



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 ARE LOSING THEIR LIVES IN A NEW SURGE OF RESOURCE-BASED CROSS-BORDER ARMED CONFLICT IN THE REGION

Pastoralists living along the borders of Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda are losing their lives from increased cross-border resource-based armed conflicts. The governments of these countries are being blamed for turning a blind eye as thousands of their populations die.¹

Depleted livestock, limited pasture and water from the cumulative effect of three years of drought and the availability of small arms are forcing aggressive pastoralists' movement in search of pasture and water in ways that is triggering violent armed cross-border conflict. According to reports from the Kenyan Times of August 12, 2008, cattle rustling incidents have increased in the region in recent



Pastoralist from Koten-Karimojoa in Uganda take livestock to pasture armed, ECHO 2007

months as owners seek to restock herds badly affected by the searing drought across east Africa'

The Horn of Africa contains the largest grouping of pastoralists in the world: Sudan has the highest pastoralist percentage globally while Somalia and Ethiopia rank third and fifth respectively. In Djibouti, one third of the population is pastoralist. The semi-arid and arid areas in the Horn make up 70 percent of the total land area, which provides an average of 20 to 30 percent of GDP. At the local level, as much as 70 percent of cash income is generated

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THE AU PASTORAL POLICY INITIATIVE PROVIDES POLICY GUIDELINES FOR ADDRESSING CONFLICTS IN PASTORAL AREAS AND COMMUNITIES

At the just concluded Specialist Task Force meeting – October 16 to 18 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa Ethiopia—the team adopted guidelines and strategies for formulating a pastoral policy framework to reduce cross-border armed conflict in pastoralist communities in the region.

Some of the guidelines proposed are as below:

Conflicts and conflict resolution

Conflict is rampant in pastoral areas. Such conflict stems not only from competition over pastoral resources, but also from borders and boundaries established without taking into account the needs of pastoralism, from weakening of customary conflict preven-

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FROM DROUGHT TO FLOOD: PASTORALISTS IN CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA SWAMPED

Pastoralists from Central and East Africa are suffering a double misfortune. Yet to recover from a long spell of drought, they are currently faced with massive floods that is leaving a chronic humanitarian crisis in their wake. The long rains have come in Central and East Africa, but are bringing massive flood to the pastoralists inhabited communities across the region.

In Chad the heavy rains have resulted in flooding in Kerfi, Sarh, Bongor, Kim Chari-Baguime and Moyer-Chari areas of southern Chad leaving 20,000 pastoralist affected, 8,000 people displaced and around 7,668 livestock swept away.

In Sudan the floods have stricken Aweli, Malaka, Longuchok, Mawait, Mabaan, Twic Nasir, Bor south and central and the impact is approximately 6,000 households affected.

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CONT FROM PG 1 ...AU PASTORAL POLICY INITIATIVE

tion and resolution mechanisms, from curtailing mobility and from a proliferation of small arms. Conflicts in pastoral areas are often aggravated by politicization and lack of adequate or appropriate intervention by security forces. Climate change and its impact on the ability of pastoralist to cope and recover from drought is also compounding conflict amongst pastoralists.

Cross-border Nature of Pastoralism

Mobility is a necessary feature of pastoral production systems: it ensures access to scattered pastoral resources (water, pasture, salt licks) and helps avoid risks (disease, conflict). Pastoralists often have difficulties with state borders which have been historically drawn without consideration of pastoral needs and historical use.

