



Development Priorities in the Rangelands of Northern Kenya and Southern Ethiopia: Results of a Ranking Exercise Among Pastoralists

John McPeak, Syracuse University; Cheryl Doss, Yale University; and Christopher Barrett, Cornell University
Pastoral Risk Management Project

Research Brief O6-O9-PARIMA

December 2006

This study investigates development priorities of individuals living in arid and semi-arid areas of northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia that are predominantly used for pastoral production. Using a ranking exercise, individuals were asked which development interventions had been the most helpful in the past and to indicate their priorities for future development interventions. Results suggest there is relative consensus around a few key development interventions. The development priorities are not explicitly related to pastoral production, but rather focus on basic development needs such as human health, clean water, and access to education.

Background

Development efforts have met with limited success in the pastoral areas of Africa (Goldschmidt 1981; Brandstrom 1985; Lane 1996). Scoones (1995) describes the record in the following stark terms, "Millions of dollars have been spent with few obvious returns and not a little damage. Most commentators agree that the experience has been a disaster, so much so that many donors and other international agencies have effectively abandoned the dry zone in their development efforts." Recently, donors have begun showing renewed interest in pastoral development. They express frustration that development efforts in pastoral areas have been reduced to periodic humanitarian relief interventions that offer little prospect of long-term improvements to peoples' lives. As donors begin to formulate plans to address long term development problems there is a need to prioritize among different types of interventions. In response, the PARIMA team in 2001-2 fielded a survey that elicited development rankings from individuals in 11 communities in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia. A total of 396 individuals (249 in Kenya, 147 in Ethiopia) were asked to rank the effectiveness of past development interventions and rank the development interventions they felt would be most helpful in their community in the future. This brief summarizes the findings of this study.

Major Findings

We first asked about the personal experiences of respondents with different kinds of projects. Table 1 summarizes the responses of whether they had individually experienced these interventions. Almost everyone had received food aid. Most people had experienced several interventions, with human health the next most common

type of intervention (after food aid) that had affected respondents. Livestock health and water development were not far behind.

We then asked the respondents to rank the development interventions according to the degree of helpfulness to themselves and the community. The responses to this question were converted to a value between zero and one, with zero meaning that the project was not helpful at all and one being a project that was the most helpful. There was little difference between their rankings of the helpfulness to themselves versus that to the communities, so we focus here on the results for helpfulness to the community. Human health and water projects were by far the most helpful interventions, in the collective view of our respondents, with livestock health and food aid also highly rated (Figure 1). Thus the interventions most commonly experienced were also rated the most helpful, generally.

We also asked the respondents to conduct the same kind of exercise for ranking the development interventions they felt would be most helpful in the future. Again, we found little significant difference between rankings for the individual and for the community, so we report the results for priorities for the community (Figure 2).

In Table 2 we contrast the ordering of the intervention categories presented in Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2. Overall, the results illustrate that development efforts targeting human health, water, and education are seen as the most important, both in terms of past projects and people's priorities for the future. Interventions targeting the pastoral production system such as livestock

Figure 1. Ranking of past interventions most helpful to the community.

