

MISMATCH BETWEEN STATE'S AND COMMUNITY'S
BOUNDARIES AND IMPLICATIONS ON PASTORALISM
IN TANZANIA

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Abstract

We present the case of mismatch in boundaries of the state and those of the local communities, and analyze its implication on pastoralism in Tanzania. We use the *Maasai* pastoralists as the case study. These social players are recognised as gurus of the mobile livelihood style in keeping with relative resource abundance across the spaces of time and place. As such, their boundaries are not fixed but instead dynamic, flexible and oftentimes unpredictable. In other words, these boundaries can be termed as resource-driven limits. On the contrast, the state's boundaries are spatially static and based on the geopolitical logic. A mismatch unveils when the state's politically-driven rationality enforces discontinuance of pastoralists' resource-based boundaries without prior in-depth investment to comprehend the logics behind the latter boundaries and avail alternative mechanisms of meeting the rationales driving sustenance of the resource-based boundaries. We argue that unless logic of resource-based boundaries valid in pastoralism in Tanzania are clearly comprehended and acted upon, renunciation of these boundaries will hardly become feasible.

Keywords: pastoralism, resource-based boundaries, political-driven boundaries, mismatch, Tanzania

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Introduction

For several years now the government of Tanzania discourages pastoralists' spatial mobility tendencies and instead requires pastoralists to settle within specific politically defined boundaries (e.g. village) because of various reasons. Among those reasons include escalation and spread of social conflicts from one place to another occurring between migrating pastoralists and the settled crops farming communities (IIED, 2006; URT, 2012; Kayunze et al., 2011), spread of livestock diseases, and degradation of natural resources such as water, land and forests. Despite the government's orders, migratory tendencies - though have been pressured by various social, economic, political and ecological forces – have not stopped. In other words, there is a mismatch in boundaries over land use between the state and the pastoralists.

The aspect of boundaries mismatch pertains to the issue of mobility. This issue has attracted attention of various commentators some assuming a proponent side while others placing themselves on the opponent position. Among those who seem to backstop sustenance of mobility is Oba (2011) who explored the way changes in pastoral herd mobility can be explained by four paradigms namely carrying capacity; mobility; modernization; and resource variability, risk and governance. Oba states that the carrying capacity paradigm is split into two categories of perspectives, that is, of those who believe in the equilibrium concept wherein they advocate for adjusting densities of livestock in keeping with the ability of the specific land resource to sustain the livestock. Another side under the carrying capacity paradigm is that believing in disequilibrium thus supporting the aspect of mobility rather than adjusting the livestock numbers. In principle, Oba criticizes the carrying capacity notion by ignoring the role of indigenous knowledge in ensuring that the natural resources such as grazing land are used in a sustainable way. The other paradigm is that in favour of mobility wherein its proponents (e.g. Little et al., 2001; Moritz, 2008) based their arguments on longitudinal studies that compared agro-pastoral systems in which mobility was practiced vis-à-vis those in which this norm was not exercised. These came up concluding that mobility promotes rangeland productivity and its sustainable use. In other words, mobility paradigm promotes sustenance of herd mobility. Niamir-Fuller (2005) is one of commentators who hold a strong defendant position over mobile pastoralism vis-à-vis the settled one. This scholar states that mobility has more economic, social and environmental benefits than the sedentary systems and thus blames the state for effecting policies whose core premises have been in favour of settled production systems. Environmentally, the author contends, mobile pastoralism allows regeneration of the degraded land by adjusting and moving herds of livestock to other areas of the rangeland. On the other side, socially the use of rangeland under communal property rights arrangements enables access to and distributes benefits from the use of range resources to the wider society and hence individualistic resources use characters are avoided. From economic point of view, Niamir-Fuller argues that mobile pastoralism is efficient in terms of the use of low labour and cheap fodder costs and in terms of increased resistance of diseases.

Modernization paradigm antagonizes the mobility paradigm by its stance in favour of intensification of pastoralism instead of free mobility. According to proponents of this tradition (e.g. Mark, 1996; McCabe et al., 2010; Tache and Oba, 2010), the changing scenario in terms of high population growth disqualifies the relevance of mobility norm. Instead, they view intensification and diversification as appropriate mechanisms while concurrently harboring

reservations as to whether under the on-going shrinking of grazing land intensification is possible.

This paper nonetheless is not intended to place itself in either of the two antagonistic perspectives but rather it aims at analyzing the drivers rationalizing the mobility tendencies and thus resulting into the issue of boundary mismatch between the state and the pastoralists. As such, in this article we narrate the rationale for mismatch between government's boundaries which are socio-politically defined and those of pastoralists which are based on the logic of resource availability, in particular water and pasture. We argue that, unless the logic behind migratory livelihood tendencies is addressed, it is practically unfeasible to enforce compliance with static livelihood boundaries among the pastoralists' communities.