Movement sometimes extends beyond multiple state bor-

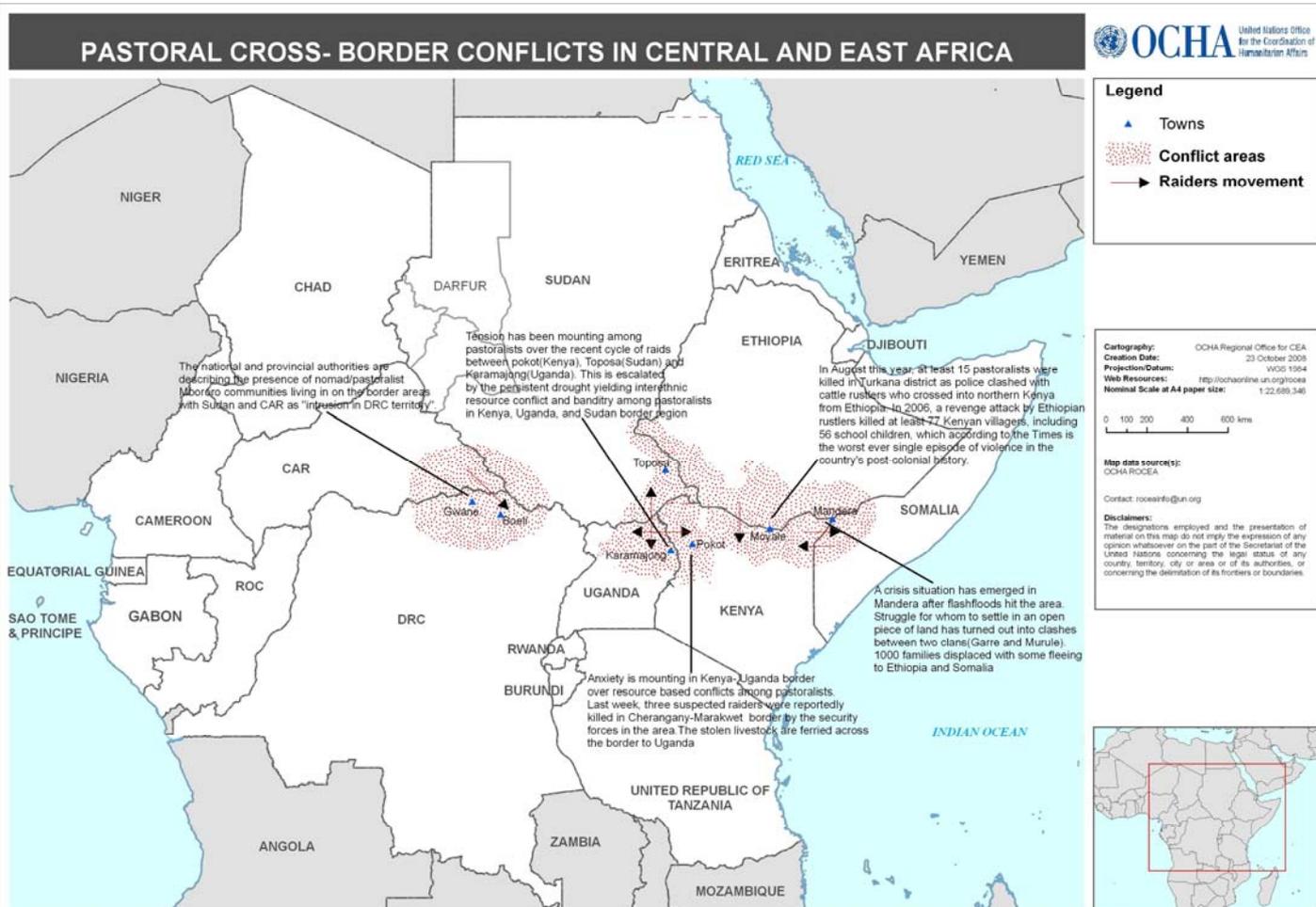
ders. On the negative side, mobility may facilitate the spread of animal and human diseases. It may also spread conflicts across national borders. Minimizing these negative effects requires a policy framework that promotes cross-border harmonization and co-existence. Such harmonisation measures are especially important in cases where the traditional drought refuge grazing areas or the essential trade centres of a pastoral group are in another country. This requires negotiation between both the customary authorities, and the national formal authorities on either side of the boundary. Policy can facilitate these processes.

