



Planetary Security
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Exploring the potential for transformational change in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa is an incredibly dynamic region and one of the world's most food-insecure regions, drought being a direct trigger of recent food insecurity crises. In a region that is one of the most conflict-prone regions in Africa, the humanitarian impact is severe on an already vulnerable region. In turn the consequences of the drought in such a context are costly and potentially explosive: food and nutrition security are both a cause and consequence of conflict and instability. Building resilience to shocks is even more important in conflict-affected countries. Most of the Horn of Africa may be classified as arid and semi-arid and livestock production is the economic mainstay of these environments. Pastoral communities have long adapted to harsh climatic conditions but they are now facing endemic insecurity with increasing climate variability, more frequent occurrence and intensity of droughts and competition for shrinking pasture and water resources. Building on the growing momentum for change that addresses the underlying causes of vulnerability, this brief calls for recognition that livestock is a powerful engine and a key driver for sustainable agriculture, for poverty reduction and the achievement of food security and nutrition. It highlights the importance of longer-term solutions that keep the enhancement of the adaptive capacities of communities at the core of the responses and which address the relationship between issues that have the potential to drive conflict or peaceful cooperation.

1. Endemic insecurity with increasing climate variability

The Horn of Africa is one of the world's most food-insecure regions, drought being a direct trigger of recent food insecurity crises. This is a region that straddles a geographical space of strategic importance with its proximity to the Middle East, the scale of its humanitarian and developmental challenges, and the irregular migration out of the region. It is one of the most conflict-prone in Africa¹, conflict being the main driver of displacement both within states and cross border. It is also highly diverse and vulnerable to social instability.

Most of the Horn of Africa may be classified as arid and semi-arid, and pastoralism² is the economic mainstay of these environments, accounting for the majority of ecosystem and land use.

Pastoralists in the region have struggled for centuries with drought, conflict and famine, but of necessity, have been resourceful and innovative in developing specific coping strategies for adapting to the harsh climatic conditions. Over the past century, and most significantly over the last 30 years, droughts have become more frequent and more

severe, devastating the lives of millions. They are now facing endemic insecurity with increasing climate variability³, more frequent occurrence and intensity of droughts and competition for shrinking pasture and water resources. The net result of this increase in frequency has been a reduction in the time a population has to recover from the previous drought and prepare for the next⁴, leaving the environment and pastoral communities progressively susceptible to severe drought and losing resilience.

In 2016 a drought exacerbated by El Niño directly affected the region, leading to an increase in food insecurity and malnutrition with vegetation conditions the worst on record in many areas⁵. The humanitarian impact of the drought is severe on an already vulnerable region and the demand on humanitarian resources has been further magnified by the protracted armed conflict in Somalia and the number of emerging crises – political unrest in Ethiopia and an increase in conflict-related displacements and refugee returns from Kenya.

The consequences of the drought in such a context are costly and potentially explosive: food and nutrition security are both a cause and consequence of conflict. The root causes of conflict vary greatly, generally the consequence of a combination of political, institutional, economic, and social stresses. They are also often related to shocks such as droughts and food price crises, which may aggravate or even trigger conflicts. It is because of the interdependencies between shocks, which often lead to

