

What Makes Conflict A pastoral-Exploring Conflict Resolution Systems among Pastoralist People In Somali Regional State

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Abstract

The research reveal the conflicts among Pastoralist Somalis a in Ethiopia.

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Abstract

Pastoralism is the oldest type of production system that survives and serves millions of people in dry lands of Africa. This system makes livelihoods for 20 percent of Ethiopian population and 85 percent of the total population of Somali Region. The pastoral area is known droughts and livelihood vulnerability of people residing there. The same is true of the impact of conflict common in the area that affected the peoples well being. To the extent that the dominant conception about pastoral people has been equating with conflict since the system operates in scarcity context of hardins Tragedy of commons characterized by competition over resource leading to conflict. Pastoral-conflict equation is also emanates since the system entertains a traditional practice of cattle raiding that fuels conflict among different groups. Yet pastoral conflicts of today are no more limited to competition over resources of pasture and water or caused by the act of cattle raiding per se. But pastoral conflict become very complicated and can only be understood by the multiple variables that can give explanations to the prevailing challenges within the production system and the political context and geographical location in which the system functions. Pastoral societies survived for thousands of years amid their conflict sensitive system owing to the traditional dispute resolution mechanisms they developed and sustained overtime. However this system is becoming obsolete and unable to create equilibrium in the face of emerging challenges that complicated traditional dynamics of conflicts and its resolution. This article presents a primary data about conflict that is destabilizing community's livelihoods focusing on selected boundary districts of Somali regional state. As exploratory study it submits the facts as the community speak and links this with the existing data in the literature and other unpublished related documents.

Key Words: Conflict, Conflict Resolution systems, Pastoralism,Somali Region,Xeer, Ethiopia

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1. Introduction

Conflict has been the feature of all human societies. It has been defined as “a competition by groups or individuals over incompatible goals, scarce resources, or the sources of power needed to acquire them” (Avruch, 2009:11). On the other hand, conflict refers to “either violent dispute or an incompatibility of positions/goals” (Bercovitch et al, 2009:3). In the conceptualization of conflicts, scholars identified the basic features of conflicts. According to Sandole (2008:42-43), “conflict is a process characterized by stages of initiation, escalation, controlled maintenance, de-escalation and some kind of termination including settlement and resolution”. Conflicts, just like as it originated, becomes resolved at some time in due course of the conflict. As Peter Wallensteen (2002:13) argued, conflicts are solvable and there are many and varied experiences of such solutions.

Pastoral areas of Ethiopia and the horn of Africa are among the most vulnerable for violent conflicts due to different factors. The Somali Regional State is the largest pastoral resided areas located in eastern and south-eastern part of Ethiopia. The region has experienced various forms of conflicts, with a multitude of causes, which is resulted in the region to be remained as the most volatile areas of Ethiopia. The region has experienced the impact of both inter-state (Ethio-Somalia war) and intra state conflicts that ragged the horn of Africa for the last 100 years (Richards & Gezu: 2011:7).

In relation to the scarcity context characterizing the dry land nature of the region some of the often used explanation for conflict in the pastoral areas relates to conflict over resources. Put in other words competition over controlling scarce natural resources resulting in violent conflict among different groups (Hagmann, 2003:2). To this end Hagman 2003 identifies “Three ideal type of resource conflicts that can distinguish the dry lands of the Horn of Africa, namely “herder-herder”, “herder-farmer”, and “multiple resource user” conflicts” (Ibid 3). This conception though relevant may be minimalistic to give the real picture concerning and drivers, factors and consequences of conflicts affecting the pastoral communities of Ethiopia and Somali region. This is also partly because conflict is a dynamic issue which’s causes and effects vary depending on a number of circumstance that vary as the time, the place and the political as well as social conditions change.

Accordingly this article buys the conception of conflict as a common aspect of human history, that arise due to a complex set of variables coming together and reinforcing each other at multiple levels and at critical junctures of a country or region’s development (USAID 2005 P1).

As conflicts are the feature of all human societies, people have established different conflict resolution mechanisms at various times in order to ensure their peace and security. Conflict resolution has therefore been the day-to-day practices throughout human history. The practice of conflict resolution is undertaken in order to achieve certain objectives as understood from the following excerpt:-

conflict resolution aims to address causes of conflict and seeks to build new and lasting relationships between hostile parties by helping them to explore, analyse, question and reframe their positions and interests; it moves conflicting parties from the destructive patterns of zero-sum conflict to positive-sum (win-win) constructive outcomes (Omeje, 2008:70).

The research studied and analyzed pastoral conflicts and its resolution in Somali regional state. In due course, it studies the nature, types, causes and impacts of pastoral conflicts; the conflict prone areas and the prevailing mechanisms which enable community to manage and resolve conflicts focusing on the pastoral system dominated weredas of the region.

1.1 The Problem

Inherent in human nature theorized in political science disciplines discussion of state and society such that in the state of nature, a conflict has been the feature of all societies. As a production system and way of life Pastoralism represents a continuation of one of the oldest forms of production trajectory human being practiced for thousands of years. As a primitive subsistence mode of production Pastoralism thrives on exploitation of the gift of nature namely water and pasture. This mode of production mainly depends on strategic mobility by pastoralist groups in search of water and pasture. This mobility of pastoralist in search

of resources creates conflict among different groups making conflict inherent in Pastoral areas and among the pastoral societies. Based on this context for some authors pastoral conflict equates to conflict over natural resources. This conceptualization however is minimalistic and short of capturing the various developments happening within the pastoral production system and the geo political location in which pastoralism (citrus paribus) thrived for millennium.

