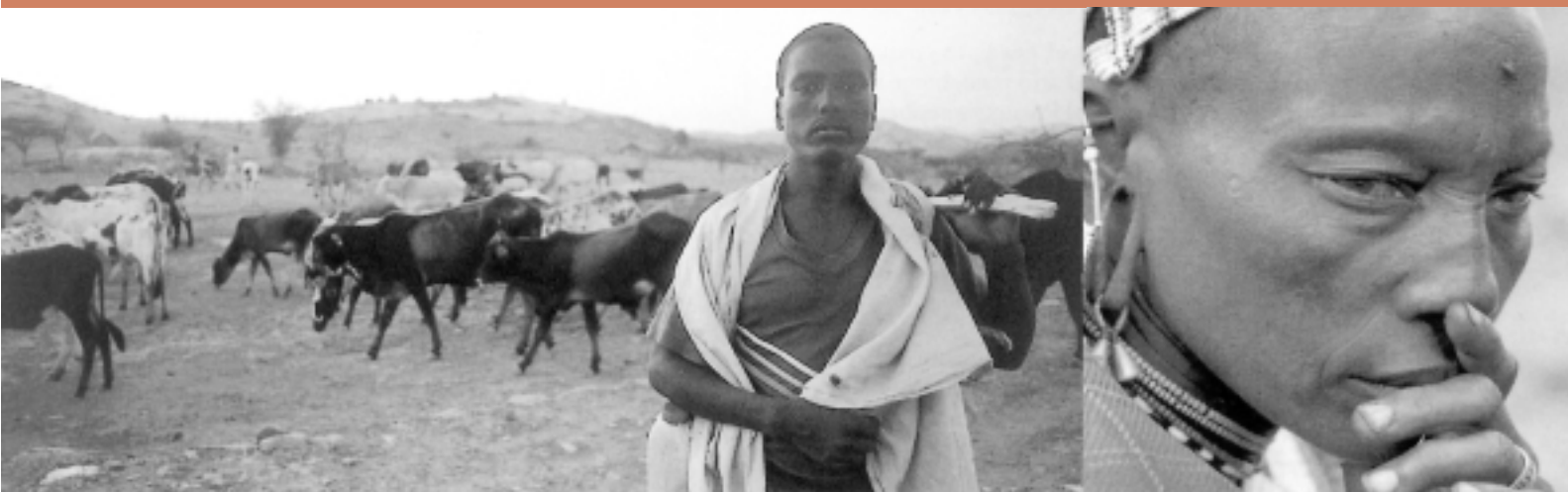


# Pastoralists in the Horn of Africa

Report of a Workshop on Social and Economic Marginalization  
8–10 December 1998, Nairobi,  
Kenya



## WORKSHOP REPORT

## Introduction

Pastoralists in the Horn of Africa have become among the most marginalized and disadvantaged of minority groups. This is due to their wide dispersal, climatic and ecological conditions, state neglect, development plans that have excluded them, seizure of their land, land tenure laws, national borders that restrict their freedom of movement, internal strife and national conflicts.

The corollary has been the neglect of gender issues in the pastoralist communities, where custom and religious teachings defining women's role have been overtaken by rapid modern development.

Minority Rights Group International (MRG) in cooperation with the Kenya Pastoralists' Forum (KPF) organized a joint workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya from 8 to 10 December 1998.

The workshop was attended by more than 50 representatives of pastoralist communities, academics, parliamentarians, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental personnel, and other interested parties coming mainly from Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Somaliland, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Nine papers were presented covering themes from the problem of land tenure and land rights, to gender perspectives and inequality, good governance, the causes and effects of pastoralist marginalization, the role of traditional institutions in pastoral societies, pastoralism and human rights, and restrictions on pastoralists' freedom of movement.

The aim of the workshop was to address the issues affecting pastoralists, identify the areas in which NGOs and other agencies duplicate work, identify ways in which academics, NGO and other agency representatives, and government officials can be brought together to back a unified strategy to address the problems faced by pastoralists in the Horn of Africa.

Such a unified strategy, to which MRG and KPF are committed, is to:

- lobby for the appointment of a government representative conversant with local pastoral culture and its problems in each region;
- bring together pastoralist community representatives, experts, academics and researchers, non-governmental and intergovernmental personnel, and create public awareness of pastoralists and their marginalization;
- encourage cooperation between pastoralist communities;
- promote lobby groups to advocate, advance and promote the rights of pastoralists;
- support and encourage the formation of strong grassroots pastoralist organizations to advocate and lobby governments, the UN, NGOs and other agencies through networking.

