



Draft policy brief for Planetary Security working group on the horn of Africa (WG2).

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Policy Brief

Making the link between natural resource management, conflict and resilience

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Summary

The Horn of Africa is 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.

There is a heightened determination that history must not repeat itself, that the 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. This has led to renewed calls for responses that are forward-looking, that seek to build long-term resilience and tackle the root causes of the area's vulnerability. These responses are rooted in the belief that environmental security, food security and social security (socio-economic conditions and the political economy), are inextricably linked. 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.

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.

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

Food and nutrition insecurity in conflict-affected countries

The Horn of Africa is one of the world's most food-insecure regions, drought being a direct trigger of recent food insecurity crises. 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. The year 2016 ends with the Horn of Africa in the grip of the worst drought in decades; vegetation conditions are the worst on record in many areas¹. With food production largely dependent on the conditions of the resource base, the impacts of the drought are evident in crop failures and increased mortality of livestock, limited food stocks for sale and poor livestock value, while household purchasing power is expected to sharply decline. It comes at a time of political unrest in Ethiopia (mainly in the Oromo and Amhara regions), the protracted armed conflict in Somalia (where during 2016 Al Shabaab has accelerated its offensive) and the more recent armed conflict in neighbouring Yemen. Conflict has also been the main driver of displacement, both within states and cross border, in a region that is one of the most conflict-prone in Africa². The humanitarian impact of the drought is severe on an already vulnerable region and the demand on humanitarian resources has been further magnified by a number of emerging crises, including an increase in conflict-related displacements and refugee returns

¹ FewNet. 2016. Alert November 2016: *East Africa October rainfall fails; Vegetation conditions worst on record in many areas*. Available on line: <http://www.fewnet.net/east-africa/somalia/alert/november-11-2016>

² 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).

from Kenya. 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. Building resilience to shocks is even more important in conflict-affected countries.

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 2080s³. Additionally, the already highly variable climate will become more variable: changes in both rainfall and temperature are likely to have significant impacts on water resources, food security, natural resource management, human health, settlements and infrastructure, raising concerns about increased risk and vulnerability across the region, especially in the drylands.

Most of the Horn of Africa may be classified as arid and semi-arid, and livestock production is the economic mainstay of these environments, accounting for the majority of ecosystem and land use. By way of example, in countries with extensive rangeland areas, such as Kenya, 80 percent of all red meat produced in the country is raised in rangelands⁴, 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 area⁵.

³ IPCC, 2014. *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.

⁴ Farmer, E. and Mbwika, J. 2012. *End Market Analysis of Kenyan Livestock and Meat: A Desk Study*. USAID

⁵ This includes the value of ploughing services. (Source: Shitarek, T. 2012. *Ethiopia Country Report*. Available online: www.gov.uk)

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 role⁶. In terms of environmental benefits, sustainably managed rangelands in good condition do sequester considerable amounts of both above and below-ground carbon, and are home to significant biodiversity.

While there have always been cycles of drought and flooding, the population of the region has developed specific coping strategies, adapting to the 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. 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 next⁷, leaving the environment and pastoral communities progressively susceptible to severe drought and losing resilience. It negates the possibility for livestock to be a powerful engine and a key driver for sustainable agriculture, for poverty reduction and the achievement of food security and nutrition.

A combination of exacerbating factors further worsens the vulnerability to drought risk, compounding difficulties:

- a fragile and rapidly degrading physical environment (although the hard evidence is scarce, many lament the degradation of rangeland resources due to

over-use and poor management of water resources);

- limited capacity and equipment for disaster management, preparedness and response;
- disparities in access to markets, land and water;

and tenure insecurity and constraints that disrupt customary tenure and which have opened the door for large land investments that benefit the investors and not the communities.

⁶ Aklilu, 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.

⁷ Busby, J.W., Smith, T.G. and Krishnan, N. (2014) *Climate security vulnerability in Africa mapping* 3.01. Political Geography 4351-67, p.4