Study area

The study was carried out in pastoralists' villages situated in Morogoro region, Manyara region, and Tanga region. In Morogoro region data were specifically collected at Ngerengere village situated in Ngerengere ward in Morogoro rural district. In Manyara region, data collection was done at Irkiushiobor, Namelock and Kimana villages in Kibaya, Kiteto district. And for Tanga region, data were collected from Elerai village in Kilindi district. The focus communities in all these study regions were the Maasai pastoral communities.

Methodology

This study used participatory dialogue methods to collect the data from Maasai pastoralists. Researchers and the respondents made circles in keeping with the Maasai tradition and exchanged talks in terms of questions and answers. The talks exchange session was followed by the visit to resource areas including grazing land and ponds/dams where pasture and water for the livestock respectively were obtained /planned to be constructed. During these visits, pastoralists' interactions with the ecology were observed including their efforts to ensure continued supply of water and pasture resources. Also, the statuses of the grazing land resource were observed.

Focus group discussion and transect walk methods were complemented with key-informant interview and personal observation methods. The key informants were the livestock officers in the study districts who had a close contact and ties with pastoralists. These included district livestock and land officers, livestock multiplication unit managers and the ward livestock officers. Also, in this group were included ward and village administrative and project officers of NGOs including Erato Masai Youth (EMAYO), KINNAPA, and the elderly Maasai people. These provided descriptions and elaborations regarding the logic behind pastoralists' mobility and its dynamics. Across the study period, personal observation was used as a tool for cross checking respondents' descriptions vis-à-vis the real situation in the field.

This study was guided by a combination of longitudinal and cross-sectional research designs. Data collection in Kiteto and Kilindi took place involving three consecutive years (2011, 2012 and 2013) wherein researchers and students from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in

Tanzania, specialized on range management course, had a long ecological excursions to gain field experience vis-à-vis their theoretical understanding regarding land use, ecology and range management issues and interactions among the actors involved in the process. The excursion trips took place in August and September in the three years. For Ngerengere, data collection employed the use of cross-sectional design wherein the data were collected at one point in time (Bailey, 1998).

The collected data were analyzed using content analysis wherein the information that had been recorded in the shorthand note was categorized into units, themes, and patterns for easy comprehension and presentation.

Political-driven boundaries versus resource based boundaries – conceptualizing the interactions

Boundaries mismatch prevails in the spaces of decision-making because the rationales of the authoritarian institution and the community institution seem to be antagonistic. The mismatch entails the dimension *state*, with the broader authoritative coercion valid over the national territorial boundaries, and the dimension *pastoralism* which though holds informal narrower organizational powers confined within the ethnic boundaries, on its own right, has a greater magnitude of landscape maneuverability as driven by variances in resource availability (IUCN, 2006; Roba and Oba, 2008), the norm which is discouraged by the *state*. While the authoritative dimension, *the state*, enforces compliance with fixed geopolitical boundaries arguably as a mechanism of reducing undesirable characteristics perceived to yield social-political disorders, and ecological and health hazards and imbalances, it appears to rapidly extend the push approach prior to thoroughly and comprehensively understanding and addressing the logic inherent in the dynamic *pastoralism* dimension.

State and *pastoralism* dimensions embody logic and rationales that manifest discord instead of congruency. As a trustee of public interests, the state uses this cap, attempting to fit the dimension *pastoralism* into static management models. Arguments have been given backstopping this position as entailing avoidance of the long experienced and potential social ethnic and sectoral upheavals at diverse regional and local spaces. Conflictive interactions involving sedentarised agro-production systems and mobile pastoral systems have been among the rationalities for enforcing and justifying decision-making of the state dimension. The alleged escalation and out-scale of disease disorders and complications as well as degradation of the environment also rationalize operationalization of static-boundaries-policy strategies, from the viewpoint of the state (Khadiagala, 2011; Eneyew, 2013). However, though usually not explicitly acknowledged especially among the authoritarian state bureaucrats, of recent years Tanzania has been, and still is, facing a myriad of interactions and pressure from big waves in the name of external investments, and in most instances, the land whose tenure systems did not appear to have been formalized from the state's legality perspective, have been alienated for such external demands (Cameron, 2001; Galaty, 2012; Nelson, 2005). Mobile structured informal tenure systems recognizable among propagators of migratory resource use and management regimes become forcibly extinguished. Furthermore, from the human rights and advocacy angles, *pastoralism* logics have been blamed as denying the rights of gendered groups such as preadolescents, adolescents and teenagers of access to educational domains. As such, the state has been enforcing sedenterisation, among other reasons, to ensure access to education for these

vulnerable groups (Summitt, 2002). These rationalities dominate the core position in the state's rationale for enforcing compliance with fixed geopolitically defined boundaries.