However despite the inclusion of some notions of conflicts in pastoral areas as a whole, or that focused on pastoral conflicts and its relation with competition for resources of water and pasture in an increasing scarcity context, there has been limited empirical research, which examined the nature and the relationship between pastoralism and conflict viewed in light of the aforementioned conceptualization of conflict as a common aspect of human history, that arise due to a complex set of variables emerging together, reinforcing each other at a different levels and important junctures of a community or a regions development

This study thus makes its first hypothesis that pastoral conflict cannot be understood in isolation of a multitude of factors that is occurring at regional and national as well as global levels that impact the dynamics of human progress as a whole.

The existing literatures and researches fail to investigate pastoral conflicts and its resolution in a comprehensive and context-specific manner. This is still very much the current state-of-the-art, though significant, even if infrequent, evidence-based studies have slowly started to surface.

Based on this the second assumption made here is that pastoral conflict resolution mechanisms that held the system survive archaic conflicts in yesteryears cannot suffice to handle conflicts that are caused by multiple factors some of which are none existence the past.

Therefore, this research informed by the prevailing gap in this regard can be taken as an endeavor to fill this gap by examining the nature and current context of pastoral conflicts in one hand, and the mechanisms which enabled communities to manage and resolve such conflicts in the region on the other.

In order to make these exploration and understanding of the problems the research is derived to find answer to the following questions. What is the current context and dynamics of pastoral conflicts in the region? and what are the underlying causes? Which particular areas in the region face pastoral conflicts frequently and what impact they have? How pastoral conflicts are managed and resolved in the study area? What are the actors, and their roles, in the resolution of pastoral conflicts in the region? To what extent did the existing mechanisms address pastoral conflict? What would be the short-term and long-term solutions for pastoral conflicts in the study area?

1.2. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to answer the research questions in a way that helps better understanding of Pastoralism and conflict nexus. In a way that this would enable for meeting major objective of examining pastoral conflicts and its resolution in Somali regional state. Thereby making specific focus to analyze the nature, types and current trends of pastoral conflicts, Study the underlying causes and impacts of pastoral conflicts in Somali regional state, identify the conflict prone areas which experienced pastoral conflicts frequently and examine the different aspects of impacts of conflict on the community, investigate the mechanisms used for managing and resolving pastoral conflicts in the region and make policy suggestion for preventive and reactive ways that would enable actors to address pastoral conflicts in the study area.

1.3. Geographic and Demographic background of Somali Regional state

Somali Region falls under arid and semiarid agro-ecological and climatic zones. The climate is mostly arid/semi-arid in lowland areas and cooler/wetter in the higher areas. Annual rainfall ranges from 150 - ~600mm per year (Gu' March April and May Deyr September, October and November (Need Study, 2005). The way of life in the region is a reflection of the coping strategies adopted by its inhabitants to meet the challenges of a harsh and fragile ecosystem. The livelihoods of most Ethiopian-Somalis primarily revolve around animal husbandry. They are mainly transhumance pastoralists and agro-pastoralists engaged in

livestock production or a mix of livestock and cash crop and production. The pastoral mobile way of life serves as an adaptive strategy to the complex ecological system of the area. With change in the global and regional climatic condition and other indigenous and exogenous factors pastoralism alone are no more the only source of income and means of sustenance to the community in the region. A considerable segment of the population has already been shifted to agro-pastoralism.

The Somali regional state is one of the nine ethnically delineated regions created in the post 1991 government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It is the second of largest regions of Ethiopia which has an estimated area of 279,252 km². The region has an estimated total population of 5,300,000 CSA (2013). Generally over 90 % of the region's populations trace their ethnic background to Somali (proper soomal). Administratively Somali region is divided into 11 Zones namely Fafan, Jarar, Korahay, Shabeele, Liban Afder, Dolo, Siti, Nogob, Erar and Dawa. Within this 11 zones there are a total of 93 districts. The region has also a total of 6 city administrations: Jigjiga (capital city of the region) kebridahar, Godey, Dhegahbour, and two newly added in 2016 Kebribayah and Wajaale. On the previous 9 zones by the year 2016 two zones namely Errar and Dawa zones are added (Miftah 2016).

The region is adjacent to Oromiya and Afar regions of Ethiopia and shares international borders with Djibouti, Somalia and Kenya. The Region is geographically far from the more developed parts of the country and is economically less integrated with the center.

1.4. Methodology

The study was conducted on the basis of qualitative research method. This is due to the fact that qualitative research enables to study social phenomena's in a holistic manner. Qualitative research "takes place in the natural setting in which the researcher, being the key instrument of the study, often goes to the site (home, office) of the participant to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants" (Creswell, 1998:186). In addition, this research is an exploratory and empirical one which is undertaken based on experience and observation of the researcher about the issue. As an exploratory study, the research does not prove or test hypothesis rather it seeks to explore and investigate the nature, causes and impacts of pastoral conflicts; the conflict prone areas and the prevailing mechanisms which enable to manage and resolve pastoral conflicts in Somali regional state.

1.5. Data Collection Strategies

The research used different data collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected using qualitative tool of key informant interviews, focus group discussion and observation. The Secondary data sources collected are mainly from unpublished conflict assessment report documents. The research reviewed varied relevant literatures regarding conceptual, theoretical and practical aspect of pastoral conflicts and its resolution. Thus far reference of materials in grey sources such as books, journals, articles, government policy documents, reports were instrumental.

In the qualitative aspect the plan was to cover wider population through interview and group discussion covering at least four districts. However due to conflicts and closing up of roads the possible action taken by the researcher was to locate at a hub town and contact accessible persons for the interview. Thus the Interview is conducted with knowledge governors who have rich experience on pastoral conflicts and its resolution. The focus group discussions were made with community leaders and individual informants.

Four groups discussion each with eight individuals materialized. Participants in the group discussion and interview session were the elderly, officials working at the governments local administration set ups, the community and religious leaders, youth. Interview of key informants with 10 elders

Project Funding

This research project was funded by Jigjiga University as part of annual research grant delivered to academicians based on competition.

