

# **Challenges to Traditional Livelihoods and Newly Emerging Employment Patterns of Pastoralists in Tanzania**

**An ILO-INDISCO Study in collaboration with Jobs for Africa (JFA)**

**By**

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**Executive Summary** This report is a result of a one-month fieldwork undertaken in Simanjiro district in Arusha region through a community based consultative process. The study is an attempt to analyze and identify ways of strengthening the changing livelihood and employment situations among the pastoral communities in Tanzania. The study observes that the pastoral communities are in major crises today. They are marginalized in many aspects: socially, economically, and politically. This situation is a reflection of inadequate government pastoral development policies, discouragement of the pastoral mode of production, competition in use of the available natural resources, lack of bargaining power and inadequate formal education and training among the pastoral societies.

A team of three researchers, at the request of the ILO-INDISCO program in cooperation with the Jobs for Africa Program, had an opportunity to meet a reasonable cross section of people involved directly or indirectly in “Traditional Occupations” in Simanjiro district. Three villages were selected for an in-depth study in the district. The choice of these villages was based on a number of considerations, but more importantly ILO’s initial involvement in the area through the support extended to pastoralists in establishing a pastoralist co operative society.

The study employed focused group-interviews approach where the following groups of pastoralists were interviewed: youth, elderly people, and women. Other categories are businessmen, miners, farmers, government officials and technocrats. In addition, coordinators of NGOs based in the region were also involved at one level or another. Furthermore, it also made use of secondary information available in the form of literature and records.

The study observed that the majority of the pastoral communities in Tanzania mainly depend on livestock keeping for their livelihoods. These include the Maasai, Barbaigs, and Datoga communities. Other non-pastoral peoples, who are also considered as the indigenous tribal

peoples are Hadzabe, Sandawe, Sonjo and Ndorobos. Most of these tribal pastoral peoples keep a variety of livestock: cattle, goats, sheep, and donkeys. Unfortunately, this initially reliable and sustainable traditional source of livelihood among the pastoral peoples is now under severe strain from both human and natural vagaries. Increase in human population, emerging new activities ranging from farming, mining/quarrying, charcoal making, commercial hunting, etc, is happening in the formerly exclusively livestock keeping environment. On the other hand, frequent droughts, animal diseases, and unreliable market channels have their own negative impact on the livestock economy and, therefore, the livelihood of the pastoral peoples.

Traditional institutional frameworks: customary laws and regulation, administrative machinery and institutions have broken down and replaced by modern administration and state organs. These are yet to be popularly accepted by the tribal peoples, especially among the elderly people who recognize and respect their traditional institutional and administrative set up. As a result of the ongoing transformation processes, much of the traditional knowledge and educational system is disappearing.

The pastoralist sector is increasingly coming under strain as a result of loss of traditional natural resources (land, water, and forestry), break up of traditional governance and institutional set up combined with inappropriate government policies towards the development of a sustainable pastoral development in Tanzania. The study observes that development investments in pastoralism have been rare, often inappropriate and, compared to investments made in other sectors, negligible in terms of size and scale. Pastoralists interest and needs have been largely ignored, overlooked and at times misinterpreted.

As a result of the break up of the traditional occupation that form the basis of the pastoralists livelihoods, most of them are now seeking alternative employment opportunities. The emerging forms of employment among the Maasai people include farming, business (selling of traditional medicine, running of restaurants/shops, buying and selling of minerals, selling milk and milk products by women, embroideries), and wage employment (as security guards/ watchmen, waiters, tourist guides), and few others (who are educated) are engaged in the public and private sectors.

Complex constraints and challenges face the pastoralists. Simanjiro district for example is experiencing a high population growth rate, both natural populations increase and through immigration. The land size remains the same, while other economic activities are introduced, some of which are not at all environmentally friendly, as the district has poor soils, unreliable

rains, and is always water deficit. Activities like farming, charcoal making, quarrying and mining naturally clear trees and other vegetation, in most cases leading to desertification. This needs to be stopped if further damage is to be avoided.

At the local level, some, if not most of the problems arise out of the lack of formal education. The district is among the least provided with education and training facilities. For instance, it has one Secondary School, and adult illiteracy stands at 85%, perhaps the highest in the country. This implies that, some of the challenges which could have been addressed through formal education and professional qualification, will remain to act as impediments to any meaningful development.

On food security, as long as the livestock population continues to decrease in both quality and quantity, the pastoral Maasai are at high risk in terms of normal viii Assessment of Challenges to Traditional Livelihoods and Emerging Employment Patterns of Pastoralists hunger and outright famine. Likewise, the degree of malnutrition will increase tremendously. As long as human resource development remains at its rock bottom, employment in the formal sector, outside livestock keeping, will remain a dream.

In order to address the needs of the pastoralists and that of the indigenous tribal peoples in an effective way, the study recommends that: i) the government needs to develop a comprehensive national pastoralist policy that would address the pastoral development issues in a holistic way, ii) Regional and district authorities need to work out strategies on land utilization in their respective administrative areas in order to avoid existing or potential land use conflicts. However, land conflict resolutions process need to involve all stakeholders in a participatory manner, iii) Government needs to invest more in education among the pastoral peoples so as to uplift their general understanding and acquisition of more knowledge and information on development issues, iv) The pastoral communities need to be educated and informed of their rights as defined under different legislation concerning land, v) Investment in infrastructure such as marketing facilities and information, communication, transport, health and watering points is crucial for increased livestock productivity and pastoralist incomes. However, such an investment needs to be done in a cost sharing manner so as to create sense of ownership among the pastoral people for sustainability purposes, iv) Encourage pastoralists' advocacy groups/associations, so that they are able to protect their interests and rights to use of natural resources including land., v) Such studies need to be undertaken to cover other forms of traditional occupations among other non-pastoral tribal peoples as well.