The logic of *pastoralism* dimension has for many years based on the relative resource availability. Because resource conditions at diverse spaces of time and place remarkably fluctuate (Turner, 1999), pastoralist players who normatively possess the wealth of sizeable live bank accounts, transcend geopolitical delimitations earmarked by the state. Displeased by bureaucrats' and technocrats' perspective applauding reductionism of their living wealth on the rationality of carrying capacity, pastoralists maintain the mobility norm as shifts in accessibility of natural resources adversely advance (Lesorogol et al., 2010).

In the search for mechanisms for compliance with the rationale of the fixed geopolitically defined boundaries, therefore, incentives and disincentives surrounding and propelling the mobility norms have to be unraveled so that consequently strategies for their effective dismissal may be devised and operationalised. This, nonetheless, does not seem to have embedded in the status quo of institutional mechanisms promoted by the *state* dimension. The following case study indicates diverse realities behind the resource-driven dynamic boundaries, the knowledge of which is crucial towards strategic planning for effecting compliance with state-based geopolitically delimited static boundaries.

Mobility drivers across spaces of time and place among Maasai pastoralists

This case study indicates challenges and experiences uncovering at the diverse scales of time and place as unveiled through focus group discussions with pastoralist players and interviews with key informants as well as from field observation. The account of the empirical evidences reveal that pastoralists experience a complex of issues triggered by intra-, inter- and cross-scale interactions of various forces and a switch and layering of various geographic, cultural and political spaces at various dimensions of time. We present this case to indicate the logic and rationale of livestock mobility tendencies among the Maasai communities. These rationalities are constructed upon relative shortage of pasture and water at diverse spatial spaces and different temporal scales, lack of organizational attribute, climate change, land grabbing, and lack of infrastructures for livestock.

Pasture scarcity at different spaces of time and place

The norm of resource-triggered-mobility keeps on transcending multiple geographically and politically defined boundaries. Movement of the *Maasai* occurs from study areas to Rufiji, Mbeya regions and other places as was mentioned by pastoralists during the focus group discussions. This especially happens during the dry season when the pasture condition becomes very critical leading to the numerous livestock deaths. For example, during the study period most livestock had been moved away to the above-mentioned places; only children (especially those attending schools) and women and elderly men were left behind. Mobility tendencies occur among the along with the norm of reciprocity. Social networks exist amongst the pastoralists wherein newcomers to a specific spatial space today will become hosts at another spatial space tomorrow when the resource convenience will shift to another area. The Maasai pastoralists believe that rainfall distribution occurs at different times at spatial spaces, as God decides, and therefore if you do not receive pastoralists migrants today they will not receive you tomorrow

when pasture and water conditions at one's place of origin has deteriorated. This is one of the substantiating reasons driving the acceptability of the logic of herd mobility amongst pastoralists. Thus, pastoralists' movements are triggered by the dynamics in livestock feed resources conditions.

Water shortage at special and temporal scales

Water is another problem especially during the dry seasons and this problem triggers livestock mobility; even for household consumption, water is drawn from the distance of up to 5 hours walk during this season. Conflict thus becomes an inescapable component in this process. For example, one woman at Elerai village uncovered that they search for water with their donkeys for domestic consumption but congestion involving large human and livestock populations makes access to water difficult. According to women discussants, a woman can leave her house/homestead area at 8:00 in the morning but may remain away without even accessing the drop of water up to 4:00 in the afternoon, and oftentimes she may even come back to home without water at all at this late time. Scarcity and hence competition for water also results into violent conflict involving, among others, Maasai women and "*waswahili*¹ women". One Maasai woman testified that: "*we face a lot of difficulties when travelling long distances to fetch water. We remain waiting longer times at the water fetching site; on one occasion, a fight occurred and my ear was torn away by waswahili women, and sometimes they cut our donkeys with machete or drive the donkeys away and sell them*".