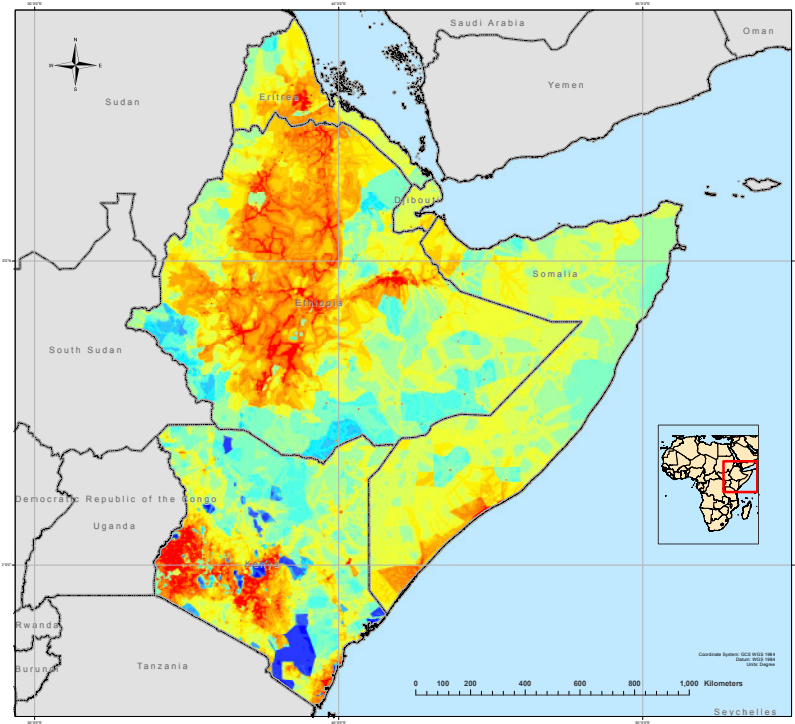
1 The refugee and asylum seekers caseloads in Ethiopia number around 780,000 and in Kenya around 500,000. During 2016 the number of Internally Displaced Peoples has increased by 16%, mostly as a result of the drought. There are over 1,2 million Somali refugees living in the region and in Yemen. (Source: OCHA, 2016. *Regional Outlook for the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes: Recommendations for Humanitarian Action and resilience response: April to June 2016*, UNOCHA ROEA).

2 Pastoralists are people who depend primarily on livestock or livestock products for income and food – typically graze their animals on communally-managed or open-access pastures, and move with them seasonally. Adding in agro-pastoralists – who derive 50 percent of their income from non-livestock sources – the numbers reach 200 million, over 30 million in the Greater Horn of Africa. Source: Future Agricultures, 2012. Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa: Diverse livelihood pathways. In FAC CAADP Policy Brief 06, March 2012, p.2.

3 Climatically the region is at the epicentre of the climate crisis. Whilst the impact of climate change in the region is likely to be mixed in terms of precipitation, average temperatures will increase in the region by up to 1.5°C in the next 20 years and up to 4.3°C by the 2080s.

4 Busby, J.W., Smith, T.G. and Krishnan, N. (2014) *Climate security vulnerability in Africa mapping* 3.01. Political Geography 4351-67, p.4.

5 FewNet. 2016. Alert November 2016: *East Africa October rainfall fails; Vegetation conditions worst on record in many areas*. Available on line: <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/somalia/alert/november-11-2016>