Declaration of ethical and consent of the individuals involved

This project was part of annual research series award of Jigjiga University. Accordingly the whole project has passed through a depth scrutiny of both internal and external evaluators. This implies that the research's proposal was approved by the universities committee for research ethics. And the data collection was supported by official letter that requested the consent of all informants and individuals as well as organizations involved. As such this research is printed and submitted to Jigjiga University for internal report sake. So it does not have any ethical violation problem and the research has no conflict of interest.

II Part Two :- Causes of Conflict in Pastoral Areas

2.1 Economic Drives of Conflict

In the literatures of conflict study economy is an important variable expressed mostly in terms of deprivation of it or poverty .A growing number of researchers interested in how factors such as poverty, negative economic growth, unemployment, and corruption may fuel societal discontent since stagnant economic growth correlate with the emergence of civil unrest in many developing low income countries.

The pastoral areas of Ethiopia have been marginalized for centuries thus there is a huge gap or difference in the level socio economic development .According to community leaders pastoral conflicts are derived by economic factors such as generating incomes through controlling of positions and possessions. Economic need drives and motivates individuals and groups of a given pastoral community, an ethnic group, or clan member achieve their targets of possessing property. When it is within the same region or with groups residing in different neighboring regions groups loot others livestock of camels and cattle's through raiding. Traditionally such an act of crime has been solved through customary laws or reciprocity. So this aspect of raiding is what is traditionally seen as source of conflict that is common in the pastoral production. Thus continued practice of looting created gaps between groups, spread hatred among groups and has been source of violent conflicts occurring in the area.

Conflict over Natural Resource

This is another aspect of economic driver for conflict. This typology of conflicts is the one referred as common conflict inherent in pastoral production system which is characterized by scarcity context. In yester years in this area temporary conflicts occurs between groups competing for access and use of resources of pasture and water. However since recent decades due to drought, increasing resource scarcity and ever shrinkage resources base made the conflict over water points and grazing and farmland a common cause of conflict in the study area. This type of conflict occurs especially during droughts and dry seasons when the nutritional conditions of livestock are generally compromised. The limitations of the grazing land resources and the subsequent competition over it often lead to violent conflicts between different pastoralist groups and clans roaming in the study areas.

Socio-Cultural Sources of Conflict

Most of the people residing in the pastoral production depend on primordial affiliation as a social and political institution through which ones status and security is determined as well as protected. An individual clan member is guaranteed with economic, social and physical security for being born into the clan and has thus an obligation to defend the clan's interest. Within this system resources are used following certain patterns and depending on traditional resources uses means mostly of communal in nature. Communal resource use that follows rule of the commons sometimes creates conflicts between individuals. The clan system defines an offense to an individual member as an offense to the entire clan. It follows that individuals conflict brings the entire clans into violent conflict with another clan. Therefore, conflicts between individuals are easily transformed into entire ethnic conflicts. This typology is common in the region. Example, of this type of conflict was the conflict between Rayitu and Shekash that occurred in the year 1994 when a murder of a student by one of this group led to a full-fledged conflict involving whole clan (PCU 2001).

The Prevalence of Small Arms

The prevalence of small arms in the pastoral areas ameliorates the risk of violence. Many writers on pas-

toral areas including Getachew, Lister, Hagmann and Deveraux mentioned “proliferation of firearms from a local dealer and or the influx of small arms and weapons which are illegal as aggravating factor for conflict in pastoral areas. Likewise, the study areas Somali boundary districts have small arms as they are pastoralist/agro-pastoralists society. Most people arm themselves primarily for the purpose of self-defense; given the potential for clan and non-clan based conflict inherent in the pastoral way of life. The inability of the local governments to protect individuals life and property makes individual, family and clan to ensure their own protection. On the top of this lie pastoralists - realist believe of a world as a place of anarchy where there is security dilemma and the imperative of building ones military capacity to survive. Thus far the majority of pastoral groups attach great importance to the ownership of semi-automatic rifles. In this sense the availability and the prevalence of arms contributes to accelerated escalation towards widespread violent conflict in pastoral areas.

Conflict Among Different Clan Groups Living In The Same Region

A point of addition is that conflict among different clan groups living in the same region and within elongated areas crossing two regions. This is a case that has been partly affected by the political dynamics of development that has happened in the past and the subsequent effect this has had on determining cross border population movement. This has to do with exodus of a group of people from Ethiopia to Somalia and from Somalia to Ethiopia due to conflict raging the horn of Africa since the early years of post independence period. Mention in this case is the Ethio-Somalia wars of the 1970s that resulted in the exodus of Somalis and Oromo peoples to Somalia fearing punishment from the Ethiopian government side.

So with regime change in Ethiopia in 1991 and state collapse in Somalia we had the second wave of exodus of people mostly returnees to Ethiopia fleeing Somalia. It follows that conflict arises when a group of people make such claim as “we were settling in this particular area in the past and this is our traditional grazing area so we have right to graze and settle” .Such claims and counter claims has been source of conflict in the early decades following state collapse in Somalia and subsequent exodus of refugees and returned people in to Somali region. In this category is for instance conflict between Gare and Borena, Marehan and Borena and Degodiya, Shekash and Ogaden clans, Afar and Issa, Hawiya and Issa clans. In other cases conflict happens among sub-clans. Some of sub clans within Somali region who are with no specific kebele, district or zone of their own defined based on the new regional arrangement. That this groups often feel alienated, marginalized hence become more vigilant in demanding their own particular place of residence a quest for recognition and own space.

Common to the above cases of inter clan conflict within same regions or between clans in different regions is a clear presence of conflict of interest. It is also characterized by claims and having evidences or justifications for each group’s claims and position on the conflicting agenda. As ethnic group start mobilizing their people and form informal organizations there emerges narratives of ones unique identity to justify their cause. However there is high level of differences between each case when it comes to the specific scenarios attached to each particular case. The frequency of the conflict, level of clash, number of parties involved, extent of the loss incurred, the success and failure of each case differs. In some of these cases some groups become losers due to their numerical disadvantage and the customary communal land tenure system that didn’t recognize their right to have land settlement as community. Shekash Quest for district in part of Somali region has been a good example in this regard. This case was contentious and has had big consequence on the loss of human life and productive asset among the fighting groups around Raso area during the 1990s. The demand of this group however has delivered result of creation of a district in raso.

