly scarce pasture and water." Ehrhart presents a scenario where during the next 20 to 30 years; areas already affected by weather-related hazards would see an increase in their frequency and/or intensity. 'Areas already affected by drought and floods would expand.' These are some of the realities on the ground that humanitarian actors are responding to. In alignment with Ehrhart's scenario, humanitarian actors shared that the frequency of drought is creating increased animal diseases and aggressive movements resulting in armed conflicts.

For Jeanine Cooper OCHA Kenya Head of Office, climate change impact in pastoral areas in Kenya are presently demonstrated by extreme weather conditions from protracted drought to floods, with the rains not coming when they are expected. 'Conflict is the result as people move in search of water and pasture or evacuate from flooding'

Around 150,000 people in North Eastern Kenya majority of who are pastoralists are currently relying on food aid due to perennial drought. Water scarcity is also currently forcing pastoralists population migration in the North Eastern region. According to the Kenya Red Cross Society, even when and where water is available, it is poor quality, affecting the health of residents. Northern Kenya has also been hard-hit by drought and is experiencing severe food shortages, massive population displacement and deaths from conflict over control of water points and pasture.

In January, for example, at least 15 people died in fighting between Somali and Samburu pastoralists in Isiolo central division, according to the Isiolo district peace and reconciliation committee. In total 40 people have died in Isiolo central alone. This insecurity has worsened the plight of pastoralist communities, as traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are failing to restrain the warring communities as competition for resources intensifies.

Cooper of OCHA Kenya notes that there was an urgent need to address longer-term drivers of food insecurity

amongst pastoralists in the region. We need to work with pastoralists as they build their resilience. We must support them to build their coping and adaptive strategies.'



*1st Prize, Friends of the Earth International Photo Competition, Photo: Mwelu / IRIN*

The issue impacting pastoralist's livelihoods does not get the attention and appropriate response it deserves says Andy Pendleton OCHA Head of Office for Southern Sudan. 'Climate change will gradually ratchet up the risks and vulnerabilities, putting pressure on already over-stretched coping strategies and magnifying inequalities.' Pendleton said.

For Harriet Atim Humanitarian Affairs Office for OCHA Uganda, climate change is indeed taking its toll on pastoralists in Karamoja with poor seasonal rains. While sustained civil security and second season harvests will improve food security in northern Uganda, the situation will continue to deteriorate in Karamoja says Atim, 'Hunger is becoming more intense and widespread following a poor 2008 season in Karamoja. As a result, assistance is being prioritized to Karamoja region and North Eastern Uganda.'

Food insecurity in Karamoja has deteriorated substantially due to failed 2008 harvests, high food prices, poor livestock terms of trade, civil insecurity, poor access to basic services, and poor road access that hampers commercial trade and humanitarian deliveries. Assistance in Karamoja will be needed until September 2009, when next harvests occur. Approximately 2.15 million people are moderately to highly food insecure in eastern, northern, and northeastern Uganda, of which only about 1.95 million people currently receive food assistance (in the North and North East). Outside of these areas, the country will remain generally food secure<sup>1</sup>.

Peter Achia, Karamojong' Pastoralists of Matheniko Community Based Organization explains that Karamojong' mobility ensured that their herds grazed throughout the year without jeopardizing future grazing. 'Despite their

<sup>1</sup>Uganda Food Security Outlook, FEWSNET October 2008 to March 2009

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ecologically sustainable practices, few people understood the Karamojong' system of pastoralism and proposed curbing their mobility – through policy or more often, through force.' Karamojong' are enforced he says to settle in an area not environmentally suitable for settlement, and this is increasing violent conflict. 'The Karamojong' lifestyle has led to societal marginalization, and a national policy of militarization.'

According to Dr.Kassaye Hadgu Pastoralists issues specialists with OCHA Ethiopia the magnitude, frequency and the effects of the droughts in the pastoral areas of Ethiopia has increased since the mid 1970s. 'The 1973 to 1974 and the 1984 to 1985 nation wide drought were the worst in the countries recent history. Since 1987 localized droughts occurred almost every year.

Seriously undermining the coping and recovery capacity of the pastoralists in the country. Many pastoralists he said are abandoning the pastoral production systems and chronic food insecurity is rapidly expanding in the pastoral areas of Ethiopia.'