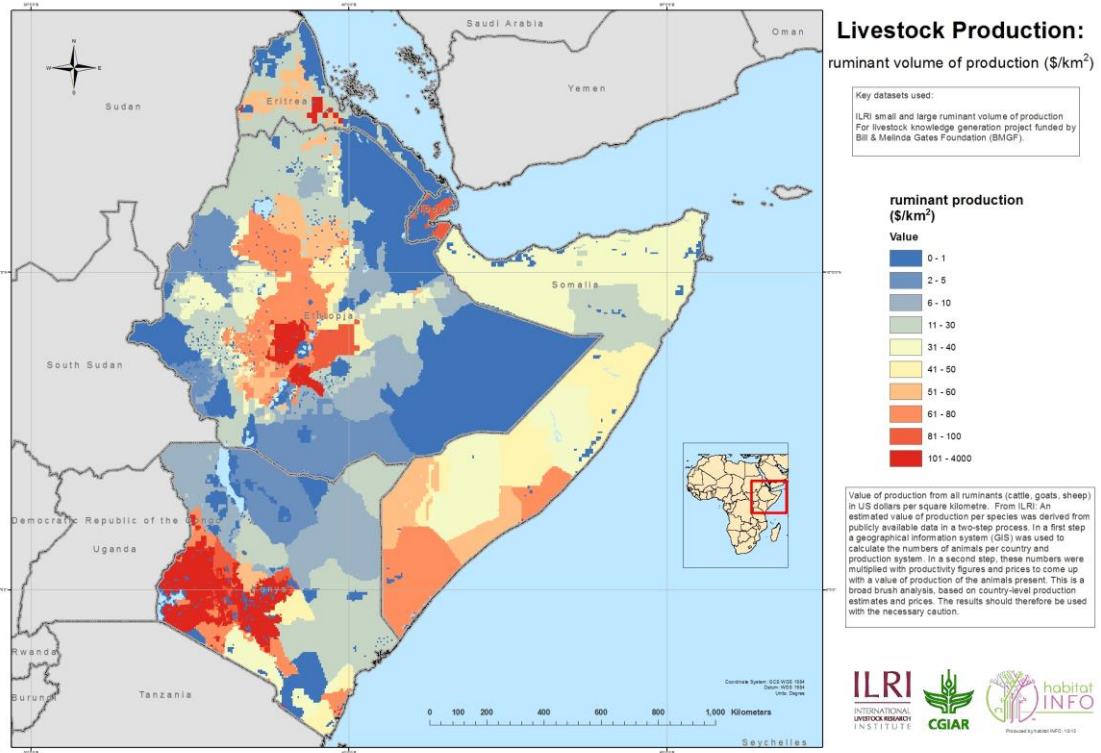


Figure 2 value of production from all ruminants (cattle, goats, sheep) in US dollars per square kilometre. From ILRI: An estimated value of production per species was derived from publicly available data in a two-step process. In a first step a geological information system (GIS) was used to calculate 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.