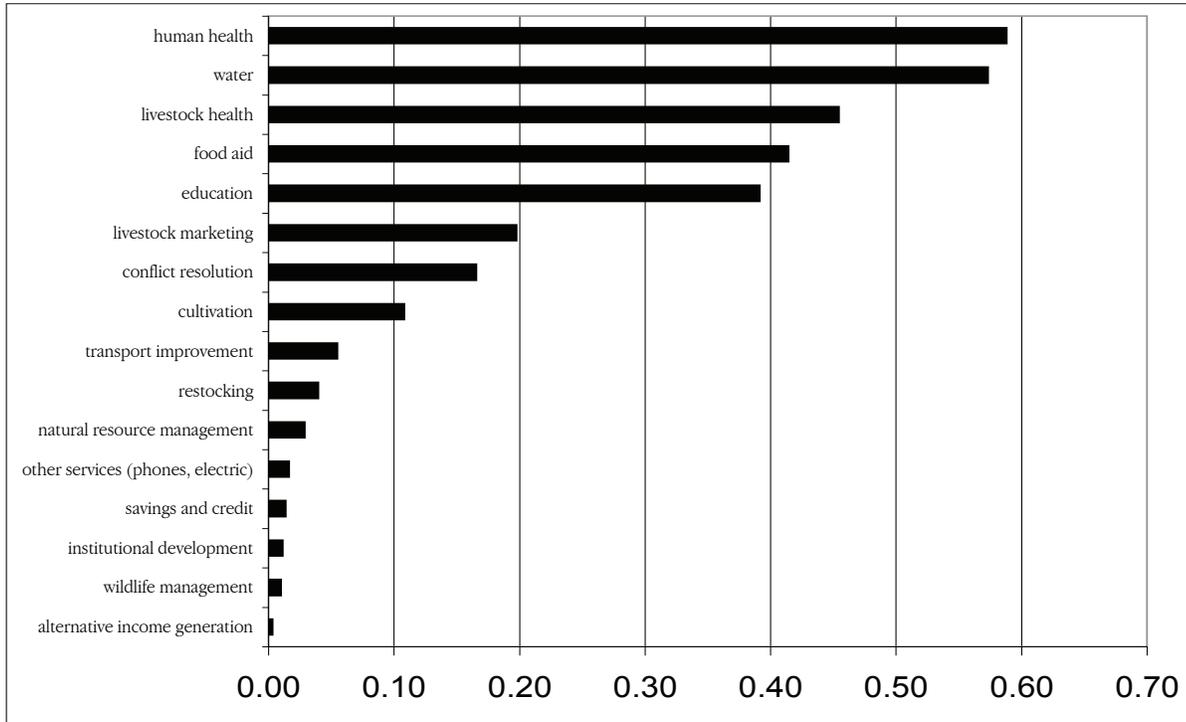
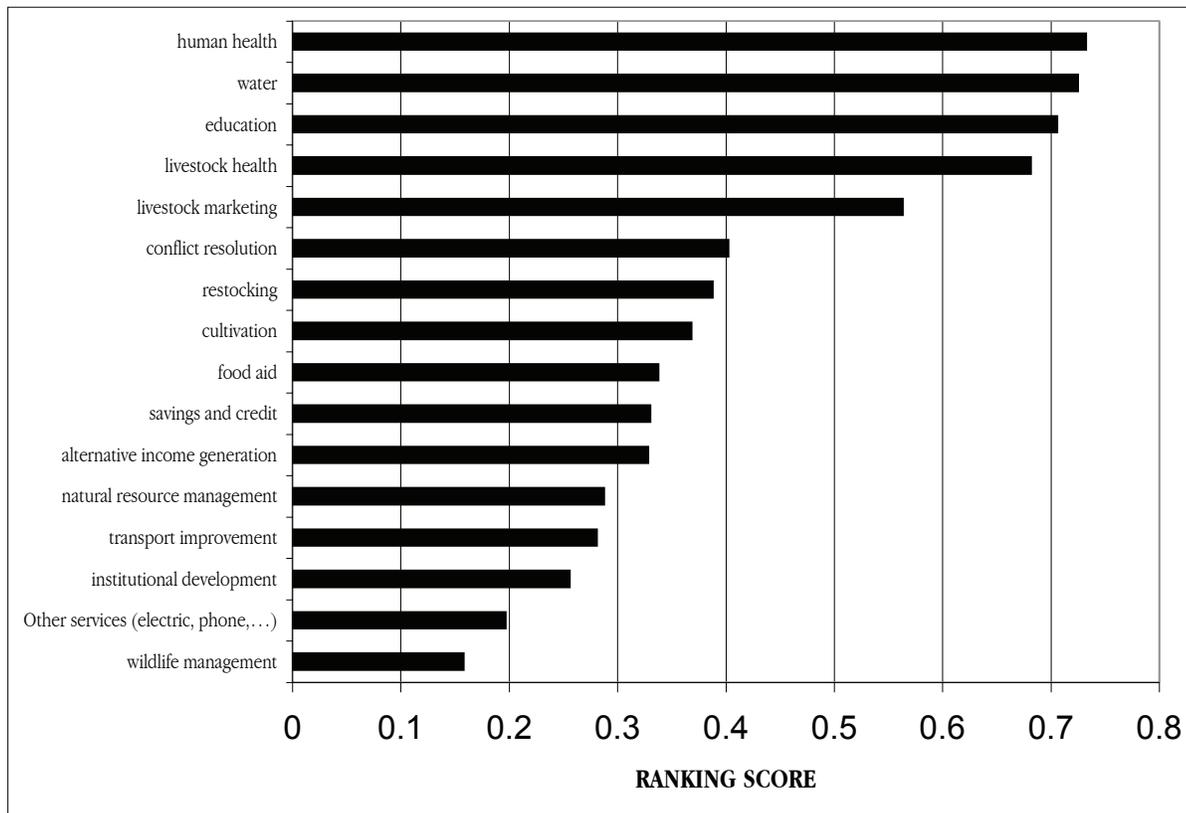


Figure 2. Ranking of future interventions most helpful to the community.



health, livestock marketing, and herd restocking fill in the middle range of the rankings. A variety of other types of interventions fall into the lower range of the rankings.