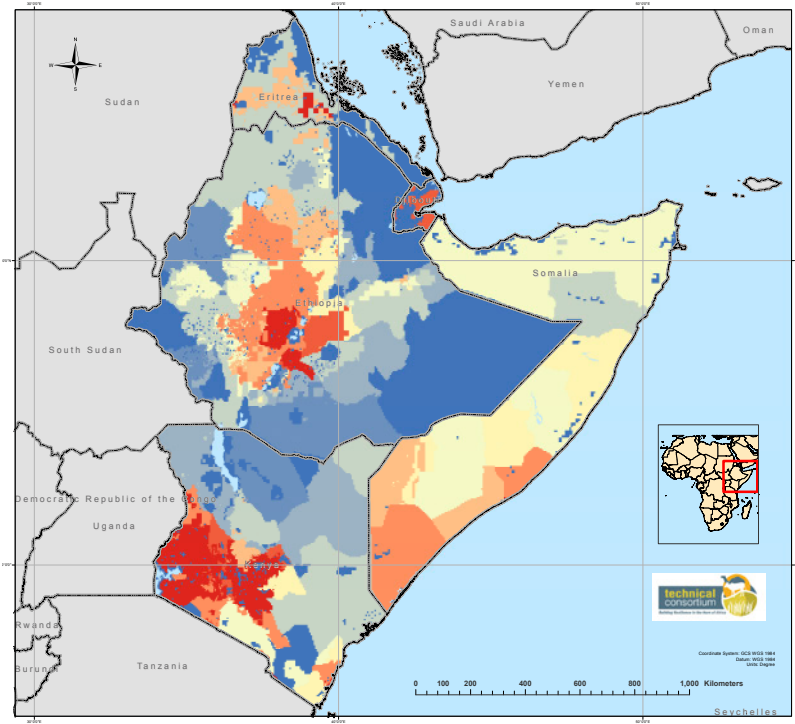
levels of protection

Horn of Africa

biodiversity security



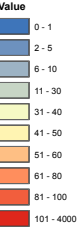
This dataset is a combination of three inputs: \$ spend per km2 in protected areas; log human population density (GPW); and log traveltime to cities. Areas that are well protected, far from cities and with low human population density are shown in shades of blue. These are areas where biodiversity and associated ecological services may be considered more secure.



Livestock Production:
ruminant volume of production (\$/km²)

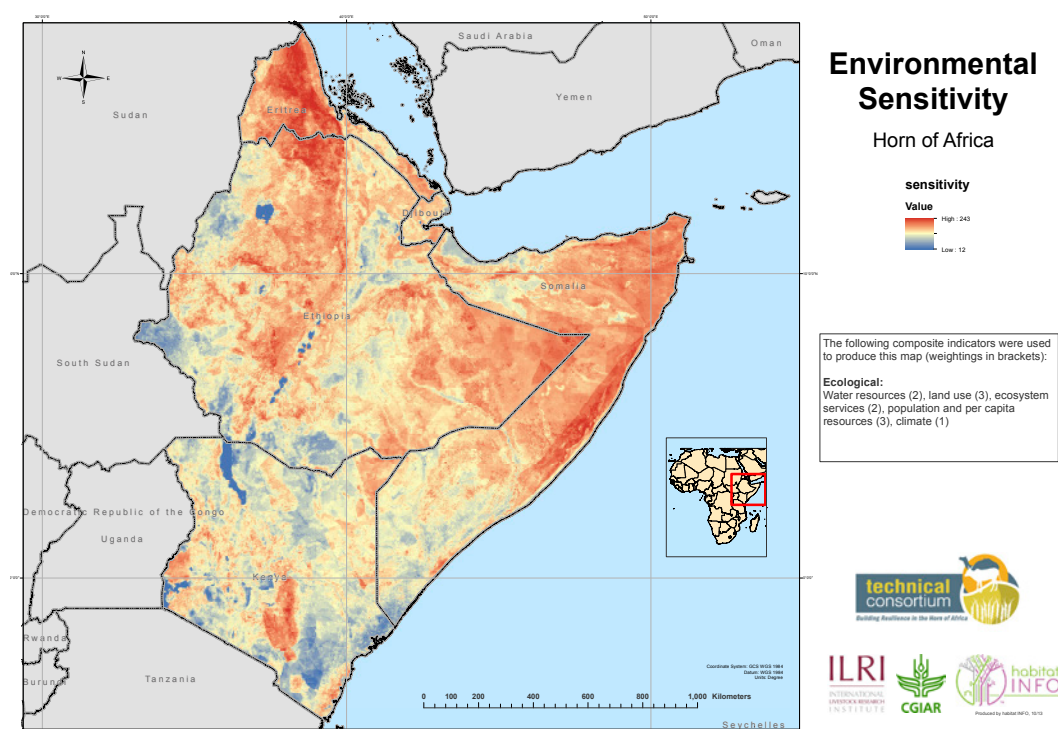
Key datasets used:
ILRI small and large ruminant volume of production
For livestock knowledge generation project funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

ruminant production
(\$/km²)



Value of production from all ruminants (cattle, goats, sheep) in US dollars per square kilometre. From ILRI: An estimated value of production per species was derived from publicly available data in a two-step process. In a first step a geographical information system (GIS) was used to calculate the numbers of animals per country and production system. In a second step, these numbers were multiplied with productivity figures and prices to come up with a value of production of the animals present. This is a broad brush analysis, based on country-level production estimates and prices. The results should therefore be used with the necessary caution.





complex emergencies, that we need policies and programmes to solve this vicious cycle by identifying conflict triggers and to develop food security strategies that can increase resilience and are transformative.