In the other case the issue has to do with the exodus of refugees and returnees to Somali region following collapse of Somalia as a state. In this group also there are different cases. For instance the case of The Borena and Gare conflict is one sub category. Where following the exodus of returnees and refugees from Somalia in to Ethiopia people settled in traditional grazing areas near bordering Oromia and Somali region. In this place as seen in the literature the Borenas blame the Gare for expanding and occupying their grazing land while the Gares also extend their own argument. Making value Judgement about which group is right or wrong is beyond the scope of this analysis hence the research abstain from making emotive statements or

quotes in this regard. However the case in this group shows that the Gare Ethnic Somali groups were able to establish their own place of abode in the region. They were able to use all possible tactics and efforts to establish district at Hudet first and today their number of districts are reached four included are Mubarak, and above all able to create their own zone called Dawa zone within Somali region.

A similar typology of conflict but that occurred in different time and context in pastoral areas of Ethiopia is the case of Afar-Issa conflict. This conflict has been taken by some as purely pastoral conflict. Others consider it as ethnic conflict and by other writers as both pastoral and ethnic conflict. Markakis (2003, 447) for instance identified the Afar-Issa conflict case to involve an aspect of pastoral conflict characterized by competition over natural resource and or one group expanding to access more pasture and water resources in the following quote:-

Since the beginning of the colonial period the Afar have been pushed northwards by their Somali neighbours who outnumber them three to one within Ethiopia. The spearhead of the Somali expansion, as the Afar see it, is the Ise clan, who now occupy Shinile zone in the Somali regional state—— Within Ethiopia, the Ise pushed the Afar from Dire Dawa northwards to claim the eastern portion of the Alighedi plain and came within sight of the Awash river; which the Afar believe is the Ise ultimate goal . Markakis2003:447)

More importantly Markakis makes a critical comment on the above quoted Afar-Issa conflict. Reflecting on his comment have been found vital for putting pastoral conflict in Ethiopia in to perspective. According to him an array of intricate factors, manmade and natural affect the nature of conflict making it difficult to label a given conflict in this context as a purely pastoral or not. This was well illustrated in the following quote:

Unravelling the fabric of this dispute, we become aware that many threads are woven to form an intricate pattern. Tracing some of them to their origin, we venture not only outside the present time, but also to places and events beyond the pastoralist domain. We realise that that external forces play a significant and sometime decisive role in events within the pastoralist zone, conflicts included. To paraphrase Marx, the history of the pastoralists is not all their own making.

In addition to the above cases the community response to the cause for pastoral conflict in the study area the respondents pointed out wrong attitude and or mutual misunderstanding –wrong perception- what they call it in Somali *aragtida qalad* as cause for violent conflict . The first aragtida qalad emanates from racism among the Somali tribes themselves. This involves such claims as we are known as this clan (REER HEBEL) and we belong to this land, we used to reside in it hence the land belongs to us alone. This creates sense of exclusion and belongingness resulting in conflict between different groups with each its own belongingness and ownership of an area creating a sense of hatred among people.

This problem and complication and claiming of an area called kebele has rooted in the aforementioned historical and political development that shaped the horn of Africa in general and the pastoral communities living in the study area in particular. That many people who were grazing in the past in different part of the region have left the area for reasons such as the Ethio-Somalia war and the distributive disruptive impact this has had on the pastoral communities. This is including exodus in to neighboring countries like Somalia of people living their traditional grazing areas following the outbreak of the conflict and fear of political repression by the military regime afterwards. With state collapse in Somalia, in the year 1991 and the change in regime in Ethiopia, people of returnee and refugees engulfed the region. So when the latter try to graze and settle they are told that they don't belong to the area and have no right to graze or settle. Moreover respondents also mentioned that with the new ethnic based arrangement people living in Somali region and people of ethnic Somali background residing in the regions territory are Ethiopian Somalis but the issue of exclusion and belongingness or ownership of grazing land is creating conflict hence can be taken as the main cause for pastoral conflict in the pastoral areas of Somali region.

In the second strand is conflict with neighboring districts of Oromia over land and water point access among other economic/ political factors mentioned above. In this regard most informants emphasized that elite's involvement on the issue to pursue their own interest as major accelerator of conflict between neighboring

districts and people. The community mentioned the economic drive behind pastoral conflict in the area to be related to struggle to control pasture and water points which are the modus operandi upon which the pastoral economic enterprise is founded. Access and control of strategic trading routes has also been cited as another economic driver.

Cattle Raiding

Cattle raiding and individual killings are other factors that contribute to aggravating conflict among Borena, Arsi and Gabbra clans of Oromo ethnic and Garri, Degodi, Marahan, Gabbra and Gura clans of Somali ethnic . This is particularly true during drought times, when the pastoralist communities have to move their livestock further afield to access resources. Linked to this, is increasing access to small firearms. It is increasingly normal for pastoralists to carry small arms to protect their family and livestock from attacks by wild animals and cattle raiders. Nevertheless, when conflict occurs between different ethnic clans and groups, the access to arms changes the intensity and levels of violence of conflict and creates extreme insecurity.

The cattle raiding is made for two reasons first it is carried out to gain assets of livestock's. This is usually accomplished by gang groups with chain with office holders working locally . Secondly it is undertaken to create grievance between different groups mostly neighboring communities. The victims, whose livestock's are looted who attach high value to cattle's, mostly revenge at least by taking proportional action against any member or close relative of raider's.