The results for food aid merit particular attention, as the motivation for increasing development efforts are often expressed as arising due to frustration with the recurring need for food aid. Food aid, as noted above, is the most widespread intervention. Respondents overall find it has been helpful; it was ranked the fourth most helpful type of intervention in the past. However, looking to the future, it slips to the ninth priority. In discussing these results with the communities, the general explanation of this was that if other development interventions succeed, there will be less need for food aid in the future. Thus a reduction in importance of food aid in the future is not just a desire of the donor community, but also a desire of the residents of these areas. But in the absence of effective means of supporting fragile livelihoods, our respondents plainly believe food aid has been valuable.

Practical Implications

The key conclusion of this study is that development efforts supporting basic human needs such as human health, clean water, and access to education are most highly desired by residents of this area. Development efforts should focus on ensuring that the basic human needs of residents of pastoral areas are met. This means that focusing on the development needs of “pastoral peoples” should emphasize the “people” first and the “pastoral” second. Past emphasis on the livestock on which many pastoral peoples’ livelihoods

Table 1. Experience of respondents with development interventions.

TYPE OF PROJECT	PERCENT OF INTERVIEWEES IMPACTED
Food Aid	97%
Human Health	88%
Livestock Health	76%
Water	74%
Education and Literacy	62%
Conflict Resolution and Security	62%
Transport Improvement	56%
Livestock Marketing	36%
Natural Resource Management	31%
Cultivation	28%
Wildlife Management	26%
Other Services (phone, electric)	18%
Restocking	13%
Savings and Credit	4%
Alternative Income	2%
Institutional Development	1%

depend is viewed as being only moderately helpful in the past rankings and, in the expressed view of these peoples on future development priorities, is less desirable than an emphasis on basic human needs.

Table 2. Summary Comparison of Results.

	PAST EXPERIENCE	PAST RANK	FUTURE RANK
Human health	2	1	1
Water	4	2	2
Education	5	5	3
Livestock health	3	3	4
Livestock marketing	8	6	5
Conflict resolution and security	6	7	6
Restocking	13	10	7
Cultivation	10	8	8
Food aid	1	4	9
Savings and credit	14	13	10
Alternative income generation	15	16	11
Natural resource management	9	11	12
Transport improvement	7	9	13
Institutional development	16	14	14
Other services (electric, phone)	12	12	15
Wildlife management	11	15	16

Further Reading

Brandstrom, P. 1985. "Do we really learn from experience?" In *Land Management and Survival*, A. Hjort (ed.). Uppsala, Sweden: Scandinavian Institute for African Studies.

Goldschmidt, W. 1981. "An anthropological approach to economic development." In *The Future of Pastoralist Peoples*. J. Galaty, D. Aronson, and P.C. Salzman (eds.). Ottawa, Canada: International Development Research Center.

Lane, C. 1996. *Pastures Lost: Barabaig Economy, Resource Tenure, and the Alienation of their Land in Tanzania*. Nairobi, Kenya: Initiatives Publishers.

Scoones, I. (ed.) 1995. *Living with Uncertainty: New Directions in Pastoral Development in Africa*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications Limited.

About the Authors. John McPeak is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Administration at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York USA 13244-1020, E-mail: jomcpeak@maxwell.syr.edu. Cheryl Doss is the director of Graduate Studies for the MA program in International Relations and a Lecturer in Economics at Yale University, 34 Hill House, P.O. Box 208206, New Haven, CT 06520-8206 USA, E-mail: cheryl.doss@yale.edu. Chris Barrett is International Professor of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-7801 USA, E-mail: cbb2@cornell.edu.

The GL-CRSP Pastoral Risk Management Project (PARIMA) was established in 1997 and conducts research, training, and outreach in an effort to improve welfare of pastoral and agro-pastoral peoples with a focus on northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia. The project is led by Dr. D. Layne Coppock, Utah State University, Email contact: Lcoppock@cc.usu.edu.



The Global Livestock CRSP is comprised of multidisciplinary, collaborative projects focused on human nutrition, economic growth, environment and policy related to animal agriculture and linked by a global theme of risk in a changing environment. The program is active in East Africa, Central Asia and Latin America.

This publication was made possible through support provided by the Office of Agriculture, Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade, under Grant No. PCE-G-00-98-00036-00 to the University of California, Davis. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID.

Design by Susan L. Johnson