Improving food insecurity can help reduce tensions and addresses some of the fundamental grievances that motivate conflict in the first place.

A fundamental shift in thinking is needed about pastoral livelihoods that does not overlook the innovation, entrepreneurialism and significant economic contributions of pastoralism; and which recognises that livestock production is a powerful engine and a key driver for sustainable agriculture, for poverty reduction and the achievement of food security and nutrition. Pastoralists' strength is that they are highly adaptive: "While there are profound difficulties in creating secure livelihoods for all, there are also significant successes"⁶ and an enormous amount of entrepreneurial activity is going

on across the region based largely on the livestock production system⁷.

2. Traditional responses

Responses to the economic challenges of the drylands, synonymous with economic hardships and human emergencies, have varied for many decades and received limited public or private investment. Dominant narratives have suggested that pastoralism is a non-viable livelihood strategy that results in degradation of rangelands⁸, and a false perception that investments in drylands will yield low returns from inefficient systems. This has led to poor service provision, failed rangeland interventions and market development interventions.

6 Future Agricultures, 2012. Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa: Diverse livelihood pathways. In *FAC CAADP Policy Brief 06*, March 2012, p.1.

7 Ian Scoones: Interview "Pastoralism in Africa: doing things differently". Available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWcpKm5N-xA>

8 World Initiative on Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP). 2008. *Policies that work for Pastoral Environments: A six country review of positive policy impacts on pastoral environments*. IUCN Nairobi.

Despite the widespread opinion that pastoralism is not an economically viable or rational livelihood activity, it contributes significantly to the GDP of the region's economies. In Kenya, 80 percent of all red meat produced in the country is raised in rangelands⁹, and this production accounts for 13 percent of agricultural GDP. In Ethiopia, livestock contributes 45 percent to agricultural GDP, 12 percent to GDP and uses 60 percent of the land area¹⁰. Livestock exports from Ethiopia underwent a fivefold increase between 2005 and 2011 with exports valued at U.S. \$211 million in 2010–2011, again with pastoral production in the drylands playing a central role¹¹. Looking at the Greater Horn, the value of pastoral livestock and meat trade is nearing US\$1 billion a year – making Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia 'high export' countries. "This is several fold larger than government figures, which consistently underestimate the contribution of livestock and pastoralism to the national economy"¹². Livestock are also of economic and social importance at the household level contributing in many ways to household incomes and food security as a direct source of food, crop production, as raw materials for leather and carpet industries, insurance against climate crises, transporting of goods and people, means of investment and source of income and foreign exchange¹³. There are also many environmental services that are provided by

pastoralists and pastoralism that are poorly understood, mobile livestock raising playing a critical role in the ecological sustainability of drylands. It is these multiple indirect services that are rarely quantified, often poorly appreciated and ultimately undervalued.

The debates have also been marred by a lack of solid evidence both on long term trends as well as the impact of interventions. Fundamentally, these interventions did not understand the nature of dryland ecosystems or livestock production, in particular the need for mobility to manage variable environments, and the logic of pastoral production which values large herds for drought recovery and economic returns¹⁴. Migration is a key resilience strategy for some populations that have a long tradition of resource sharing and cross-border (customary and legal) movements.

Responses to droughts have traditionally focused on disaster relief and short-term measures that do not address the roots of problems, creating a cycle of dependence that does not build household-level resilience. It is important to not only recover, that communities not just "bounce back" to where they were before the crisis, but transformative actions leave them even better off. There is a growing shift away from disaster relief, but while acknowledging that future climate change poses risks, many interventions and programmes have not yet included significant components on climate change adaptation. The impacts of future climate change are only slowly being mainstreamed into national and sectoral development programmes and donor interventions.