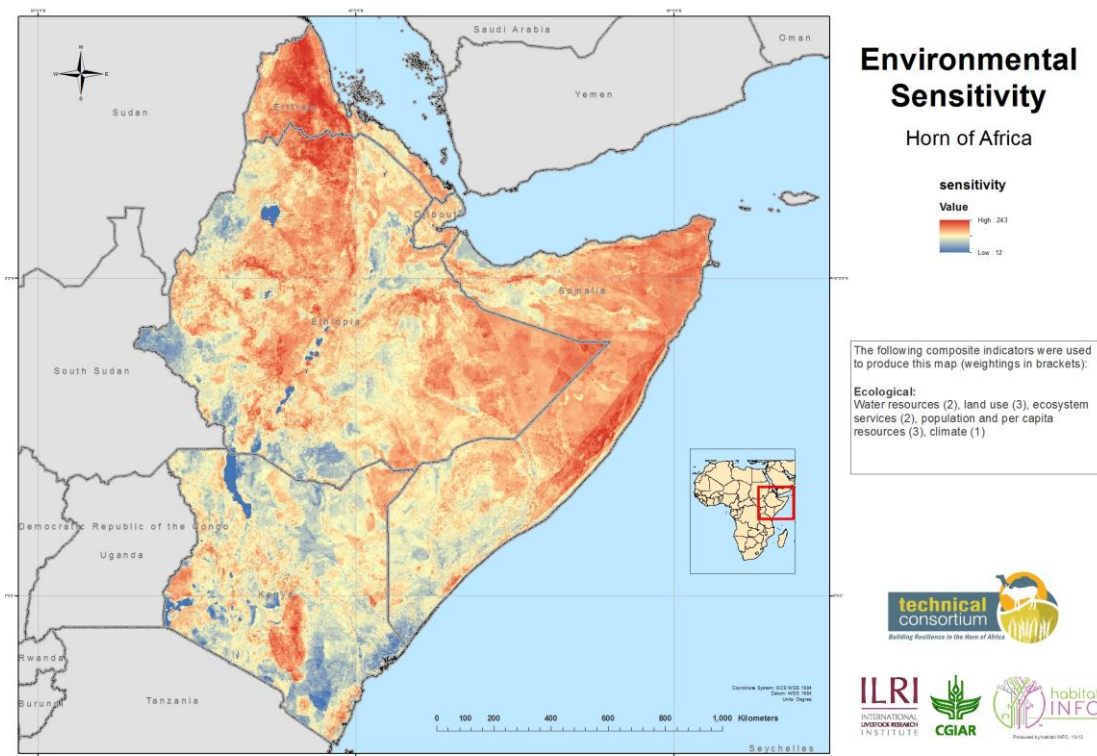


Figure 1 environmental sensitivity map based on available resources, land use, ecosystem services, population per capita resources and climate.

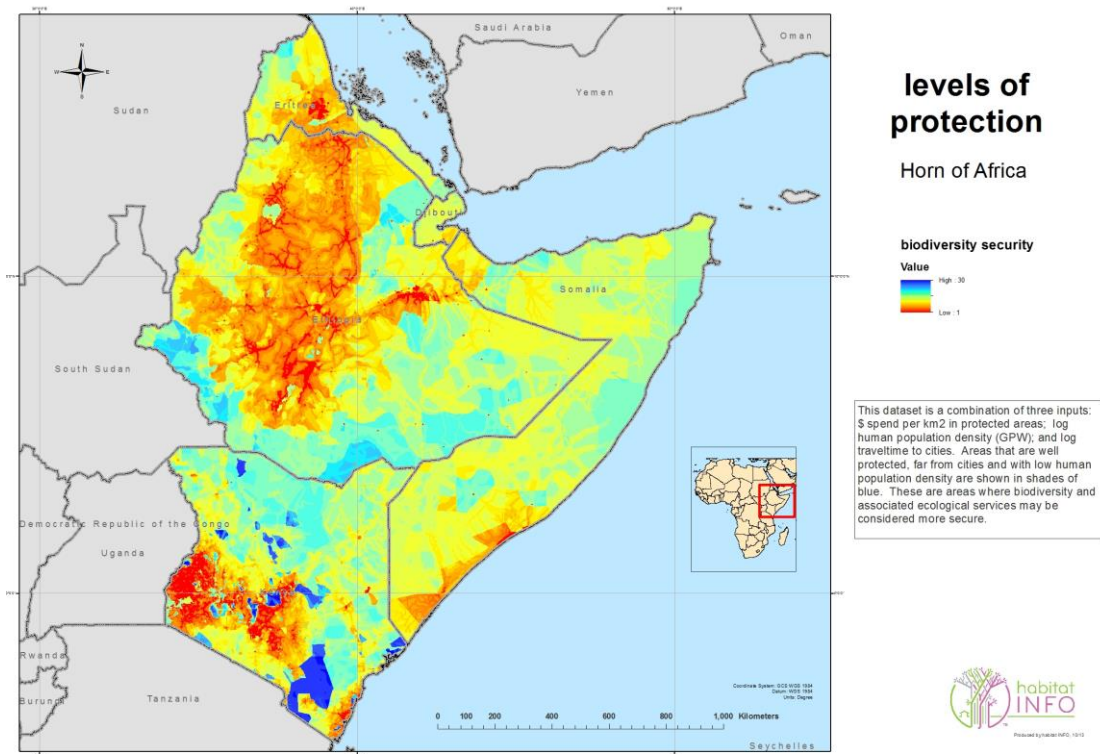


Figure 3 this dataset is a combination of three inputs: dollars spend per km² in protected areas; log human population density (GPW); and log travel time to cities. Areas that are well protected, far from cities and with low human population density are shown in shades of blue. These are areas where biodiversity and associated ecological services may be considered more secure.

A heightened determination that history must not repeat itself

For more than a decade there have been growing calls to address the structural causes and systematically address the underlying causes of vulnerability in the Horn. Now the momentum for change is building and international engagement is growing in support of a wide range of activities in the region, from humanitarian operations and disaster risk reduction, to building more robust political structures that ensure basic human rights and freedoms are respected, to capacity building of regional institutions and peacebuilding efforts. The Horn of Africa straddles a geographical space of strategic importance. As noted by Soliman et al., its geostrategic significance stems also from the scale of its humanitarian and developmental challenges and the “irregular migration out of the region, including into Europe, and the attendant significance of the region’s diaspora communities in the EU; and the threat of terrorism, both

in the region and through its linkages to Europe”⁸.