Unfinished issues and Pocket Kebeles

As mentioned above referendum was conducted over contentious kebeles of Oromia and Somali regions in the year 1999. As a whole that Referendum has resolved a considerable case of the violent conflict emanated from territorial claim between the two regions. As a result of referendum some of the pocket kebeles were created between Filtu and Liban districts in the study areas. These kebeles are Harro and Goofa Ambo in which Filtu district of Somali region won the referendum and their location were inside Liban districts of Oromia region.

Lack of clear decision on how to administer these pocket areas become source of tension between Filtu and Liban districts in which the community live in these kebeles devoid of development due to the stretch between the two districts and zones. There is vague on how to administer these pocket kebeles. Even though there exist understanding between the two regional governments on how to administer these pocket kebeles and yet decision was not reached precisely to the districts and zones. This gap created source of friction between these areas to handle the conflicts.

Lack of Awareness and Poor Conduct

Leaders play decisive role in restoring the relationships between and among the neighboring community as well as enhancing the development along the boundary districts of the two regions. Community usually follows the footsteps of their leaders/person in charge of them. The levels of understanding the Laws of the land i.e Ethiopian Constitution determine the way the structure of the state implement the laws/respect and enforce the constitution. However, some of the structures at districts and lowest levels of administration lack the knowledge how to strengthen the brother hood of the neighboring community and help to develop tolerance and coexistence under the constitutional umbrella.

Lack of knowledge/skills at these levels of administration would create gaps and become sources of injustice that affects the outlook of the community those lived together in areas. These perceptions at administrative levels create friction between ethnic clans that lead into exclusion of one another in resource utilization/social affairs. On the contrary, lack of the development activities to quench the need of the communities other factors that exacerbated the conflicts. These areas were deprived of development during the previous regimes and required huge investment. Moreover, there exist disparities in infrastructure provision that would increase grievance at the community levels.

3. Discussion: Pastoral Conflict and Pastoral Conflict Resolution in Liben Zone of ESRS

The current situation and dynamics in the Pastoral conflicts?

According to respondents on the condition of the pastoralist community in the area, the livelihoods situation of the pastoralist community today is of mixed character. In the one hand the community is living in a condition of problem related to scarcity of water for livestock and human consumption. There is acute lack of water in this area. Because of this the pastoral communities in the rural areas exposed to conflict. This happens when for example in the boundary districts and areas of Somali region Liben zone with Guji zone and Borena residing areas people come in contact as they are fetching for water.

Mostly the lack of water is serious in the side of Somali region in this area and the water is available in areas under Oromia regions administrative tiers. And the pastoral communities cross boundaries to find water for cattle. This creates conflict among users of the water points. So conflict over resource specially that of water is the number one source of conflict among the pastoral communities residing in the border areas of the two regions with respective zones and Districts mentioned above. So the community's response is in conformity with the research findings on the nature of security and conflict in pastoral areas as a whole and that of Somali region in particular. That resource based conflicts are not new to the Somali region. According to a UNDP study of the Somali region, cited by regional gap analysis document there were about 24 active resource based clan conflicts in the Somali region in 2005 alone (UNDP 2005 Cited In Need Assessment 2014).

The other point raised by respondents was the issue of territorial expansion of one group to another a condition expressed by the Somali word (isixrix). This literally translates as competition over and pushing to control more land. This conflict has two manifestations. In the first strand this land expansion motive conflict has been reported to occur between people from one district blaming people from the other neighboring district or kebele within the same region with different tribal settlement identity pushing for territorial expansion. In this typology the reference is best exemplified by the conflict occurring between the Borena and Arsi clans around Negelle Borena or between Degodiya and Merhan clans in Liben zones of Somali region. In the three adjacent districts of Raaso (Afer Zone), Lagahidda and Salahad (Nogob Zone) tensions are simmering between clans of the Shekhash Clan and Rer-Abdille Bali sub-clans, of the Ogaden Clan could be included as examples of this typology of conflict over quest for more lands by one group over the other (PCU 2009).

In the second string of reasons of land acquisition and or the claim for access to land resulting in conflict between different groups refers to the counter blaming and conflict of people living in district or kebele of two different regions say Oromia- and Somali regional states. In this typology the conflict and fear of conflict between the Arsi clans in bale area of Oromia region conflicting with the Gura clan in -Somali regions or the Borena Oromo clashing with Marehan Somalis, The Raitu Oromo disputing with Rer -Mahamud and Amadin in Fiq zones in Somali region and many similar examples can be mentioned as example. The headline and or main cause cited for the above case is usually referred to be pursuit for land expansion and occupying pasture.

According to many informants the expansion issue is one of the most occurring causes of conflict between the pastoralist communities today. This is also aggravated by the lack of clearly demarcated or delineated land or boundary that divides between people from different regions and the same region but between different district settlers. This gap has made the issue a bone of contention among different groups demanding for more grazing lands based on own justification resulting in conflict.

Responding to the current security and peace environment in Somali region respondents reflected that the security condition by now is very good in Liben zone of Somali region and there is no any big security challenge. However there is the fear for conflict to happen between communities living in Somali region boundary districts with its Oromia counterpart. This fear has also to do with the issue of unfinished aspect of the referendum held in previous year (1997E.C) between the two regions boundary districts and communities. So the community emphasized that this unfinished issue is the source of fear of conflict and potential point of dispute that could cause conflict in the area at any time.

The other security related threat emphasized by respondents is the anomaly in the climatic condition resulting in lack of rain and subsequent effect this may result in drought condition.

The question whether any conflict has happened in the study area within the past five years was responded by most as yes. Conflict was reported to happen within the region and among different groups residing in Liben zone. To this end the cited conflict was the conflict that has happened between people living in Dheka-suftu area. According to informants the conflict was happened in the newly created district called locally Dheka Suftu. The immediate cause for the conflict was reported to be the difference and disagreement on the designation of the name of the district. Whether the district should be named after hisuftu-a kebele in the side of the way to Filtu or it should follow Dheka a relatively recently established center located between Liben district of Oromia and Filtu of Liben zone.