Honourable Mohammed Affey, MP, Assistant Minister for Cooperative Development in Kenya, opened the workshop,

noting that three major problems facing pastoralists in Kenya can only be solved through regional cooperation, namely:

- insecurity in northern Kenya;
- drought, and the unpredictable movement of peoples in response to drought;
- refugee influxes fleeing from internal strife and wars;

This Report is a summary of the main issues raised at the workshop and recommendations made at its conclusion.

## Causes and consequences of pastoralist marginalization

John Markakis, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

The bulk of the land in the Horn of Africa, the pastoralist habitat, lies in the semi-arid and arid zone, home to the largest aggregation of traditional livestock producers in the world, estimated at 15 million people.

While there is some non-pastoralist production, the pastoralist contribution is more important economically, providing significant employment and income opportunities seldom shown in official statistics.

Traditional livestock production is becoming non-viable through the gradual erosion of access to land and water, as they are turned over to cultivation. This loss has been facilitated by the unwillingness of states to acknowledge and respect pastoralists' rights to land.

Loss of mobility of people and animals has disrupted the process of adjustment that maintains the balance between people, land and livestock. Pastoralist society has been adversely affected by state borders dividing ethnic groups, separating people from their kin, traditional leaders, places of worship, markets, pastures and watering places.

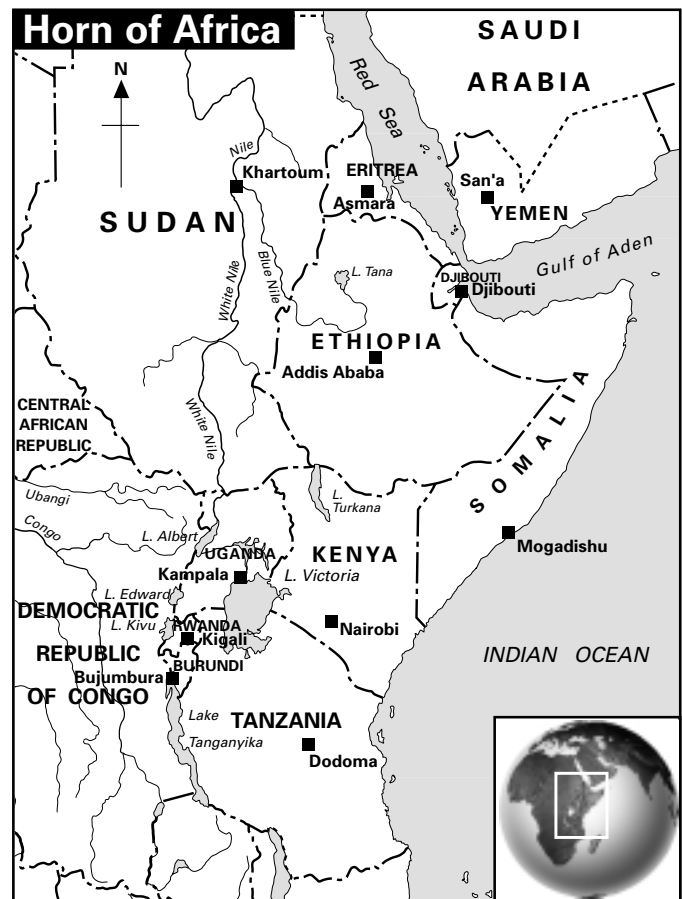
Colonial and postcolonial arrangements violated the social and political integrity of pastoralist society, and material hardship intensified competition for resources, further undermining social cohesion and traditional authority. The result was conflict both within the pastoralist society and with state authority. Pastoralists thus became known as 'unruly' and 'rebellious'.

State policy throughout the region aims to develop livestock production, not to improve the life of pastoralists. It is based on the desire to turn their land over to commercial cultivation through irrigation, or to meat production through ranching schemes, leaving pastoralists, whose terrain has remained state domain and can be alienated at whim, as the only sector without any rights of land tenure. All attempts to secure ownership rights for the pastoralists have failed.

## Good governance, pastoralism and gender

Melakou Tegegne, Panos, East Africa Office

The political marginalization of pastoralist communities was preceded by forcible eviction from their land and/or restriction of their movements. Currently, the trend towards globalization of the market, with pastoral lands increasingly being commercialized and/or turned into national parks, has resulted in environmental and ecological disaster. Poverty has increased, with women in particular being severely affected. Pastoralists are faced with a double marginalization –



as one of the dominated ethnic groups, and as pastoralists. The marginalization they face as pastoralists is more severe than the oppression faced by other dominated ethnic groups.

Traditionally, in pastoralist society, land 'belongs' to a group or family that is linked by descent or cultural affiliation. Land is not owned but is held in trust for future generations.