There is a heightened determination that history must not repeat itself: that the 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. This has led to renewed calls for responses that are forward-looking, that seek to build long-term resilience and tackle the root causes of the area’s vulnerability. These responses are rooted in the belief that environmental security, food security and social security (socio-economic conditions and the political economy), are inextricably linked.

Since the 1980s there has been varied attention to the challenges of economic development in drylands. Instead they have become

⁸ Soliman, A., Vines, A. and Mosley, J. 2012. *The EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa: A Critical Assessment of Impact and Opportunities*. EU Parliament, p.11

synonymous with economic hardships and human emergencies. Traditional responses have focused on disaster relief in the wake of droughts, short-term measures that do not address the roots of problems, coupled with narratives that suggest pastoralism is a non-viable livelihood strategy leading to degradation of rangelands⁹, and a false perception that investments in drylands will yield low returns from inefficient systems. This narrative led to failed rangeland interventions and market development 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 returns¹⁰. These traditional responses included a spread of private tenure at the cost of collective property rights, top-down rangeland re-seeding programs that have 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. The debates have also been marred by a lack of solid evidence both on long term trends as well as the impact of interventions.

More transformative responses are now emerging across the region that are aimed at building resilience as a long-term response to climate-related (and other) risks show promise for change. 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 FAO has provided leadership with a strong global call for recognizing the critical importance of resilience in agriculture for food and nutrition security, as 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 countries¹¹.

The severe drought of 2010/11 prompted significant regional and international attention and led to a more widespread shift by multiple partners, from national to international. Overall progress is being made within the Horn on improving responses to better manage dryland natural resources, protect and foster pastoral production systems and livelihoods, and preventing droughts from becoming emergencies. This is clear from the proliferation of new programs, from a broad base of donors and with the strong leadership of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) IGAD and commitments from member states. In 2011 IGAD committed to a 15-year program to build long term resilience and end drought emergencies (IDDRSI), which comprises seven priority areas including natural resource and environmental management, market access, disaster risk management and conflict prevention. Most donors now recognize that economic growth in the extensive drylands of the Horn is both important and feasible, but must be done recognizing livestock production is the anchor for economic and ecological resilience, and that regional collaboration is key to ending drought emergencies and conflict. Despite the challenges, countries in the Horn are working more closely together to solve both security and development problems

⁹World 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.

¹⁰ WISP Id; Aklilu, 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.

¹¹ FAO, 2015. *The Impact of Natural Hazards and Disasters on Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security: A Call for Action to Build Resilient Livelihoods*, FAO.

and to strengthen economic ties with their neighbours.

The recent proliferation of resilience and economic growth programmes in the Horn is largely welcome, as they mostly promote integrated programming and collaboration, and are accompanied by a changed understanding of the logic and value of drylands and pastoral livestock production. First is the emphasis on proactive disaster preparedness linked to frameworks of "Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). This means more than just preparing for the next drought but instead linking disaster preparedness to development such as natural resource management plans and livestock market development. It further calls on donors 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.

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 ensured. "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.

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 works¹². Well-implemented land-use planning is being embraced by several countries, including Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia, as a tool to promote agreements over how rangeland resources should be used to support pastoral livelihoods and avoid conflicts. In October 2016 IGAD Ministers endorsed the Regional Biodiversity Policy and resolved to manage transboundary natural resources. The Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) is testing landscape approaches to biodiversity conservation in three respective demonstration sites – between Djibouti and Ethiopia, between Ethiopia and South Sudan, and between Kenya and Somalia.

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 environments¹³. This requires considerable community engagement that draws on local knowledge, perspectives and experiences in developing strategies for reducing risk and building resilience.

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. Access to markets provides pastoralists with needed cash income and employment. Women's groups and pastoralists themselves are becoming more involved in livestock trading, and some "bush markets" are upgrading to key secondary markets (both spontaneously and with donor

¹² 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.

¹³ Roba, G., Gibbons, S. and Mahadi, Y. 2013. *Strengthening natural resource governance in Garba Tula*. IUCN

support)¹⁴.

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.

The need for strengthened regional cooperation and transformative interventions

In the context of economic interconnections between the countries of the region – the linkages and dependencies that feed into and are reinforced by the region’s security dynamics¹⁵ – strengthened regional peacebuilding is needed. Instability in the region could also make it more vulnerable to external destabilisation. Despite the “well-recognized need for strategic and regional peacebuilding efforts that address root causes of conflicts, there is no consensus on what regional peacebuilding means and constitutes of in practical terms”¹⁶. IGAD’s institutional capacity needs to be strengthened to play a more robust role in promoting regional cooperation and stabilisation, and although bilateral and multilateral cooperation among Horn states is on the rise, it remains tepid.