The designation per se alone is not the main issue of the conflict but the designation will have its own implication on the role of the tribal clan groups predominantly residing in each of the settlements vis Haisuftu and Dheka. Dheka is basically a flourishing young settlement mostly resided by Marehan Somali clan while Haisuftu is predominantly roomed by the Degodiya clan.

This typology of conflict for having a group its own space the question of how much to gain from the cake, the state provides its citizens has a lot to do with the change in the political dynamics in the national level and the subsequent change in political representation at local regional and national level. That is to say, in post 1991 Ethiopia a new political and administrative structure was erected. Change from unitary form of government to a federal structure that made its modus operandi delicate identity variables namely ethno linguist affinities as criteria for ones identification. As elsewhere in Ethiopia rural community, the new political structure altered the reality of who gets what by bringing new players in to the field of local government.

It is oblivious that the state provides its fruit to its citizens in different mechanisms. Through provision of services, protection and creating enabling environment for citizens ensure a decent living environment. In both pre colonial and post independence Africa states access to state power and authority has been seen (it is) as the means for obtaining the biggest share from the fruits provided by the state to its citizens. This common political scenario is more applicable to explain the situation of what has happened in Ethiopia in general and that of the pastoral areas of the country in particular in post EPRDF era. Where with regime change and introduction of a federal arrangement based on ethno-linguistic variable we had the emergency of regional states formed based on ethnicity.

In this condition representation at any level puts in to considerations ones belongingness to an ethnic and clan group. At regional level the proto type of this arrangement will definitely be based on cascading the issue to in to the lower level of identity formation. Clan is the main variable in this regard. Sometimes this is followed by consideration to sub clan. Other times, consideration of sub-sub-clan in calculation of elections or representations at all tiers of government ranging from kebele the lowest unit of authority in Ethiopia, to the federal level.

In this political context it sounds pragmatic for communities to find kebeles and districts based on which they can send their representatives to regional and federal parliament and gain access to state power and resources.

So at the verge of the creation of a new district in this part of the region there emerged bigger conflict between the two clans. According to informants this conflict was happened two times.

The conflict was later on settled instantly through efforts of an initiative that brought together the government's bodies' and various stakeholders together to resolve conflict occurring in the area. The key stakeholders involved were the elders, Garades (Community leaders of Somali clans), peace searching people also called in Somali Nabad doons (Peace Searchers), the Somalis of Liben zone also known as Digodia clans leader locally known as WOBERKI/ Wober-and other notable individuals, governmental workers working at district and zonal administrative and political positions and or security personnel's working both at zonal

and district to kebele level of the adjacent districts of the Oromia and Somali regions . According to informants of the study with continuous discussion the issue was peacefully settled. After that there was no any conflict happened in the district.

The conflict was characterized by night attacks, cattle raids, burning of houses causing a lot of damages. The conflict between the people living in the same region and zone fighting over territory have also happened between people living in Mubarak district and Filtu district of Liban Zones of Somali Region. So in this cases the community noted that the type of the conflict known and happened in the study area was conflict over water resource access, conflict over land expansion related and conflict that happened with the creation of new district. While the conflict on the district creation is settled and not recurring, the conflict over land expansion and scarcity of water seem to recur though in small magnitude and conditionally. So the conflict happening in this area could be classified as the traditional pastoral conflict over access to water points and pasture lands in general and the emergency of a relatively new variable:-conflict over controlling political space at districts or kebeles newly created in particular.

Bigger and Smaller Issues in Pastoral Conflict

Bigger issues are issues that may lead in to community level conflict between two clans may include:

- Looting of livestock /raiding cattle :-For looting cattle returning the cattle and followed by punishment for the action on different kind
- Molesting or attacking of womens:-This leads to violent conflict. For harming women compensation (sabayin) paid in kind i.e cattle
- Murder :When a person killed all people come together to settle the issue traditionally and prevent escalation into conflict.

In case of murder the killer will be hunted. And when caught he will be transferred to the police. First step in the process is subein, followed by kerfan then dugti then comes blood money collection to be paid to the family of the diseased .Once the blood money is paid after that settlement made and conflict is solved.

The Best Way of Conflict Settlement

The best scenario in conflict resolution among pastoralists is when the elders take the issue as seriously and engage in to and settle it. The informants emphasized the way in which mediators are treated as determining factor in the process of conflict resolution process among the pastoralists. They noted that if the elders or community leaders and influential people who are involved in the conflict settlement process are not shown respect, and or if they are not treated in well manner in the due process this may bring another problem let alone solve conflict.

Factors Affecting Conflict Resolution Efforts

In the literature it is purported that a couple of obstacles undermine the effort for peace building and conflict resolution in pastoral areas. According to informants to the study the conflict resolution task may be endangered by for example if the conflicting issue is not properly settled. It was found that the presence of unsettled dispute as an aggravating factor for escalation and re escalation of pastoral conflicts. Besides unsettled conflicts make any conflict settlement issue difficulty and complicated. If compensation and blood money is not paid in the previous time this brings problem on any settlement endeavor dealing with new conflicts. This will also result in re-escalation of violent conflict and jeopardizes the tendency for ensuring stability in the pastoral area.

The participants in various group discussion made in this regard also identified lack of soft skills and practical knowledge of resolving and prevention of conflicts at local administration level as a problem that undermine efforts of conflict resolution at locality level. Low level of development hence weak local administration capacity is the other challenge identified. On the top of these is the local politicians and people in the administrative apparatus who play destructive role in the peace process by aggravating the situations and fuel the grievance between the community.