As a result of the political marginalization of pastoralists, unfavourable land tenure reforms and the alienation of pastoralists from their lands, traditional mechanisms and customary methods of negotiation, arbitration and adjudication over land issues are breaking down.

Pastoralists do not respect the state, which is seen as repressive rather than democratic, coercive rather than persuasive, as tax collector and embezzler rather than assisting development, nor do they respect state boundaries.

East African states discuss land issues in terms of agrarian societies and peasants, since cultivation is the only rural economic activity recognized as productive and thus contributing to the national economy and capital accumulation. However, the issue of land is equally pivotal to pastoralists for whom pastoralist land tenure and land use is the most sustainable.

African states do not consider pastoralism a viable way of life. Pastoralists are not considered when it comes to formulating macroeconomic policies, or discussing state-society relationships, questions of democracy and the role of state in development – i.e. good governance. The role of civil society (i.e. representative institutions independent of the state) in good governance has been neglected.

The African states' neglect of the indispensable role of civil society in political, social and economic development, as well as of gender issues, has cost them dear in terms of the resulting poverty and conflict.

The state must assume the role of regulator rather than dictator, and recognize the rightful role of civil society. In good

governance, the relationship between state and society is dynamic, involving the state in encouraging civil and community institutions to cooperate with state organs in development undertakings. Popular participation does not just mean taking part in elections, but includes social organization within civil society independent of the state, recognizing the separate role of civil society in development and the political process, and encouraging a rapport between state and civil society through transparency and dialogue.

The marginalization of pastoralists as communities has overshadowed the degraded position of pastoralist women. In recent years the social awakening of the women's movement has led to the development of a gender perspective. Despite all the legislation, UN declarations and resolutions, and global fora of women, the position of women has not yet substantially changed in Africa. For most African women, conditions have in fact worsened.

Development must start with improvement in the conditions of women who are the most neglected – yet crucial – element of civil society and human civilization.

Development and democracy must be defined and measured by positive changes in the position of women, and in the attitude towards women of men and women alike.

## Somali pastoral women

**Sadia M. Ahmed, PENHA Gender Coordinator**

**P**astoralists occupy a fragile ecological region in semi-arid areas in the Horn of Africa, prone to drought, civil conflicts and wars which pose major threats to their way of life.

In Somalia, pastoralists also face scarcity of resources, environmental degradation, ill-conceived governmental policies, such as forced sedentarization, and marginalization as agriculture, private investors, tourism and mineral exploration have encroached on pastoral lands, while no alternative arrangements have been made for displaced pastoralists.

The failure of government to take account of traditional land tenure systems, and conflicts and disputes along national borders, have restricted pastoralists' freedom of movement and their ability to manage their livestock effectively. This has undermined the survival mechanisms of pastoral economies, in which livestock plays an important role in food security, pushing pastoralists, especially women and children, into poverty.

While regions adjacent to former Somalia went through upheavals, conflict, wars and repression, women in Somalia before the 1979 war enjoyed relative peace and freedom.

Contemporary Somali women are not subservient, but live with men in a relationship of interdependence. They are considered the most resourceful persons in the pastoral economy. They market milk products, farm produce and their pastoral crafts, as well as producing them for their own use and that of their families, or giving them away, as they choose.

This pattern has changed as urbanization encourages migration of young people to towns in search of work, depriving the pastoral family of their input. Restrictions on male movement because of conflict has led to a further loss of labour power, leaving women to cope with the management of the family, taking on roles vacated by men.

Women play multiple roles in Somali society: in the family, as contributors to the pastoral economy, and bringing resources into the family through girl bride-price.

Traditionally, women were dependent on men for their needs, for only men took livestock to markets. When women began to participate in animal marketing, the income generated reinforced their power and reduced their dependence on men.

This benefited women but increased their workload, and men felt threatened and marginalized.

Somalis adhere to Islamic law when it comes to marriage, inheritance and the family. Camels, land and cattle cannot be inherited by women. In marriage, the girl's consent is crucial, since without it the marriage is void, yet fathers or brothers will offer girls to anyone they choose without seeking their consent.

With education for girls, women increasingly join the work force, which in urban areas has reversed their dependence on men. Many well-off women participate in family decision-making. Acceptance of such participation by society is tilting the balance in their favour and they are increasingly breadwinners for the family while still managing the domestic scene.

## The drought problem and coping strategies among the Samburu

**Reuben Lemunyete, Samburu District Development Project/German Technical Corporation (SDDP/GTZ)**

**T**he majority of the Samburu people in Kenya are pastoralists, deriving their livelihoods from livestock. Their accumulated experience enables them to cope with difficult climatic conditions such as drought.