Lack of organization

Towards strategies for enhancing compliance in terms of permanent settling within geopolitically defined boundaries, pastoralists' organization is crucial. However, there is lack of organization amongst the pastoralists. This is why individuals take independent initiatives such as excavating ponds on their own, while organized collaborative effort could be more meaningful and effective in terms of achieving solution to water and related pastoral challenges. According to one elderly person, pastoralists face critical problems but their lack of unity impairs and fragments their power towards addressing the challenges. For example, in Ngerengere village an elderly pastoralist uncovered that pastoralists had unanimously passed an agreement that they should donate TShs 1,000 per cow to raise funds for excavation of an improved pond; some of them who had many cows did not want to pay that amount but instead pay less. For example, a pastoralist with one thousand cows wanted to donate 200,000 shillings instead of 1,000,000; that is 200 shilling per cow; such pastoralists did not even allow their cows to be counted to ascertain the reality in terms of number of livestock owned by individual pastoralists, vis-à-vis the number they had mentioned. Thus, disagreement arouse amongst the pastoralists as a result. One of pastoralist in this respect remarked: "*We are scared of being bewitched because of this conflict amongst ourselves due to lack of organizational cooperation, so we have resolved that each should excavate his own pond because we cannot cooperate*".

1 For the Maasai, *waswahili* are the people that speak language other than the *Maasai* language. In other words, collectively the people from other ethnic groups; regarded as uncivilized from the Maasai standards and norms.

Climate change and land grabbing

Climate-related stress was also mentioned among the challenges exerting pressure on pastoralism. Pastoralists were aware that the decline in rainfall has implications on the shortage of water. Elderly pastoralists uncovered that up to 1980s they could see abundant water flowing in the valleys but in 2000s water is the critical problem. In the similar vein, the pastoralist discussants uncovered, for example, that while in the past it could rain in September, nowadays it does not rain in September but in March of the next year. As such, for them climate change was another challenge that had resulted into increased drought in the area. As a result of the critical drought, pastoralists argued, there were times that the pasture was completely not available such that livestock had to eat soils, resulting into their death and thus pastoralists prioritize mobility to other areas at this time.

While the state enforces pastoralists' settlement to the politically defined boundaries, pressure on rangelands in the form of land grabbing concurrently increases. In the focus group discussion, pastoralist discussants unveiled that the rangeland is being increasingly alienated by people in the name of potential investors, some come from as far as Dar es Salaam and others are foreigners; they take big areas of land but do not put the land to any visible use while shrinking the areas for grazing. The pressure on the land at specific boundaries thus seems to be more of external origin than local. Rangeland alienation contributes to mobility tendency in search of grazing areas elsewhere.

Lack of livestock infrastructure

The Maasai discussants perceived pastoral management systems in Tanzania as not recognised by the state in terms of provision of livestock infrastructures. Presently, they argued, agricultural crops production is highly prioritized as if it is the only livelihood option. Also, pastoralists viewed themselves as marginalized from policy point of view. At Namelock, and Kimana village these actors expressed their views against some statist resolutions such as “*Kilimo Kwanza*” (agriculture first) that have accelerated clearance of the pastoral land. The pastoralists thus were wondering why the slogan could not be changed to “*Mifugo Kwanza*” (livestock first). While *Kilimo Kwanza* may not necessarily solely focus on crops but instead could impliedly be interpreted as embodying livestock improvement, the pastoralists conceived it differently because, according to them, more emphasis has been placed onto the crops, not livestock.

Like other people who usually prioritize their needs and plans, the pastoralists (at Elerai village) ranked the following in the order of importance: first, grazing area availability, demarcating farming and grazing boundaries; second, water availability in the grazing area; third, proximity of the hospital/health services; fourth, dip for the livestock; fifth, livestock market.

Whereas among the government claims behind the advocacy for settled livestock keeping, is on ensuring improved and enhanced access to livestock and social services, *Maasai* pastoralists complained to have lacked such the government support. While they have been reporting the critical problems that face pastoralists through their political representatives such as Member of Parliament and the ward councilor, they have always received lubricated promises that the critical challenges would be dealt with but they have not seen any tangible things coming out in

their favor. Lack of infrastructures thus leads to mobility to search for the water and pasture resources in various spaces of place.