Traditional responses have also included a spread of private tenure at the cost of collective property rights, top-down rangeland re-seeding programmes that have

9 Farmer, E. and Mbwika, J. 2012. *End Market Analysis of Kenyan Livestock and Meat: A Desk Study*. USAID.

10 This includes the value of ploughing services. (Source: Shiterek, T. 2012. *Ethiopia Country Report*. Available online: www.gov.uk)

11 Akililu, Y., Little, P.D., Mahmoud, H., and McPeak, J. 2013. *Market access and trade issues affecting the drylands in the Horn of Africa*. Brief prepared by a Technical Consortium hosted by CGIAR in partnership with the FAO Investment Centre. Technical Consortium Brief 2. Nairobi: International Livestock Research Institute.

12 Future Agricultures, 2012. Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa: Diverse livelihood pathways. In *FAC CAADP Policy Brief 06*, March 2012, p. 2.

13 Bereda, A., Yilma, Z., Asefa, Z. and Kassa, F. 2016. Livestock and Livestock Products and By-Product Trade in Ethiopia: A Review. In *Developing Country Studies*, Vol.6, No.7, 2016, pp. 44–51.

14 WISP *Id*; Akililu, Y. and A. Catley. 2010. *Mind the gap: Commercialization, livelihoods and wealth disparity in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia*. Feinstein International Centre, Tufts University. 2010, WISP 2008., Nasseff, M., S. Anderson and C. Hesse. 2009. Pastoralism and climate change: enabling adaptive capacity. Overseas Development Institute, London.

failed after a few seasons, and investments in market infrastructure and export systems. More troubling has been interventions to excise key resources (water bodies, dry season grazing areas) from communal pastoral resources.

A shift towards greater appreciation for keeping arid lands productive and push for economic growth has largely centred on increased access to and participation in livestock markets, but risks by-passing poor producers – those who still lack access to information about how market opportunities can benefit them, and who need credit and other inputs before they can successfully become commercial producers. This has created a conundrum, with on one hand increasing wealth and rapid intensification of commercialisation happening alongside worsening vulnerability for those who are not benefiting from the economic and political changes that are taking place.

3. Growing momentum for transformative responses

Since the early part of 21st century there have been some good examples of a changing view on the potential of drylands, leading to more enlightened policy and programmatic recommendations. The severe drought of 2010/11 prompted increased regional and international attention and led to a more widespread shift by multiple partners, from national to international. This is clear from the broad base of donors, new foreign investment in drylands and interest from new actors who recognise that economic growth in the extensive drylands of the Horn is both important and feasible, and which is resulting in the proliferation of resilience and economic growth programmes.

Despite the historical challenges, there are stronger commitments from governments in the Horn to work more closely together to solve both security and development problems and to strengthen economic ties with their neighbours. Strong leadership is being provided by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the

African Union (AU) Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa (2010), the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative and the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. IGAD promotes integrated programming and collaboration accompanied by a changed understanding of the logic and value of drylands and pastoral livestock production. The thrust of the AU framework is to recognise and ensure the rights of African pastoralists, and to reinforce the contribution of pastoral livestock to national, regional and continent-wide economies.

More transformative responses aimed at building resilience as a long-term response to climate-related (and other) risks are now emerging across the region. There is a heightened determination that history must not repeat itself, that the ultimate answers to repeated food and nutrition crises do not lie in food aid and other emergency programmes and that environmental degradation, levels of poverty and the regional history of conflict must be reversed. There is now more emphasis on proactive disaster preparedness and overall progress is being made on improving responses to better manage dryland natural resources, protect and foster pastoral production systems and livelihoods, and preventing droughts from becoming emergencies. There is wider acknowledgement that well-planned and implemented integrated natural resource management, including a holistic approach to grazing and water management, is critical and works¹⁵. Well-implemented land-use planning is being embraced by several countries, as a tool to promote agreements over how rangeland resources should be used to support pastoral livelihoods and avoid conflicts.