The Samburu understand drought; they can predict it and make preparations to alleviate its effects. Strategies of risk limitation, such as moving herds to better pasture and dividing the herd, or herd-size maximization – itself a major cause of environmental degradation – and species diversification to match the ecological condition of the area, are implemented before the drought begins, strategies aimed at ensuring the survival of the herds and limiting the damage to the pastoral production system. Those which come into operation after the onset of a drought focus on herd modifications by diversification of species, dispersion, distribution and expansion to protect against heavy losses and ensure the survival of people and animals through the drought period.

These strategies, used by the Samburu for many years, are no longer helping to the degree they did in the past, making them vulnerable during periods of climatic stress. NGOs and the government have been involved in plans to promote development in pastoral areas but the development agencies compete among themselves and team work is lacking. Most policies are inadequate as they fail to address the social processes within pastoralist society, dealing only with technical problems such as water resource improvement, health care and range management.

## The role of Somali pastoralists in conflict and its impact

**Prepared by Zeinab M. Hassan and presented by Zahra Ashkir Guled (Life and Peace Institute)**

**N**omadic peoples make up 80 per cent of the inhabitants of Somalia's semi-arid land. Their livelihood depends on the pastoralist socio-economic sphere. Major contributors to the economy of the whole society, pastoralists enjoy few returns.

Since independence in 1960, pastoralists have become marginalized as a result of conflicts and natural disruptions

which have led to the destruction of values and norms unique to the Somali rural tradition.

In 1974, the country was overwhelmed by a catastrophic famine (*dabadher*) which claimed the lives of many people, decimated livestock and caused the influx of a large number of refugees into Somalia, accompanied by violence, disorder and confusion. What little livestock remained was left in the care of mainly older women. This trend encouraged the exodus of the rest of the pastoralists to the relatively easy life in the urban areas, causing a massive drain on the rural economy.

The first major disaster for the Somali pastoralist lifestyle occurred when the Somalis launched an attack on Ethiopia with the aim of 'liberating' ethnic Somalis in Ogaden. The consequence of this was a large influx of refugees to camps in Somalia. This seriously impacted on the life of the pastoralists on both sides of the Ethiopia–Somalia border, not only through pastoralists becoming refugees and their livestock being commandeered, but through recruitment of a large number of pastoralists into the liberation army.

After the war ended, with their livestock decimated, the combatants never returned to the rural areas but became part of the obstinate clan militia. After the fall of Siad Barre in 1990, the country plunged into anarchy with the establishment of factional war-lords. Large-scale inter-clan conflicts caused by the breakdown of the pasture- and water-sharing traditions led to livestock being restricted to areas deemed safe. This broke down contact and communication between neighbouring communities of clans or sub-clans, inviting suspicion, fear and tension that often developed into open conflict. Apart from the increasing likelihood of violence, this phenomenon had the following major consequences on the pastoral communities.

- Inter-clan marriages, instrumental in sustaining peace and resource-sharing among different pastoralist societies/clans, through bride exchanges which strengthened bilateral relations, dwindled.
- Environmental degradation became commonplace as the animals of each clan over-grazed the areas to which they were confined.
- Loss of pride and confidence of the pastoral communities resulting from the loss of their animals.
- The flow of rural people to urban areas for work.
- Badly affected pastoralists switched to agricultural practices, without experience in land cultivation.
- Encroachment on and enclosing of common land for private use restricted free movement of animals and contributed to further environmental degradation and inter-communal disputes over scarce resources.

As peace prevailed, sustaining it became a priority. In this process the Life and Peace Institute took up the role of facilitator, bringing awareness-raising and civic education programmes, instruction in modern conflict resolution and the sensitization of communities to the evils of war by:

- training of village committees and elders on sustaining peace;
- conducting conferences for community elders on dialogue for peace;
- training social groups in civic and peace education;
- training the law enforcement institutions: the police, judiciary and the custodial corps;
- urging the international community to link peace with development aid;
- advocating the formation of district councils.

The only current major conflict in Somaliland has its cause in the large-scale enclosure of common land used by pastoralists.

This has been mitigated to some extent by:

- awareness-raising on environmental hazards;
- the enforcement of rules that demarcate agricultural and pastoral land.