More importantly informants also raised the existence of anti-peace elements in the society. This people are reported to include mostly those individuals and groups that are from wax and wane between two districts in two countries or regions/neighbouring countries and use their ethnic/group identity often to increase tension between two groups . These actors also have different interests in conflict. The conflict in Borena and Liben zone is mainly characterized by the involvement of such individuals. The same is true of the persisting conflict in Hudet and sometimes in Moyales districts of Somali region bordering with Oromia region in Ethiopia.

In summery the major causes of conflicts between different ethnic groups in pastoral areas are identified by most informants to include: disputes over political and administrative boundaries and borders (between regions/zones), competition over resource, ethnic or clan rivalries, weakness of governance and rule of law structures, communal revenge attacks, cattle raids and counter-raids. Of these, differences over political and administrative boundaries are the most important factor in conflicts between the Borana and the Garre,Merihana,Digodiya and Borena ,Guji and Arsi,Bale while ethnic rivalries and revenge are the most important factor as between Marehan and Borena .

While contention over familiar resources such as land, water, and access routes still figures prominently in pastoralist conflict, newly introduced resources have become additional bones of contention— The multifarious nature of resources that become objects of contention, as well as the extraneous origin and control of some of these, pose a serious obstacle to conflict resolution effort (Markakis 2003,447)

Where Does Most Conflict Occur in liben Zone

Mostly conflict occurs in boundary areas with neighboring region

Within the past five years at least five conflicts has occurred

Conflict doesn't show change in the magnitude and participants

Impact of The Conflicts In The Area

Conflict can't bring good result. Once happened something bad is the usual result of conflict:-Properties destroyed, Houses burned, People displaced, Cattle looted, People and Livestocks killed.

Table 2. Impact of Conflict

Impact Of Conflict On Household Level identified by participants
Displacement of people
Commodity loss
Bad community relation
Impact on women and children who mostly suffer from conflict
How Much Was The Impact of The Conflict Occurred in The Area
Large scale people displacement
Problem to access water from rivers due to hampered relations limiting peoples and livestock mobility.

Table 3. Actors in Conflict Resolution

Major Actors In Conflict Resolution mentioned by respondents Are
Regional governmental structures of government
The elderly
The youth group
The women
Peace needing elders-NABADOONS
Ugases
Wober:-Clan leaders of the degodia somalis

Attempts at Conflict Resolution

Various efforts have been made to find lasting solutions to the conflicts in pastoral areas. The EPRDF government has taken a range of measures that include establishment of local level administrative frameworks mandated to resolve inter-ethnic conflict, and decentralization policy to empower people at grass roots. Although these efforts have resolved some problems, many conflicts still persist in many places, most of them involving pastoral communities.

What They Do

What Does Actors In Peace Building Do?

According to the informants the specific tasks the concerned actors in conflict resolution in the study area undertake involve the following steps. First when information is received about conflict or pre-conflict situation they go to the place. Talk to the people/disputant. The losses have been counted/ audited. Different conflict preventing tasks are done. Before the first bullet is fired. A lot of works done continuously to prevent previous conflict do not occur again. A lot of work is usually done for maintaining peace gained through settlement.

CITATION

Method Employed by the Community to Solve Conflict

Modern approaches used in conflict resolution and peace building in the pastoral areas

The different structures that stretched at the grass root level for serving the purpose of conflict resolution are institution such as courts, prosecutor and people working in local security set ups (mainly kebele council), the police and local government. These institutions contribute in maintaining peace and order at the grass root level by enforcing legal procedures and constitutional rights. However the task of law enforcement in this area is not fully functional because of three core reasons . First reason is related to the poor institutional capacity and developmental challenges characterising the area. That law enforcement is affected negatively by the poor level of socio –economic and political, institutional and technological development in pastoral areas. Secondly also related to the first is the dominance of the tradition all aspects of the local community. Pastoralists use traditions in their day to day activities. Traditional way is thus what most people use to peace building and conflict resolution thus few people adhere to use the modern state apparatus and security set ups to solve conflict. Thirdly may be related to the aforementioned factors is the lack of confidence and commitment among the persons who are there to enforce law and order such as Judges, police and the militia.

The Traditional System

As mentioned before briefly in the above discussions among the pastoral Somalis, there is a traditional institution that has strong impact on conflict resolution and peace building. According to the informants the traditional system is a system practiced for hundreds and thousands of years and inbuilt with the culture and believe of the pastoralist communities. The traditional approach is thus has full acceptance by people compared to the modern ways. Due to the social and cultural make up of pastoralist community, they have strong obedience and norms of reciprocity that have paramount effects to handle/manage and resolve violent conflicts. From these systems is the broadly and popularly referred traditional conflict resolution system among Somalis is called the Xeer system. In the following paragraphs important aspects of the xeer system will be discussed in the next unit.

The Her (XEER) System

Her proper Xeer refers to shared Somali conflict resolutions mechanism based on precedents between clans. For example in settling a dispute based on the death of someone, Xeer have been evoked to determine the amount that might be due to the family of the diseased based on past incidents involving the same clans. For person killed blood money has been paid. There is procedure of paying the compensation acceptable

among conflicting parties. Where for every matter a council of elders sits and discuss for resolution. If the problem is bigger, complicated and becomes beyond the capacity of xeer to settle it then it usually been taken to the governmental body such as the court and security office.

However Somalis elsewhere are people who share same culture, language, and religion (taken from speech of Samatar in March 2019 at Jigjiga University) as such most of conflicts are solved through traditional methods than otherwise. Tradition is that governs Somali pastorals elsewhere including in Ethiopia. What exactly happens is that when a conflict situation occurs a series of meetings will usually be held based on traditional rules.

For instance when someone harmed first he will be taken to treatment place and after that via elders' intervention the problem will be settled. Most of conflicts in pastoral areas are solved through this tool of sitting together of elders locally called nabadonada mostly consists of people of dignity, religious Knowledge, strong warriors, community mobilizes, orators, and people that have the most influence on mobilizing resources and the local community as a whole.