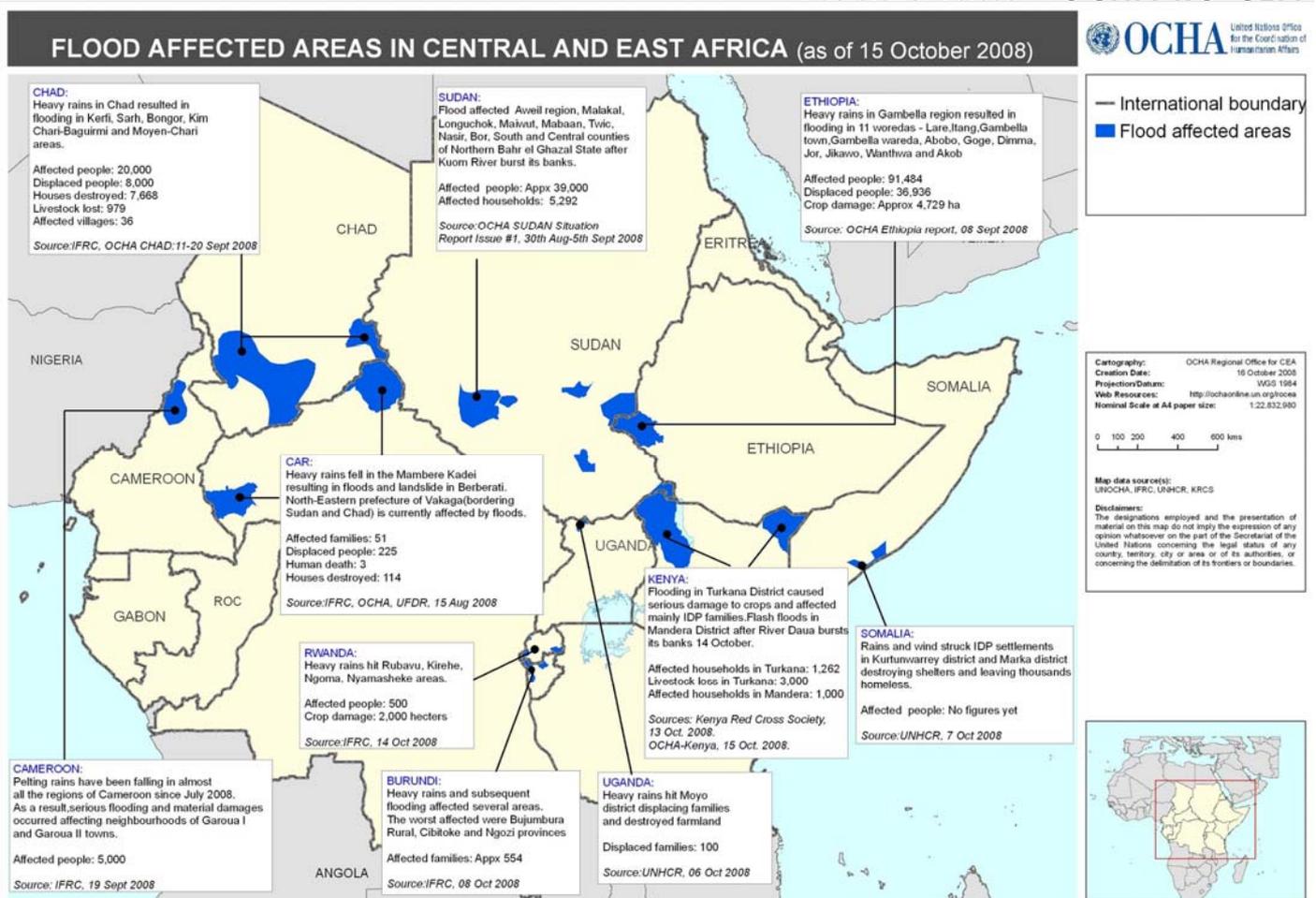
Border areas are often the site of increased military activity; the Sahel, an essentially pastoral area, is now presented by some as a new front of terrorism. The adverse impact of these parameters on pastoralists is likely to be serious; policy

should therefore seek to take pastoralists' needs and their human security into account.

The Specialist Task Force is the quality assurance and guidance mechanism of the Pastoral Policy Framework Initiative which is implemented by AU-DREA. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is accompanying the process and facilitates the full involvement of pastoralists at all stages of the policy development process, including facilitating the information flow between pastoralists and the African Union Commission.