## Wildlife conservation and customary land rights of pastoralists: lessons from the Mkomazi Game Reserve case

**Ibrahim H. Juma, Faculty of Law, University of Dar es Salaam**

*Throughout human history, whenever dominant neighbouring peoples have expanded their territories or settlers from afar have acquired new lands by force, the cultures, livelihood – even the existence – of indigenous peoples have been endangered.'*

(Center for Human Rights, Geneva, 'The Rights of Indigenous Peoples', fact sheet no. 9, 1990, p. 3)

Many lessons may be drawn from the Tanzanian High Court case filed in response to the eviction of Maasai pastoralist holders of customary land rights from Mkomazi Game Reserve, established in 1952.

In 1987 the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism issued a 'directive' saying all 'permits' to the Maasai should be revoked and that they should be forcibly removed from the Reserve. This ended the amicable coexistence between the customary land rights holders and wildlife in the Game Reserves.

The pastoralists sued in the High Court of Tanzania in 1997 as heads of their respective households, and as members of a native community occupying common land in accordance with Maasai customary law. Most cases on customary land in Tanzania had up to then dwelt only on individuals' customary rights to land. It was intended to set a precedent that would protect customary rights to land occupied communally.

The pastoralists wanted the High Court to declare that:

- the customary land rights of those residing in Mkomazi were not subordinate to the interests of wildlife conservation;
- their forcible evictions were unlawful, being carried out without court orders;
- the laws establishing the Reserve did not extinguish the customary land rights of Maasai in the Reserve;
- the exorbitant fines imposed on evicted Maasai were unlawful.

The Court adopted a restrictive approach to the evicted residents and determined the customary land rights of only 38 of the 53 plaintiffs.

The High Court declined to make a specific declaration that the customary land rights of the Mkomazi pastoralists in the Reserve were not subordinate to the interests of wildlife conservation. This response illustrated the Court's reluctance to give full awards to the pastoralists, and its failure to appreciate the importance of land to pastoralists.

An important aspect of the Mkomazi Game Reserve case concerns the position of customary land rights of pastoralists in Tanzania.

Land Ordinance 1923, the basic legislation pertaining to land in Tanzania, declares all land in Tanzania, whether occupied or

not, to be public land under the control and subject to the disposition of the President of United Republic of Tanzania for the use and common benefit, direct or indirect, of the natives of Tanganyika.

When the Land Ordinance, as amended in 1928, was enacted, it provided for existing customary land rights, wherever a native or a native community lawfully uses or occupies land in accordance with native laws and customs.

A granted right – ‘right of occupancy’ – is evidenced by a certificate of occupancy and is closely regulated by law, but the existence of customary land rights can only be proved by going to court, and such rights are regulated under a vaguely understood law. The Land Ordinance provides that customary land rights and granted land rights are of equal status, but interpretations of the land and wildlife conservation laws have adopted a different view of customary land rights. Granted rights of occupancy have been accorded more certainty, as well as government and court guarantees.

Customary land has been treated as a land reserve, to be acquired by the mainstream economy whenever it requires more land. The question of whether or not customary land rights of the pastoralists survived the creation of the Reserve was answered when the Maasai demonstrated that, in their case, customary land rights coexisted with wildlife conservation in Game Reserves. The Court confirmed that these rights were not affected by the creation of wildlife conservation areas.

Under the Game Ordinance, 1940, enacted for the preservation of wildlife in Parks and Reserves, the Governor was empowered to acquire customary land rights by outright purchase. This provision was a clear recognition of customary land rights as vested land rights in National Parks.

But, in order to end the simmering conflicts between National Park management and holders of customary land rights, the Parks Ordinance, 1959, was enacted, automatically extinguishing forever all proprietary rights existing within National Parks.

The future of customary land rights, therefore, will depend on whether the government enforces the legal principle that customary rights in land are real property, protected by the provisions of the Constitution, and ensures that such rights can only be extinguished by operation of the law.

## International human rights instruments and pastoralist communities in East Africa and the Horn of Africa

**Samuel B. Tindifa, Human Rights and Peace Center, Makerere University, Kampala**

It is difficult to discuss the extent to which international and regional human rights instruments and monitoring mechanisms have benefited the pastoralist communities in East Africa and the Horn without understanding the conditions in which pastoralists find themselves. Their main problem is one of survival in a harsh environment. The issue of land is central to these communities so the question is, to what extent are these instruments applicable to land rights of marginalized people, whose survival is threatened despite an array of human rights instruments?

Pastoralists are a disadvantaged minority who have maintained their distinctive way of life. It is useful to consider pastoralists as a ‘people’, a concept recognized in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACPHR) and some

other international and regional instruments, and it is in relation to pastoralists as a ‘people’ that the question of whether instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) are relevant needs to be determined.