The *guurti* is another traditional institution but recently semi formalized as the governing authorities in Somali region tried to use them alongside the modern bureaucracy. *Gurti* consists of the elderly person's play a number of social and political responsibilities which also include serving as judge and jury and their decisions are largely adhered to and respected. According to the discussion made at the regional level with members of the Gurti council in Somali region, the functions of the Gurti includes:

The traditional institutions function based on certain principles embedded in the community's cultural religious and ways of life. This includes the principle of reciprocity and good faith to ethical and moral values , prescribed by each a certain sequence of conflict management mechanisms to be employed. At higher and clan level jurisprudence acceptable by members as means of conflict resolution and natural resource exploitation and management. Adherence to the traditional mechanism is very high and deviating from the prescribed mechanisms, rarely happens as largely due to the strong peer pressure in place and societal expectations inculcated in them. The traditional unwritten norms are the most important peace maintaining tool as it mostly emphasizes in preventing of disputes from happening and if happens prevention from escalating into wider conflicts.

According to the informants the biggest task in the traditional approach is maintaining peace accord reached between the communities so as not to return back to escalation again. Cease fire or in Somali Dagaal joojis which literally translates in English as "cease conflict" is also identified as the second most important aspect of the process.

Which Is Best Way to resolve conflict among the pastoralists? The Traditional or Modern Ways?

According to my informants and my observation mostly the pastoralist people live in rural, remote areas isolated from mainstream political and economic developments of their country, if not the world. It follows that most of their problems are settled through traditional means. Responding to the question of what are short and long term conflicts solving mechanisms? The respondents emphasized such issues as dealing with murder case to take long time to solve. In murder case the discussion and dialogue process takes a long time. It takes days and months to finish the compensation process. Once the deal is reached an agreement is made between the disputants the next task is usually discussing the terms of payments of blood money. The payment may be made in different phases. It just depends on certain circumstance that is traditionally acceptable for prolonging the time and terms of payments for blood compensations for murder. This condition includes the time and environmental conditions in which the specific murder case is solved. Whether the murder happens in Gu i.e dry times or Jilal or wet times determines the speed of compensation payment. This morally laden concession obviously functions based on the principle of good faith and reciprocity.

Suggestions

What are Suggestions for better Settlement of Conflicts?

Working on influential local community elders/leaders, civil society organization and other key stakeholders would help creation of enabling environment to sustain peace in the study areas.

- Government should made arrangement to solve conflict between neighboring people
- Solve water shortage/school/development challenges that create grievance and sense of aggression one group against the other to survive.
- Respect for the supremacy of the law and not release criminals like person who commit homicide
- Stop killing people based on identity differences such as regional belongingness
- Create enabling conditions for settled people stay more in resettlement areas because people are leaving their place in search for water

Peace is very important thing which is in the hand of God as such it must be maintained by the efforts of all actors concerned.

Informants also identified lack of capacity on the part of local peace structures as a constraint to sustainable peace. Peace structures were said to lack capacity in terms of finance or logistics to effectively monitor conflict situations, identify early warning indicators and make appropriate rapid responses and interventions. Even local administrative structures of many of the districts in conflict prone areas studied lack institutional capacity, and are thus not in a position to provide support for community based peace building arrangements.

Conclusion

Pastoral conflict does not occur in isolation of other variables that explain conflict in any of other production systems including farming. The pastorally dominated Somali Region in Ethiopia has seen political instability with implication for slowing development pace in the past. Global warming and climate change hence Persistent droughts affected availability of water and pasture: the supply up on which the rural pastoralist community's livelihoods heavily dependent.

Although conflict is said to be inherent in Pastoralism characterized by mobility and communal use of scarce resources resulting in conflict, in the post EPRDF period the areas conflict has dramatically changed. When federalism bestowed pastoralists the right to govern their affairs in Ethiopia on the other side of the region, the state collapse in Somalia in the same year, brought about new developments in the areas socio political reality. In addition, with the new ethnic based regional arrangement introduced in Ethiopia meant redefining and altering of the laws of the communal use of resources that governed the community in this area for centuries. These trajectories translate in to contentious relations among different groups that traditionally lived in harmony.

Due to both political and socio cultural reasons Pastoral areas in Ethiopia have been one of the most under-developed parts in Ethiopia in yesteryears and today. These areas are prone to drought, famine and conflict. The causes of the current forms of pastoral conflicts are not only resource scarcities but due to the combined effects of environmental degradations/ resource scarcity, population pressure, socio-cultural and political factors.

Conflict exists in every society or between individuals; however, the important issue is how to manage these conflicts to mitigate their adverse effects on human life, economy and socio-cultural aspects of the disputing parties. Among most of the pastoral traditional communities in Somali region, there are different methods of dispute resolutions. These are the Sharia courts, the *Xeer* system and modern courts. Of these alternatives, however, the vast majority of Somali society resolves disputes through *Xeer* system which is a secular and purely indigenous set of rules and norms. *Xeer* system is considered as competent in governing the social-economic security affairs of Somali people. Specially, the rural pastoralists and agro-pastoralists prefer *Xeer* system than any other methods of dispute resolution. Yet given the emerging issues and new causes of conflict in the pastoral system the traditional mechanism of conflict resolution may become insufficient to solve all problems the society may face. Thus the *xeer* system must be institutionalized and advanced to sustainably serve the interest of the people.

Recommendation

- The multidimensional nature of conflict happening in the pastoral area entails the use of a holistic approach to conflict resolution and peace building imperative.
- Overall, to advance *Xeer* system by improving its shortcomings, the following recommendations are key inputs:-
- The government should work towards identifying long-term and sustainable strategies for minimizing instability and violent conflict within or between clans, Ethnic groups or other groups.
- With skill trainings and awareness raising tasks as well as peace education given to different sections of community leaders, the clan leader's, governmental and nongovernmental actors should help the harmonization of *Xeer* rules and norms with the universal principles of human rights.

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