### THE REGIONAL IMPLICATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON PASTORALIST COMMUNITIES

*Climate change impact on pastoralists is aggravating cross-border and regional challenges in Central and East Africa; migration and conflict are two of the salient regional implications.*

OCHA ROCEA will be exploring; within the climate change and pastoralists consultations, how to reconcile pastoralists' need for mobility (to access water and pas-



*Mosses Ndiyaine Tanzania pastoralist and Mosses Appolel Uganda pastoralist at the consultation Photo: OCHA ROCEA*

ture) and regional security issues.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the consequences of climate change, including changes in the frequency and violence of extreme weather events and changing precipitation patterns are expected to have large impacts on people's livelihoods, especially in poor and vulnerable rural societies. In many of these societies, migration has already been a livelihood strategy for generations. This is especially true for pastoralists in the Horn of Africa. According to Jerotich

Seii, IOM Regional Emergency Response Officer 'Lack of knowledge must not lead to a neglect of what can be done now to prevent displacement and to help people who are affected but the best way is to reduce people's vulnerability and to reduce global poverty.

IOM shared hopes that the right wording of pastoral migration needs would promote the development of normative guidelines to support pastoral mobility in its necessity. To facilitate cross border movement of pastoralists as an adaptation mechanism on climate change would require special recognition for pastoral movement as an essential livelihood component. 'We all recognize mobility as an inherent feature of Pastoralism' says Seii. 'A word search for pastoralists within the Climate Change and Migration discussions reveals the crucial point that the discourse around socio-economic, political and environmental impacts of Migration and Climate Change barely touches on Pastoralist concerns'.

This gap is generating and fuelling cross-border conflict and inappropriate government policies and response to pastoral cross-border migration needs<sup>2</sup>. According to Steve Kirimi of Peace and Development Network Trust (PeaceNet Kenya) over 70 pastoralists have died in inter-communal and cross border conflicts between in the just between December 2008 and January 2009.

Kirimi describes the events surrounding some these conflicts:

*In December 26, 2008*, a clash between pastoral communities in Kenya and Ethiopia led to the death of at least 29 people in Turkana District. Among the death were a month old baby and a three-year-old girl together with her mother.

*On January 26, 2009*, the Borans undertook a revenge raid on the Rendiles in Budas area, some 30 Kilometers North East of Marsabit town in North-Eastern Kenya. The incident left three people dead (two Rendiles and a Borana), with unknown number of livestock driven away.

*On January 25, 2009* armed Rendile warriors raided over 100 heads of cattle from the Borana community in Marsabit Kenya. The incident was attributed to drought in the area, where most watering points on the Borana side have dried up, forcing them to seek water in wells owned by the Rendiles inside Marsabit Forest.

*In January 24, 2009*, Turkanas at Todonyang area near Kenya-Ethiopia border killed two Merile from Ethiopia, while on January 25, 2009 Dodoth of Uganda near the Kenya - Uganda border, killed one Turkana from Kenya.

*In January 16, 2009*, the Jie of Uganda killed 5 Kenya Turkana Pastoralists leading to revenge and subsequently the Turkanas killed 7 Jies on January 18, 2008.

<sup>2</sup>The Standard, Thursday December 18, 2008, Wednesday December 10, 2008, Tuesday September 2, 2008, Kenya Times Monday April 21, 2008 Daily Nation Friday August 22, 2008

'These recent incidences reflect similar situations over the past years and there is an urgent need for sustained cross-border co-operation that goes beyond security issues and tackles the root causes of conflict' says Kirimi.

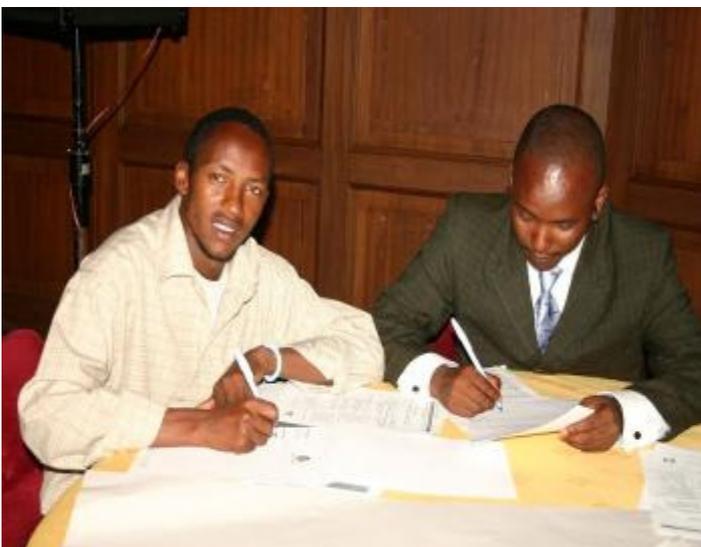
Kirimi's call for preparedness is in line with Ehrhart's concerns. 'Even though weather-related hazards would get worse, people's declining capacity to cope with hazard events may be a greater problem.' Climate change he says provides an imperative to 'increase investment in, as well as improve quality and accountability, vis-à-vis disaster preparedness and response. We should prepare for more quick- and slow-onset disasters as a result of climatic changes.'

