

Mobility, migration and climate change in the conflict affected areas, cases from Savannah Belt of Sudan

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to explain how human kind has been adopting mobility and migration as a tool to adapt to the climatic and environmental changes since human beings have existed on Earth. The paper provides examples from pastoral groups who are forced to move in order to escape the worst effects of both natural and human made disasters. In this respect, this paper examines how local and indigenous adaptive knowledge and capacities have provided the main source for developing their own resilience, adaptation and survival over the decades.

□ The paper discusses in-depth local customary laws and land use systems and mechanisms that pastoral and farmer groups use to manage natural resources effectively. By focusing on several best practices from some pastoral tribes from the Savannah Belt of Sudan, this paper portrays pastoral groups' seasonal movements to and from North and South Sudan during the summer season (called Massif), including when they begin their migration from South to the North during the rainy seasons (called Makhirif).

□ The paper vividly highlights various pastoralist and peasant land use mechanisms that have been adopted and agreed to in order to manage natural resources, under specific conditions and time frame rules, including water, land, migratory routes and open range areas.

□ The paper provides examples and best practices as clear evidence that mobility and migration can be suitable and effective tools to adapt and cope over the climate change and conflict risks in Africa and world-wide environments.



Pastoralists are moving with their livestock on the migratory routes



Source: downloaded from this website
<https://landlineafrica.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/map-of-sudan-en.jpg>
(dated on 9 September 2017)

Mobility and Seasonal Pastoralists Movement in Sudan

The nomads and pastoralists adopted a coping strategy to deal with the scarce resources in desert and semi-desert areas. They travel, over the period of each year, from the dry desert regions to the Savannah areas that have high and low rainfall levels. As the rainy season begins in the south earlier, and before it begins in their areas in the north, which are still dry. Then, the nomad livestock herders take their animals northwards, returning to their home land in order to escape the muddy clay soils, heavy rainfalls and flies in the Savannah area in the South after October. For examples, in central Sudan, the Arab tribes (Missirya and Hinabla tribes) move to reach the Nuba Mountains and Abeyi areas. In the Butana area, the Shikrria, Falta Um-brooro and Rashida (from eastern Sudan) move to the Southern Blue Nile. Similarly the Darfurian nomadic tribes travel to Southern Darfur or Bahar El Gazal. All nomads travel through traditional passages or routes in the Savannah Belt areas.

Best Practice in Sharing and Managing Natural Resources

In the Blue Nile state, the users have mutual trust, share information on where the best place for fodder and reach an agreement in the time of using the migratory routes between the Arabic and Umbroro pastoral groups is one of the best practices. The pastoral tribal groups have adopted a new system of using the natural resources by all the pastoralist tribes, involved all pastoralist groups having scheduled times to use the migratory routes. The Umbroro began their seasonal movement to the south and back to the north one month after the Arabic and indigenous pastoral groups' movements. This system led to avoiding overlap and competition over the resources between the various pastoralist groups

The Pastoralist challenges in Sudan

Insufficient and shortage in the rainfall, severe drought and extreme floods are major climate related risk in the pastoral environment in the Sub Sahara in Africa.

Weak policy and institutions to support to the ranges, pastures, sustainable natural resources management in Savannah Belt areas of Sudan.

Agricultural expansion and investment policies have forced agro-pastoralists groups into marginal lands, which are mainly used for grazing thus increasing competition with several pastoralists and land overgrazing, water shortage, and increase of the livestock diseases, decrease in the rangelands and biodiversity;

The climate change and conflict's impacts have increased the pastoral vulnerability and livelihood insecurity.



Arab and Umbroro pastoral tribes exchange information and news, concerning best places to access range, fodder and water resources in the open pasture areas in the Southern Blue Nile State, Sudan



A mobile pastoralist family from Raabida tribe are sitting in their tent

Concluding Remarks

* Pastoral local responses to the climate change and conflict:

- Practice environmental mobility even cross the borders to avoid harsh conditions;
- Within ecological zones they adopted adaptation practices with some modification according to nature, exposure and sensitivity and ecosystem; and
- Some of the pastoralists have Adopted new mechanisms for their livelihoods as practicing agriculture, collecting non-wood product (Gum Arabic), selling food and goods.

* There is need to provide some development support to high fragile and insecure pastoral areas in sub Sahara of Africa.

* Huge best practices and indigenous knowledge are required to be documented and analysed to improve the pastoral livelihoods;

* Pastoralists are dealing with harsh environments and have better resilience capacities than agriculture sector.

* Animal husbandry doesn't require expensive inputs and infrastructure as farming, but the livestock can increase GHGs emissions.