Pastoralist communities are divided into two groups – the agro-pastoralists who live a settled existence in fertile areas capable of supporting agriculture, integrated into the socio-economic sector, and nomadic pastoralists, whose lives are governed by the harsh environment and revolve around their livestock and its needs, influencing their lifestyles and their land tenure system.

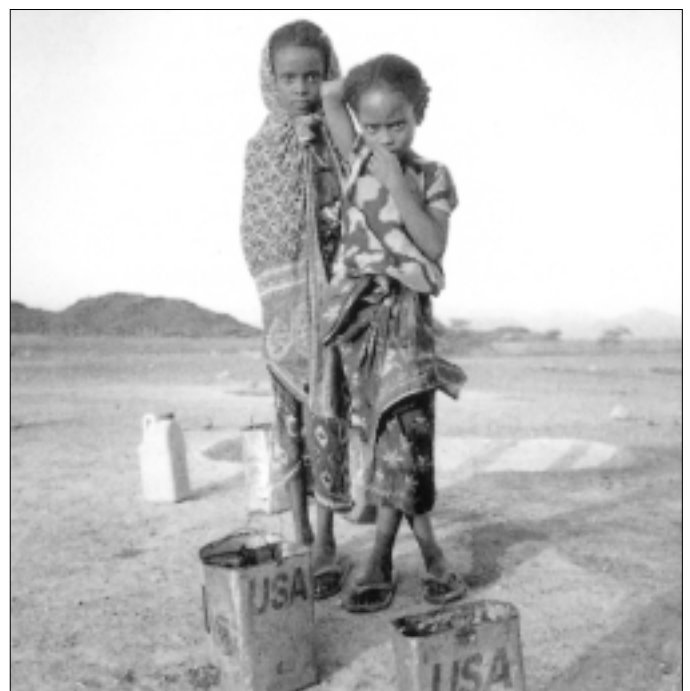
Land has traditionally been controlled according to the unique conditions pertaining to pastoral communities, which have given rise to their concept of communal property rights. In contrast, the Western concept of personal rights over property, which has been adopted by all states in the region, is an individual right.

Many international and regional human rights instruments are applicable to pastoralists, but only the recent Ethiopian Constitution mentions pastoralists as a special group or category requiring protection.

In the arena of international protection of human rights, even though there is no specific provision for pastoralists, existing instruments such as the UN Charter, the UDHR, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the ACPHR and the ILO (International Labour Organisation) Convention 169 do have provisions that can be applied to pastoralist communities.

Some provisions of the ACPHR are applicable to pastoralists, as they recognize African customary group rights to property, and the concept of common property, as well as that of individual property, is given legal force. Furthermore, the Charter recognizes the concept of ‘people’ being individuals who collectively become ‘a people’ on assuming a common identity, with group rights to preserve the identity which belongs to them as a people, such as the right to culture or language.

Some states in the region have taken legislative measures to respond to specific human rights issues, but there are no



*Afar girls fetching water from one of the few watering holes in the Dancalia desert, Eritrea.*

RHODRI JONES/PANOS PICTURES

corresponding administrative measures to enable pastoralists to benefit from them. Activists in pastoralist communities must network to pressurize governments to implement human rights provisions and devise ways of putting them into effect.

International human rights instruments and their corresponding monitoring systems will only have meaning for oppressed people if the standards enshrined in them are incorporated into domestic legislation and administrative action is instituted to implement the existing legislative measures, that would give pastoralists participation and consultation rights in policy making in areas which affect them.

## Education and pastoral communities in eastern Sudan and western Eritrea

**Ali Mohamed Ismail Mohamed**

**A**s pastoralists, the main tribes inhabiting eastern Eritrea and Kassala and eastern Sudan, move freely over a vast area during the wet and dry seasons, across the border between the two countries, in search of better grazing, watering places and markets. Political or socio-economic change in either country therefore affects, directly or indirectly, the life of pastoralists on both sides of the border.

Eritrea is divided into three geographical zones: the eastern coastal zone; the western lowland zone, where the majority of the population is agro-pastoralist; and the central highland zone, populated mainly by non-agro-pastoralists.

Sudan is one of the largest countries in Africa with vast reserves of cultivable land and the largest area of irrigated agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. Any attempt to improve the quality of life of pastoralists usually increases the influx of the dominant cultivators, pushing pastoralists to the margins of areas of high potential. This, combined with rapid population growth, has made it difficult for pastoralists to maintain the herd size necessary to meet their food and economic requirements; it has also resulted in lack of access to health services and education, and general scarcity of resources. These trends, and increased competition for limited resources between cultivators and pastoralists, have inevitably led to frequent conflicts.