The policy formulation process is expected to result in a continent-wide Pastoral Policy document to be adopted by African Union (AU) member states at a Summit in 2009. The AU Commission is hosting this first meeting of the Specialist Task Force .





In Ethiopia the floods hit Gambella regional affecting approximately 92,000 and displacing almost 37,000. In the neighbouring Somalia heavy rains and winds struck an internally displaced persons camp in Kurtunwarrey and Marka districts the number of affected populations is yet to be confirmed.

Central Africa Republic (CAR) pastoralists are also experiencing heavy rains in Mambere Kadei of northern CAR. This has resulted in floods and landslide in Berbereti also in northern CAR leaving 3 people dead, 225 displaced and destroying 114 houses. In Rwanda and Burundi, subsequent floods have been reported to have affected 950 people and destroyed crops.

Kenya has not been spared. Floods have affected the pastoralist Turkana district in northern Kenya. Flood in the country has triggered conflict in some pastoralist communities. For example, conflicts resulting from pastoralists' search for land to escape the flood is impeding the ability for humanitarian actors to distribute aid to the area.

Fighting between the two pastoralist clans of Garre and Murule in the Mandera district since early October has been hampering humanitarian efforts to distribute aid to victims of floods in the district. Ironically, the Mandera district has been waiting for the rains since 2005, but when the rains came it was too much. It swept away houses and the few animals that survived the drought were swept away leaving massive humanitarian crises in its wake.

Contaminated water sources and disease outbreak currently threaten the 150,000 residents of Mandera. There is currently a humanitarian crisis in the area that calls for urgent provision of sanitary kits, tents, utensils, and other relief assistance measures including medical assistance to prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases and food supply that the community is running short of.

Mandera is located in the very North Eastern part of Kenya, bordering Ethiopia and Somalia. It takes two days travel by road from Nairobi (capital city of Kenya) to Mandera (approx. 1100 km). The capital city of Somalia, Mogadishu is about 400 km away. Sadly, Somalia is still in a state of anarchy, in bad condition and very insecure with warlords contending for power. Mandera is located in an area prone to drought. From late 2005, there has been a severe famine. As with the other areas of the North Eastern Province until recently when flash floods hit Mandera town. Fighting has also been reported in Gari hills—130 kilometers from Mandera—where four people are reported dead and four security officers wounded in the clashes.²

The floodwaters have contaminated the water pans and unprotected shallow wells, which are the main sources of water displacing³ at least 10,000 people.

The Kenya Forest Service has also lost several bridges and kilometers of road which is hindering humanitarian assistance and posing challenges to the reinforcement of the security team.

from livestock. In Kenya, semi arid and arid land constitutes 439,000 km of the land mass, covers 14 districts, and is equivalent to 80 percent of Kenya's total land area. This area supports 25 percent of the country's population and half of its livestock.⁴

As pastoral mobility has traditionally been without regards to national boundaries and borders, cross border conflict has emerged as one of the challenges to pastoralism today. These transboundary conflicts are especially high in areas where the pressure on available natural resources is intense.

The Uganda-Kenya Border

Northern Kenya and northern Uganda have been particularly prone to prolonged outbreaks of pastoralist related armed conflict. Such tendencies are exacerbated when drought hits and the scramble for limited grazing and water intensifies.

The Kibish stretch from Turkana North to Lokichar in Turkana South has been hard hit by drought. Families from Oropoi, Kakuma, Lokichogio and Nanan divisions of Turkana North have moved to Uganda. More than 10,000 Turkana pastoralists have sought refuge in northern Uganda with their cattle estimated to number 200,000. The drought situation in the area has been complicated by Uganda soldiers who are bar-

ring armed Kenya pastoralists from entering their country. Turkana pastoralists are concerned that disarmament on their part leaves them vulnerable to attack by cattle raiders. In July this year, the Uganda People's Defense Forces ordered Turkana pastoralists with guns to leave the country or be disarmed.⁵