Improved access to markets is providing pastoralists with needed cash income and employment. Many locally driven success

15 Flintan, F., Behnke, R. and Neely, C. 2013. *Natural resource management in the drylands in the Horn of Africa*. Brief prepared by a Technical Consortium hosted by CGIAR in partnership with the FAO Investment Centre. Technical Consortium Brief 1. Nairobi: International Livestock Research Institute.

stories and transformative response are emerging in which pastoralists and smallholder farmers (the main private sector actors and stakeholders in the use and preservation of arid and semi-arid areas) are the agents of their own change and playing a role in the whole value chain.

The importance of safety nets to help households “on the edge” avoid losing many more assets or becoming more food insecure as the result of a drought is being recognised. Index-based insurance interventions similarly show great promise for helping pastoralists to avoid losses during droughts because their animals are insured. “Conditional transfers”, which are programmes that seek to change behaviour using incentives like Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) or that implement direct interventions to improve or restore ecosystems by employing poor and vulnerable, are effective in focussing on ecological and social outcomes.

Community based natural resource management has been and continues to be promoted by NGOs, and works at the local level, particularly as pastoralists usually have the most intimate knowledge of their local environments¹⁶. This requires considerable community engagement that draws on local knowledge, perspectives and experiences in developing strategies for reducing risk and building resilience.

Donors are being called on to address the contentious issue of the externalisation of disaster response and its separation from mainstream development priorities, through the promotion of integrating humanitarian assistance with development interventions. Donors have formed a Global Alliance for Action for Drought Resilience and Growth (GA), which continues to support regional and national initiatives and there are numerous examples of individual donor commitments promoting resilience strategies. Further impetus came from the UN Food

and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) strong global call in 2015 for recognizing the critical importance of resilience in agriculture for food and nutrition security, noting that it is the sector which absorbs approximately 22 per cent of the economic impact caused by medium and large-scale natural hazards and disasters in developing countries¹⁷.

4. Recommendations

Challenging dominant narratives:

A fundamental shift in thinking is needed that recognises the innovation and entrepreneurship that is taking place. Strengthened advocacy calls for making the economic case (using qualitative and quantitative indicators) for investing in the sustainable use of natural resources, and addressing the lack of frameworks to measure the impact of interventions on resilience. Programmes need to gather evidence of their attempts to foster increased integration between risk management, productivity improvements and economic growth grounded in dryland realities. Programming and monitoring and evaluation systems should be set up in such a way that they leave ample room for experimentation and spontaneous action as suggested by pastoralists and small holder farmers. Scaling up of proven success case studies should be based on integrated risk management that takes all complexities into account.

Strengthening community resilience: Now is the time to strengthen and build on emerging transformative responses – forward-looking responses that address risk and seek to build long-term resilience by tackling the root causes of the area’s vulnerability: systemic socio-political marginalization, structural poverty, ecological preconditions and limited economic mobility. This calls for improving (locally driven and inclusive) responses to manage dryland natural resources, building on the diverse livelihood pathways and working on multiple fronts to encourage

16 Roba, G., Gibbons, S. and Mahadi, Y. 2013. *Strengthening natural resource governance in Garba Tula*. IUCN.

17 FAO, 2015. *The Impact of Natural the Impact of Natural Hazards and Disasters on Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security: A Call for Action to Build Resilient Livelihoods*, FAO.

sustainable and secure livelihoods. It also must be recognised that many households resident in the drylands still need protection against shocks, as chronic poverty and malnutrition plague a sizable portion of the population, and they need cash transfers and other forms of asset protection to help them graduate from poverty.

