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“Solidarity in a competing world —
fair use of resources”

Relationships of Mobility and Markets in Different Pastoralist Hotspots

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Abstract

Concerns about increased marginalisation of pastoralist communities have led institutions such as International Fund for Agricultural Development to put pastoralism on the agenda. A consultation process to evaluate the global political integration and the enabling environment of pastoralists was carried out in 26 countries distributed over 5 subcontinents and was subsequently analysed in 8 selected pastoralist hotspots. On aspects of enabling environment, a minimum of 3 interlocutors per country were interviewed, whereas 315 pastoralists have been surveyed in the hotspots in respect to their employed practices. Multiple comparisons of means were carried out using Scheffe function of SPSS statistical package. Mobility is a critical livelihood feature that enables pastoralists to adapt to harsh conditions. Results revealed that Afar (East Africa, annual migration distance 85 km \pm 14.1), Arkhangai (Asia, 67 km \pm 13.4), Chaco (South America, 55 km \pm 12.7) and Altiplano (67 km \pm 8.1) were characterised by limited mobility, while pastoralists in Tiris Zemmour (North Africa, 100 km \pm 13.3), Gourma (West Africa, 168 km \pm 14.1) and Wagadou (105 km \pm 14.1) reported migrations from significant higher distances and were only exceeded by pastoralists from the East African Chalbi territory reporting 345 km (\pm 14.1) annual herd migration. Impeded mobility was probably the reason why in this survey migration and herd splitting were only mentioned by 50 % and 29 % of the pastoralist when asked about drought adaptation mechanisms, whereas selling of livestock even at low prizes was the main coping mechanism during periods of stress for 62 % of the pastoralists. It is remarkable that pastoralists chose distressful coping mechanisms which require longer periods to recover over adaptive mechanisms that with seemingly less disadvantages. Perhaps there are constraints that limit full mobility? If mobility played a decreasing role as coping mechanism, market access becomes important. More than half of the interviewed pastoralists perceived that policy harmonisation efforts amongst the ministries and agencies were low. Improved information exchange amongst ministries and towards the pastoralist communities was a prioritised plea. For the consulted pastoralist, development is not only about enabling access to information and knowledge, but also about rights and participatory decision making.

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