In August 2007 and in August 2008, the Ugandan army bombed over 5,000 Turkana pastoralists in Koten in a move to flush them out of this area. The most recent report is in August this year where ten Turkana pastoralists died in an alleged bomb attack by Ugandan soldiers. Since August Pokots in Kenya have mounted two successive raids in South Turkana district which saw over 70 people killed and over 2,800 head of cattle stolen and driven towards West Pokot district.⁶

The recent attacks in Kenya Uganda border reflects a similar situation where 60 Turkana herders were killed in 2005. The karamajong' community of Uganda, which occupies Koten area where the attacks occurred, has for long been involved in resource based conflict with the Turkana community.

In June 2008, 5,000 Turkana herdsmen crossed to Uganda due to drought in Kenya, but were asked to leave by the army. A meeting between Kenyan and Ugandan authorities scheduled for July 30 to resolve the issue never took place. The government of Kenya is pro-



Pastoralist from northern Uganda. ECHO 2007

posing approaching Kampala for further negotiations, for the herders to be allowed to stay in Uganda until the situation in Turkana improved.

Ethiopian and northern Kenya border

Since April this year Ethiopian pastoralist have died in northern Kenya as a result of cattle rustling activities. At least 15 pastoralists were killed in Turkana district this August as police clashed with cattle rustlers who crossed into northern Kenya. The killing marked a new surge in cattle-related murders. In 2006 a revenge attack by Ethiopian rustlers killed at least 77 Kenyan villagers including 56 school children, in the worst-ever single episode of violence in the country's post-colonial history.

The August killing brought to 42 the known number of pastoralists killed this year in cattle-rustling related attacks in Turkana district which also neighbors strife-torn southern Sudan and north-eastern Uganda⁷

The Kenya and Sudan Border

Approximately 500 pastoralists have been recorded to have lost their lives from clashes in the Kenya and Sudan border; most recently in the last week of August at least 19 pastoralists were killed in Turkana north District in clashes between local herders and rustlers from Southern Sudan. Earlier in September, 70 pastoralists lost their lives in a massacre in three villages of Lokor, Division in Turkana South District.

For years, border communities in Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya have consistently stolen cattle from one another. However, the availability of small arms is changing the pattern. Following civil wars in Sudan and Uganda the dynamics of cattle raiding changed. The Governor of the Southern State of Eastern Equatorial in Sudan has ordered security to 'kill those guilty of raiding' and has committed to serious disarmament exercise.

Noting that indeed the Kenya-Sudan border is plagued with insecurity due to cattle rustling and availability of small arms, the Kenyan Labour Minister John Munyes has called for a new thinking on the economic activities of pastoralists.

Aggravating factors*

Weakening Pastoralists coping mechanisms: The recurrent droughts ravaging the region are not giving the pastoralists adequate time to recover from previous droughts. The conflicts have also weakened their ability to cope and recover from droughts-related shocks particularly livestock diseases. This has depleted their asset base thus has forced many communities to drop out of pastoralism and end up as destitute in urban centres. This has also led to over-dependency of pastoralists on relief food aid thus making relief food distribution centres into permanent settlements.

Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs):

Due to porous and expansive borders, weak governments, and ineffectual national security systems and



Turkana pastoralist; Pastoralists are concerned that disarmament efforts often leaves them vulnerable to attacks from armed pastoralists from neighboring communities. ECHO 2007.

policies, SALWs are difficult to control or account for as they move within the region from one conflict to another. Pastoralists have therefore resorted to acquiring guns to protect their property and lives from armed communities and militias locally and from neighboring countries leaving pastoral areas saturated with arms and making it easy for these illegal arms to circulate in urban, rural, and border areas.

Inadequate policing and state security policies: National and district police and security services have lacked the capacity to provide security to pastoralist communities. This has increased insecurity and the tendency towards self-defense and retaliation.

Weakening and undermining of traditional governance systems:

Traditional leaders and governance systems in pastoralist communities, while still substantial, have generally weakened, reducing the capacity of communities themselves to manage and prevent conflict and criminality. National and district state authorities have exacerbated this problem, through policies that either neglect or undermine traditional governance systems.