Understanding the relationship between conflict and food insecurity: There is a strong but nuanced relationship between conflict and hunger. It requires addressing the relationship between issues that have the potential to drive conflict or peaceful cooperation and for climate change adaptation to be considered as an integral part of conflict-prevention strategies. It is important that security responses be balanced with efforts to strengthen community resilience. Inclusive policies and interventions that build resilience to climate shocks have the power to defuse social grievances, to limit the impact of conflict related food insecurity, and to strengthen national-level governance systems and institutions.

Greater political commitment is needed by national governments in the region to address climate resilience, and to mainstream climate resilience across sectors. There is also greater scope for investments in climate projects that have a regional reach.

Increasing market access and addressing social disparities: Resilient communities and sustainable land management in turn create the path for increasing market access and growing bankable projects, thereby strengthening the private sector comprised (primarily) of small-holder farmers and pastoralists, as well as national and multinational companies. Renewed support to market-access and participation for and by pastoralists can ensure that they continue to benefit from the growing economic opportunities of livestock sales and trade.

Improved market access makes both business and social sense, but must also address the relationship between issues that have the potential to drive conflict or peaceful cooperation, to address any potential for growing inequity. A great deal

more needs to be done to address social disparities and intercommunal conflicts that drive violence. Peacebuilding is not a linear process: first peacekeeping, then reconstruction, and then development. A longer-term perspective that escapes linear causality should be embraced from the design phase of projects onward. In designing development projects, it is important to take into account all complexities – the historical and cultural context – in which they will be implemented; failing to do so may exacerbate existing conflicts, or in some instances promote new conflicts. It is noteworthy that conflicts in the Horn of Africa are often driven by differences in political access between different groups and are often sparked by a particular intervention or event.

Pastoral mobility and regional cooperation: It is important to recognise the considerable adaptability of pastoralism if pastoralists are enabled to practice mobile livestock production. Customary border regimes, which dictate different types of migratory and trading behaviour, as well as resource management schemes for cross-border resources, should be recognised and respected; legal borders should not be a blockage to pastoral migration. Governments need to recognise the benefits that formalised cross border livestock trade has for their economy. Given that land insecurity is an issue of fundamental importance in the region and that rangelands and livestock production cross national borders, their secure management is crucial to enhance regional cooperation for greater regional security. Pastoralism will benefit from regional approaches to policy reform and harmonization.

Dissemination of information: There is a need for greater dissemination of information and effective uptake of different sustainable practices, especially of the many locally driven innovation and success stories that are emerging in which pastoralists and smaller-holder farmers (the main private sector actors) are the agents of their own change and playing an increasing role in the whole value chain. This needs to be recognised by local authorities and by external donors; too often success stories

go unnoticed, not mapped and therefore fail to provide a starting point for programs or projects. The sharing of information in a simple and understandable way by local communities through peer-to-peer processes should form a key element of scaling up strategies.

International support and donor co-ordination:

Overcoming funding silos is a challenge for programmes that seek to link peace and security responses to development initiatives, or take more holistic, integrated approaches. Coordination and cooperation is needed both between implementing partners and across donors. It is particularly important to overcome the challenges that arise when programmatic boundaries are ‘crossed’ in the interests of an integrated approach.

It is important to link local, national and international efforts designed to address vulnerability and resilience, most especially during the needs-assessment stage of development programming: partnerships have remained sub-optimal because of heterogeneity in approaches and policies.

Finally, continued and invigorated commitment to investing in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) is needed – to investment that builds resilience and sustainability through enhanced cooperation, to investing differently to end drought emergencies in the region and to investments that adopt a more regional approach.

Now is the time to capitalise on this renewed commitment, to tap into global agendas and secure support for strengthening the economic mainstay of the Horn of Africa.


About the Planetary Security Initiative

The Planetary Security Initiative aims to help increase awareness, to deepen knowledge, and to develop and promote policies and good practice guidance to help governments, the private sector and international institutions better secure peace and cooperation in times of climate change and global environmental challenges. The Initiative was launched by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2015 and is currently operated by a consortium of leading think tanks headed by the Clingendael Institute.

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