In the Sudan the state advocates the settlement of pastoralists, who have been regarded as hostile, resistant to change, agents of soil erosion through over-grazing and deforestation, and a liability in relation to development programmes.

Because of their mobility, pastoralists should be offered education and training on the move. Current educational systems are planned not for the benefit of pastoralists but to serve the policy makers in Eritrea and Sudan, with curricula designed to lead to higher education.

Boarding schools in pastoral areas could play a role in the education of pastoralists, provided such education was relevant to the real needs of pastoral life, was controlled to some degree by parents and did not disrupt traditional cultural values and lifestyles. Teachers would need to have a good pastoral background, teaching cycles should be adapted to pastoral seasonality and special provision should be made to ensure that girls have equal access to school.

The wide gap in the provision of education between the highland farmers, who have become involved in the decision-making process, and lowland pastoralists, who are deprived of basic human requirements, is one of the biggest problems facing pastoralists, and contributes to their continuing impoverishment and social marginalization. Where education is available, there are considerable disparities between regions

with regard to qualified teachers, pupil–teacher ratios and examination pass rates.

Although education policy in Eritrea provides for compulsory basic education for all children, this is not the reality on the ground. Inequality in educational opportunities, both in services and access to formal education between regions, results in high illiteracy rates, particularly among the pastoral peoples of western Eritrea. The 30-year conflict with Ethiopia has also played a role in denying thousands of Eritrean children in pastoralist communities access to schools.

## The Iloodoariak land scandal

**Oleku Ole Roore Sammy**

**N**ot a single pastoral community in East Africa today can claim to be at peace with its government or to be enjoying internal peace within itself. The struggle for their land rights and the liberty of indigenous people can be and is, both challenging and demanding.

The struggle for land rights is a process that demands determination and vision. Like so many other Maasai, the Iloodoariak community is in danger of losing the pastures on which its members depend, through massive and uncontrolled fraud.

Until the 1970s the land at Iloodoariak, like many other lands in Kenya occupied by pastoralists, was legally held in trust by the state for the benefit of its residents and administered by the local county council. However, in 1978–9 a land adjudication committee was imposed on the people of Iloodoariak, and the land was declared an ‘Adjudication Section’. The adjudication committee, largely made up of non-literate elders, was deceived or bribed, and consequently as many as 362 people – including local officials, businessmen and the political elite and their families who were not residents of Iloodoariak at all – were assigned parcels of land totalling about 20,000 hectares, while over 2,000 poor Maasai families got nothing.

The Maasai of Iloodoariak are angry and determined. As an elder said, ‘They took the land on paper, but the land on the ground is ours.’ The land belongs to the Maasai by virtue of right. It belongs to the young and to the old, the born and those yet to be born, and must be defended.

Because of the possible involvement of senior officials, the Kenyan press, which publicizes other land conflicts and stories of grabbed public lands, will not touch this story. The new owners wanted the land not to farm but as security to raise loans. The land conflict in Iloodoariak is essentially question of might versus rights.

The Maasai have been subjected to exploitation, marginalization, oppression, social injustice and violation of basic human rights as witnessed by the shameless land scandal. Besides this land loss, the looting of other resources, mismanagement and indiscriminate destruction of natural resources in Maasai land by short-term economic interests has assumed alarming proportions.

By failing to recognize the value of Maasai customary land use, and rights of occupation, the land adjudication policy has not only been detrimental in its impact on Maasai welfare, but has also had an adverse impact on land use and the environment. Current land use policies encourage fragmentation, which negatively affects wildlife conservation and the livelihood of pastoralists, especially the Maasai, but also has a negative impact on them socially.

The Maasai call upon the Kenya government to nullify the corrupt and irregular land allocations in Iloodoariak area of Ngong Hills, Kajiado District, which it has already promised to do. The support of Members of Parliament and bodies such as the Kenya Pastoralist Forum and Minority Rights Group, as

well as all friends of the Maasai, is vital not only to the Maasai people but to the entire pastoral community of Kenya. Legal aid and willing advocates are also invaluable to prevent the continuing harassment, intimidation and imprisonment associated with their struggle, and to assist the Maasai preserve their lands and traditional way of life.

If the Iloodoariak community does not recover and preserve its land, not only will lose its rights to its land, it will lose its collective dignity and means of survival.

## Group discussions and recommendations

The topics for discussion chosen by the two groups set up to discuss the issues raised and make recommendations, were empowerment and advocacy.

### Group 1: Empowerment

The problems identified as holding back empowerment were:

- lack of education and access to information;
- poor health service;
- poor infrastructure;
- deliberate discrimination;
- gender inequality.