Pastoralists are also coming into conflict with ranchers, farmers, horticulturalists and conservation area wardens, and thus with State authorities. Long distance nomadic movements by pastoralists with their herds require local cooperation with sedentary communities and this is not being adequately addressed. The risks of conflict are particularly severe during droughts and similar emergencies.

A broader examination across the Horn of Africa reveals a number of specific factors that are contributing to the risks of violent conflicts between pastoralists and other communities living in the same areas. These include:

Inappropriate government development policies: policies pursued by successive governments have tended not only to neglect the needs of pastoralists but also often to run directly counter to pastoralist interests with a bias instead towards ranchers, horticulturalists, and other resource users. This has exacerbated problems and insecurities of pastoralist communities, particularly in relation to access to scarce water and pasture.

Inadequate land tenure policies: Although laws enabling secure tenure and ownership of land are in many ways beneficial, they have been implemented with little regard for the needs of nomadic pastoralist communities. Nomadic communities have tended to rely on communal grazing rights, which are not protected by law, and they have lost access to water and pasture as privatization of land tenure has proceeded. This has intensified the problems of access to scarce resources and of managing competition for these resources. The consequent increased risks of violent conflict have become particularly clear recently during the periods of drought, where lack of provision for pastoralist needs for pasture and water has led to ranch invasions and similar conflicts

Inadequate engagement with traditional governance systems: Traditional models of governance, including access to water and pasture, often contradict statute law. Most remaining pastoral lands are managed in fact according to traditional governance systems, and the inconsistencies with national and district state regulations lead to confusion, conflict and reduced use of legal and other frameworks for dispute resolution. Government officers do not always engage effectively with traditional governance systems, and indeed frequently undermine them unnecessarily.

Political and socio-economic marginalization of pastoralists: Pastoralist communities are inadequately represented in decision-making processes in many countries in the Horn, allowing their interests and concerns to be unduly neglected in development and other programmes and limiting the scope for official structures to be used for conflict prevention and dispute settlement. There is also a further socio-economic marginalization,

for example pastoralists generally receive limited education.

Inadequate arrangements to cope with droughts and other emergencies: During droughts, pastoralist livelihoods become particularly precarious, and experiences have shown that there is a high risk of conflict over scarce water and pasture unless special arrangements are made to ensure emergency access. Similarly, in the absence of provisions to assist pastoralists and other farmers to maintain their capital stock during emergencies and enable communities to restock afterwards, economic insecurity and deprivation during droughts increases the risk of wider violence and social breakdown.

(*Additional information from 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Horn of Africa' by Kennedy Mkutu - Africa Peace Forum)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The Kenya Pastoralist Week will take place November 19-22 at the KICC grounds in Nairobi. This year's event will focus on regional policy initiatives aimed at pastoralists development. These include the African Union Pastoralist Policy Framework, Mifugo Protocol, and IGAD Livestock Policy initiatives, the For information visit www.cemiride.info
- Colloquium on Prospects of Pastoral Economic Transformation in Southern Sudan. November 24-26, Juba Sudan..

¹ National Feature Page 19, Tuesday September 2, 2008

² Kenya broadcasting corporation news 22, October 2008

³ Kenya red cross society situation report 19, October 2008

⁴ Source: AU pastoral framework proposal

⁵ Source: Daily Nation Aug 22, 08

⁶ UN weekly security Advisory on 22 August 2008

⁷ Source: Kenya Times April 21, 08

Disclaimer: The information in this document are consolidated from research and workshop findings and are subject to availability of current data. The articles provided are subject to availability of data and do not claim to be either exhaustive or fully verified.

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS (OCHA) REGIONAL OFFICER FOR CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

OCHA House Gigiri Crescent
Off UN Avenue
P.O. Box 30218-00100
Nairobi, Kenya



Phone: +254-20-7622166
Fax: +254-20-7622632/7622895
E-mail: roceainfo@un.org
Web site: <http://ochaonline.un.org/rocea>