### UN Regional Initiatives for adaption

UNEP's Climate Change Adaptation Unit is currently launching a process for ensuring that communities across Africa are supported in their adaption needs. 'This initiative is of particular value to pastoralists as they plan strategies to mitigate the humanitarian impact of climate change' says Dr. Musonda Mumba of the Unit.

Mumba who is responsible for climate change adaptation for Africa explains that UNEP will be working with communities across the continent to ensure that knowledge and technologies are mobilized to support adaptation capacity building. UNEP's goal for a comprehensive framework for African climate change programmes, will bring together 'existing and new intergovernmental decisions, initiatives and programmes in a consolidated manner, to be implemented at the regional, sub regional, national and local levels.'

Dr Patrick from UNDP Dryland Development Center said the most vulnerable communities to the impacts of climate change inhabit the Dryland areas and the implications are huge. For effective adaptation to climate change 'there is need to incorporate drought risk reduction into national policies and development plans especially in the dry land areas of Sub-Saharan Africa.' He called for an 'Urgent needs to identify, collect, publish



Mosses Ndiyaine and Joseph Parasambey during the sub regional group planning **Photo:** OCHA ROCEA

and disseminate good practices on adaptation with links to drought risk reduction in the dry lands.'

### NEXT STEPS

*Sub-regional consultations on the current and future humanitarian impact of Climate change on pastoralists to commence February 2009 across Central and East Africa.*

To get more detailed country/sub-regional specific picture of the current and future impact of climate change across the region, OCHA ROCEA in continuation of its project is facilitating sub-regional consultations as follows:

**Mbororo -CAR, Mbororo (Gwane and Boelij)-DRC, Tanzania sub-region.**

**What:** - Baseline assessment on the current impact of climate change and possible mitigation interventions.

-Explore sustainable resource based conflict resolution mechanisms.

**Where:** Tanzania

**When:** 9-12 March 2009

**Who:** Masaai, Mbororo, Gwane, Boeli, pastoralist traditional leaders, CBOs, NGOs, Government representatives and OCHA and other UN Agencies.

**Host:** Tanzania Pastoralist Community Forum and Indigenous Heartland Organization-Tanzania.

### Central Africa Sub-region:

**Marsabit, Mandera (Kenya), Somaliland, Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia sub-region.**

**What:** - assessments and consultations on current and future implications of change on pastoral communities.

**Where:** Mandera-Kenya

**When:** 21-22 April 2009

**Who:** Pastoralists representatives, Local government leaders, MPs from pastoral areas, Women representatives, and Pastoral councils from Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea, OCHA and other UN Agencies.

### Mandera + sub-region:

**Turkana and Pokot (Kenya), Karamjong' (Uganda), Toposa (South Sudan) and Ethiopia sub-region.**

**What:** - Establish current existing knowledge, actions and traditional interventions on adaptation to mitigate the impact of climate change in the sub-region.

Identify the main causes of resource-based conflict, actors and explore on how to mitigate cross border armed conflict.

**Where:** Moroto -Uganda

**When:** 29-30 April 2009

**Who:** Karamoja, Toposa, Turkana, Pokot, CBOs, NGOs, Government representatives and UNOCHA and other UN Agencies.

**RECOMMENDATION AND WAY FORWARD**

- We can make reasonably certain projections about the nature of floods and droughts during the next 20 to 30 years.
- As a useful rule of thumb, areas already affected by weather-related hazards will see an increase in their frequency and/or intensity. There will also be an expansion of areas already affected by drought and floods.
- Even though weather-related hazards will get worse during the next 20 to 30 years, people's declining capacity to cope with hazard events may be a greater problem.
- We should prepare for more quick- and slow-onset disasters as a result of climatic changes.
- Climate change provides an imperative to increase investment in, as well as improve quality and accountability vis-à-vis, disaster preparedness and response.
- Natural resource based livelihoods in already marginal ecosystems throughout the Horn of Africa may become non-viable by 2025.
- The need for humanitarian assistance will be particularly acute in areas already identified as being at higher risk.

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*Pastoralists explain Climate Change impact in their communities*

The goal of the policy is that by 2025 the livestock sector will be to a large extent commercially and sustainably run in partnership with pastoralists, to ensure food security and improve household and national income while conserving the environment.'

Joseph Parasambey, Maasai of Tanzania Pastoralist Forum support Ndiyaine's optimism. 'The policy is a beginning in recognizing the contribution of pastoralism as a viable and profitable livelihood' says Parasambey. 'It is hoped that the development and implementation of various new laws and policies governing pastoralists will bring about more understanding and acceptance of the Pastoralism in Tanzania.'

Soil eroded area by floods **Photo:** UNEP

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