Lack of alternative livelihood options

The idea of reducing the number of livestock is not welcome by pastoralists. Arguments made by pastoralists included: “*what will I do after I have reduced the number of my livestock? Save the money to bank, and finish it by drawing bit by bit for my needs*”? “*When I have a big flock it is a risk coping mechanism because when the drought occurs some livestock will surely die but not all, but if I have few livestock, all will die of drought*”. But the Maasai were aware of the change of situation in terms of increase of the number of their livestock whereas land is constant, it does not increase; yet, they asserted that the pastoral land was being encroached for other uses such that conflict occur between other livelihoods strategies and pastoralism. One Maasai discussant said “*the government keeps on demanding us to reduce the livestock number but has not provided us with any education regarding what alternative options we have to do after reducing the flock size*”. An elderly Maasai woman in the focus group discussion strongly asserted that: “*milk and cow are our lives, the women depend on milk for their livelihoods*”, and she insisted “*the government should help the Maasai to increase the number of their livestock rather than reducing the numbers because cows are very meaningful to women and children among the Maasai especially when women give birth to babies they get fat and milk from cows and their health becomes well improved*”. She continued “*look now women’s health has deteriorated because at this season cows are away due to the scarcity of pasture and water*”. This is the evidence that the logic of reducing livestock herds is strictly dismissed by the Maasai pastoralists due to their higher dependence on the livestock and lack of alternative livelihood options. Having large herds of livestock contributes to herd mobility especially during critical dry seasons.

Critical issues on static versus dynamic boundaries

Five main aspects important for the statist-pastoralist boundaries mismatch can be derived from the case study above. These are *conflicts, resource dynamics, mobility, policy, and organization*. While there are obviously various issues that can be drawn from the case study, the five just mentioned are, in our view, the most important on the interaction between the state and pastoralists dimensions. These issues are inter-dependent because the aspect of boundary mismatch anchors onto natural resource(s) such as land, water and pasture. Dynamics of these resources trigger activity and reactivity amongst social institutional actors and based on the resource relativity at various spaces of time and place, confinement within or traverse across certain boundaries may occur. These shifts carry with them reorganization of actors at various positions whereby such readjustments have great likelihood to interact thus yielding into conflicts. As such, policies are required to bring to harmony various reorganizations as a way of reducing hazards between and among not only the social actors but also ecological aspects.

Of these five issues one has a great potential of tying the others together and thus enhancing the potential for harmony between statist and pastoralists boundaries logics and rationales. This is the *organization* aspect. As the social pastoralist actors become well organized, they may, among others, be at a good position for penetrating the policy domain thereby increasing their probability of inclusivity rather than exclusivity and marginalization, they may strategize well in

ensuring sustained resource access, the outcome of which are the reduced conflicts and enhanced degree of compliance with statist boundary logic by reducing the temporal mobility space at various spatial spaces.

This section has disclosed the logic and rationale for mobile, flexible, dynamic and sometimes amorphous boundaries in the pastoralism livelihood dimension. The question now is what policy implications may be drawn from the empirical case of resource-driven boundaries vis-à-vis geopolitically defined boundaries? The coming section attempts to provide an answer to this question.

Boundary mismatch and implications on pastoralism in Tanzania

We can conclude from the case studies that the pastoralism dimension is not a simple one but a complex and dynamic taking different forms at multiple spatial and temporal spaces as shaped by various social, institutional, political, organizational, ecological/climatic and economic stimuli, among others. Whereas some of these drivers may in part be predicted and foreseen, other drivers emerge as surprises and yet others clothe temporal and opportunistic characteristics that promote their own interests in the name of pastoralist advocacy. This complex interactive system triggers elasticity, flexibility and, at certain duration, amorphism of pastoralism dimension, as a response, in order to ensure and stabilize the resilience and adaptability. This rationality seems not to have attained acceptability in the mind map and vision of state technocrats who instead treat pastoralism dimension in a simplistic fashion enforcing abrupt transformative process through reductionist approach which attempts to enforce confinement to spatial boundaries but falls short of creating incentives and addressing disincentives surrounding the *pastoralism* dimension. We argue in this paper that while the move under the state dimension seems to work towards provisioning of the solution to the complex situation entailing pastoralists and a complex of other natural resource users and multiple sectors, such a move requires prior thorough knowledge and insights on the rationality and logics driving the pastoralism dimension. This will likely be achieved through employment of inclusive rather than exclusive approach wherein pastoralist actors are put at the central position in the problem solving process.

Conclusion and the way forward

The mismatch of state's and pastoralists boundaries that occurs because of different rationales and logics emerge as a result of lack of platforms for mutual and thorough communication to deeply understand then reconcile the rationales of the two dimensions. Unless platforms for mutual communication and deliberations are effective, practical mechanisms to enforce compliance with state-promoted static boundaries will remain theoretical. Thus, there is a need for more statist efforts to explore and strategize actions for ensuring that incentives for compliance with geopolitical boundaries are created and maintained amongst pastoralist communities. This is only possible by realistically addressing the drivers presently promoting the mobility norm at various spaces of time and places. The role of planners at diverse multidisciplinary scales should thus streamline to scrutinizing on how such the reality could be achieved.

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