Security responses must be balanced with efforts to strengthen community resilience. To have lasting impact requires not only transformative changes, but change at scale and strengthened regional cooperation, involving actors from government, civil society, international organizations and communities. Investments in transformative change need to address underlying vulnerabilities – systemic socio-political marginalization, structural poverty, environmental degradation and limited economic mobility.

Countries in the region need to build more robust and accountable political structures, and to promote equitable growth, reduce poverty and increase prosperity. A great deal more needs to be done to address social disparities and intercommunal conflicts that drive violence, and 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.

Future engagements to strengthen the economic mainstay of the region and build resilience require 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. There cannot be varied attention to the challenges of economic development in the drylands, based on perceptions about the limited value of arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), which have long been regarded by many as a wasteland and have received limited public or private investment. Drylands do have the potential to be productive. Achieving sustainable development in the drylands has significant implications for reducing poverty and hunger, and there is a real opportunity for the people who live there to prosper. It calls for making the economic case for investing in the sustainable use of natural resources, and recognising the critical importance of resilience in agriculture for food and nutrition security. The productivity of the rangelands is a critical issue as without productive rangelands pastoralists will not support their livestock. While there are certainly examples of well-managed rangelands¹⁷, and much has been written on the need for enabling

¹⁴ Aklilu et al 2013, *op.cit.*

¹⁵ Soliman et al., 2012, *op.cit.*, p. 12

¹⁶ Life and Peace Institute, 2014, *op.cit.*, p. 7

¹⁷ WISP, 2008 *op.cit.*

policies and institutions, the predominant narrative is that rangelands are in crisis and cannot support the livestock population.

There are still areas of concern that risk falling off the policy agenda if they are not advocated for. Many households resident in the drylands still need protection against shocks, as chronic poverty and mal-nutrition plague a sizable portion of the population, and they need cash transfers and other forms of asset protection to help them graduate from poverty. The push for economic growth, largely centred on increase access to and participation in livestock markets, risks bypassing poor producers, who still lack access to information about how market opportunities can benefit them, and need credit and other inputs before they can successfully become commercial producers.

Given that rangelands and livestock production cross national borders their secure management is crucial to enhance regional cooperation for greater regional security. Conflict resolution and peace-building efforts, however, have the least evidence of success, largely due to lack of a comprehensive approach that empowers citizens and links them to governance reform and commitment from state institutions.

It is worth noting that the impacts of future climate change are only slowly being mainstreamed into national and sectoral development programmes and donor interventions. While acknowledging that future climate change poses risks, many interventions and programmes have not yet included significant components on climate change adaptation.

Finally, programs need to gather evidence of their attempts to foster increased integration between risk management, productivity improvements and economic growth grounded in dryland realities.

Another gap is the lack of frameworks to measure the impact of interventions on resilience, demonstrating the value of these new approaches.

Discussion points for Africa Working Group

- How can we better make the economic case for investing in the sustainable use of natural resources and, in particular, for investing long term in drylands? Who are the main role-players that can strengthen the science – policy interface?
- Do you agree that a common vision and a long-term strategy to support pastoralist development and guide plans and investments in the drylands is needed? Who would provide the leadership and what actions are required?
- What examples are there of transformative actions to protect the environment, reduce poverty and strengthen food security? Are there long-term commitments to support these and are the interventions sustainable in the long term?
- In addition to current interventions, what more is needed to enhance coordinated action (through time and across geographic scales) that will strengthen regional cooperation among Horn of Africa countries to build peace and security?
- How could the (several) regional strategies and policies for peace and security be more effectively linked to national or local implementation?
- What are the hindrances to mainstreaming climate resilience into national and sectoral development programmes?

- What is needed for communities and NGOs to better leverage institutional, political and budgets to strengthen local interventions?
- What are the constraints to generating multi-focal area projects that combine financing for climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity and sustainable land management? How can these be overcome?
- Do peacebuilding initiatives have sufficient appreciation for the economic interconnections - linkages and dependencies - between countries of the region which both feed into and are reinforced by the region's security dynamics;
- What more should be done and by whom to promote the Horn of Africa as an attractive investment destination and which could counter perceptions of the region as one characterized by violence and famine?