

Pastoralism and PRSP in Ethiopia: An Epic Note

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In the capacity of Pastoral Expert

Many thanks Madam Chairperson and the title of my presentation is Pastoralism and PRSP in Ethiopia: An Epic Note. I am here in the capacity of Pastoral Expert representing no organ in Ethiopia or elsewhere.

Introduction

Pastoralism is a livelihood system and a way of life for millions citizens in Ethiopia. The pastoral population is heterogeneous in its ethnic composition and social structure comprising about 12% of the 80million total population and inhabiting the majority of the arid and semi-arid parts of the country. Being suffering from all-rounded marginalization, exclusion and policy hurdles, the pastoralists have been relegated in the waiting room of development by the former regimes, and little attention was given to them by development partners and the public. Since recently, however, the pastoralists have received attention of policy makers and public due to political will of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Government and continuous advocacy works of the NGOs and the pastoral activists.

Since 2001, the processes of PRSP in Ethiopia have followed the principles of PRSP (country owned, inclusiveness and participation, result-oriented, etc) with the functional structures and systems in place. The first and second generation of PRSP, named as *Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP)* and *Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)*, have been implemented for the last eight years. Based on the experiences of these PRSPs and the building blocks, the third phase of the PRSP, *Growth and Transformation*, has recently been developed and endorsed by the FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives.

Pastoralism, PRSP and related policies

- ✚ The FDRE Government have political will to develop pastoralists. The FDRE Constitution (1994) ensures the constitutional right of pastoralists not to be displaced from their own lands (Article 40 (3)(5)), rights to fair price to their products (Art. 41(8)), and right for participation. Pastoralists are represented in the Federal and Regional Parliament, and power has been decentralized to Woreda and Kebele levels (the lowest administrative unit) to ensure democracy and good governance in the country. In addition, the Government has recognized the Ethiopian Pastoralist Day (EPD), a multifaceted platform of pastoralist and partners, as a national day.

- ✚ The PASDEP and SDPRP have been responsive to the pastoral policy inputs. Specifically, the PASDEP stipulates that pastoralists are characterized by unpredictable and unstable climatic conditions; inadequate social, economic and institutional developments as well as ecologically fragile environment resulting in frequent calamities (conflict and drought), and food insecurity. Cognizant of these circumstances and considering the uniqueness of the pastoral lifestyle and varied needs, pastoralism was treated in both PRSPs and a range of tailor-made pastoral oriented programs are developed and being implemented. The major program areas include: improving Pastoral Livelihoods and Asset Bases, Basic Social Services, and Institutional Issues. Furthermore, the donor and NGO communities have invested millions of dollars for the pastoral development.
- ✚ Pastoral concerned institutions formation has been given attention, which include establishment of the Pastoral Affairs Standing Committee (PASC) in FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives, the highest organ over sighting pastoral development in the country, and Inter-Ministerial Board, composed Federal level ministries, has been technically advising and supporting pastoral development. In addition, establishments and/or formulation of pastoral institutions like Oromia Pastoral Area Development Commission (OPADC), Bureau of Pastoral Development in SNNP and Gambella, and Pastoral oriented bureaus in the Somali and Afar regional governments can be cited. The NGOs/CSOs and donors are increasing in number, in geographical coverage, and resource mobilization to alleviate poverty in pastoral areas.

Recommendations to the international communities

1. ***Focusing more on pastoral potentials over limitations:*** referring to various capitals of pastoral societies and taking into account the pastoral way of life, it is imperative to reorient the development approach to focus more on pastoral *potentials* (livestock resources, custodians of genetic resources, land, water, energy, etc) than their *limitations* (conflict, drought, food insecurity, land degradation, flood etc).
2. ***Taking pastoral development program as integral part of all development initiatives:*** all levels development plans should integrate pastoral development to ensure sustainable pastoral development.
3. ***Facilitating and supporting regional integrative pastoral development programs (eg. the Horn/the Eastern /western African Level):*** pastoralists dwell in more than one country in the eastern as well as the western Africa regardless of political boundaries. The social, cultural, political and economic ties among the pastoralists have existed for centuries in the area. The development policy should consider the regional context as the pastoralists have many common features. Thus, the international communities have to play a significant role in supporting and initiating regional integrative pastoral programs. Such initiatives will have key contribution to reduce cross-border conflicts, harmonize trading, and create good opportunity for common arching goal-sustainable development for the different pastoral groups in Africa.
4. ***More attention to Climate change:*** the pastoralists are the most affected social groups by impact of climate change in Africa so that sound and localized adaptation and mitigation strategies should be in place. In addition, the pastoralist should get enough information and representation in climate change debates at all levels.

5. ***Acknowledging and supporting CSOs and NGOs working at grassroots levels:*** the assistance to local NGOs and CSOs should be encouraged for the development of long term and holistic programs, and supporting with adequate and reliable fund. In addition, capacity building and financing the existing NGOs in the pastoral communities should take priority.
6. ***Recognition and accreditation of common property right:*** the genetic resources and cultural heritages should be recognized and protected by law.
7. ***Establishing and recognition of Global Pastoralist Day:*** there are more than 200million pastoralist in the globe. Besides the development of international instruments that have been developed and protecting the disadvantaged groups globally, it is advisable to initiate a *Global Pastoralist Day* so that the pastoralists across the globe can voice more and strengthen solidarity. In addition, the day serves platform for pastoralists and partners to exert collective efforts to address common concerns at all level and pursue towards achieving sustainable pastoral development.

Thanks Madam Chairperson!!