Opportunities for intervention were identified as being:

#### 1. Mobilization strategies, such as:

- Training of community motivators.
- Community meetings to enhance community participation.
- Formation, support and maintenance of social institutions.
- Participatory Rural Analysis as a tool.
- Local/community radio.
- Mobile education by the provision of equipment and staff and the establishment of strategic primary and secondary schools.

#### 2. Health:

- Provision of a basic mobile health service, education on nutrition, maternity, child health, etc. through the recruitment of community members.
- Establish strategic dispensaries, health centres and hospitals for referral.

#### 3. Gender awareness:

- Discuss with men and women their individual roles, worth and responsibilities, and persuade them to become involved in the decision-making process.
- Sensitize men, through the establishment of appropriate institutions, to their responsibilities towards women.
- Establish strategies which will give girls a good foundation for life from a young age.
- Arrange for group visits involving men and women to be exchanged between communities.

#### 4. Networking:

- Establish and maintain a strategy to check and balance the roles and work of the various intermediary groups and agencies (NGOs, aid agencies, spokesmen, politicians, researchers, scholars, etc.). The lack of such overall

networking is a major obstacle to empowerment as each agency is cut off from the others.

- Establish and facilitate processes to lobby and influence policy makers on all issues which inhibit the free movement and communication among pastoral communities.

### Group 2: Advocacy

The discussion centred around the establishment of an advocacy strategy group and regional fora to pursue the interests of pastoralists generally. It was observed that there was a need to bring together organizations relating to minority rights in a regional forum. The OAU and IGAD were suggested as possible venues to push forward the agenda for minority rights.

Pro-pastoralist Parliamentary Group (PPG), an initiative of Kenya Pastoralists' Forum (KPF), started as an ad hoc committee with advocacy on land rights as its main agenda.

It was decided that there was a need to identify regional and national focal organizations such as KPF, Panos, Afar Pastoralist Development Association, Land Rights Alliance, and individuals who could speak out on behalf of pastoralists.

One participant advocated:

- The setting up of PPGs in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda and the establishment of a partnership between such PPGs.
- The establishment of a regional PPG network to enhance the level of advocacy for the rights of pastoralists.
- Assistance to pastoralists to form groups and organizations and to establish a network to coordinate their efforts.

## Recommendations

Overall, participants in the workshop agreed that:

- There is a need to develop a pastoralist network consisting of indigenous pastoralist organizations but also involving scholars and researchers.
- Every country in the region should establish a Pastoralist Parliamentary Group (PPG) to improve and maintain advocacy in the region.
- Every country in the Horn and East Africa should establish a focal point to where workshops could be held to address advocacy strategies. The following were recommended as focal points to start the process:

International umbrella

Minority Rights Group (MRG), London

Regional umbrella

Pastoralist and Environmental Network in Horn of Africa (PENHA)

Kenya  
Ethiopia

Kenya Pastoralist Forum (KPF)  
Panos – East African Office  
Afar Pastoralist Development Association

Uganda  
Tanzania

Uganda Land Alliance  
Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Associations (PINGOS)

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Hon. Ethuro Ekwe  
Hon. Poghisio  
Hon. Mohammed Abdi Affey  
Hon. Dr Abdillahi Wako  
Hon. Dr Abdillahi Ali Ibrahim  
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Kenya National Assembly

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Life and Peace Institute

IUCN (International Union for the  
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Resources)

USAID

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Friends of the Nomads

Maa Development Association

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Lodaria Development Group

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Iaramatak/PINGOS

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Uganda Land Alliance

# Minority Rights Group International

Minority Rights Group International (MRG) is a non-governmental organization working to secure rights for ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities worldwide, and to promote cooperation and understanding between communities.

We publish readable, concise and accurate Reports on the issues facing oppressed groups around the world. We also produce books, education and training materials, and MRG's 800-page *World Directory of Minorities*.

We work with the United Nations, among other international bodies, to increase awareness of minority rights, often in conjunction with our partner organizations. We also coordinate training on minority rights internationally and work with different communities to counter racism and prejudice.

MRG is funded by contributions from individuals and institutional donors, and from the sales of its Reports and other publications. However, we need further financial support if we are to continue to develop our important work of monitoring and informing on minority rights.

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*Cover photo: (left) Nara herdsman, S.W.*

*Eritrea. C. SHEWEN*

*(Right): Sipape Olkeri, a Maasi woman from Ngorongoro, Tanzania. CRISPIN HUGHES/PANOS PICTURES*



MRG Workshop Report

Published June 1999

ISBN 1897693 87 7

Designed by Texture

Printed in the UK

on recycled paper



Further copies of this Workshop Report are available free of charge.

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