



The education of nomadic peoples in East Africa:

Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Roy Carr-Hill and **Edwina Peart**

An IIEP study commissioned by the **African Development Bank (ADB)**



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This report was prepared by Roy Carr-Hill and Edwina Peart (IIEP Consultant), under the direction of David Atchoarena, UNESCO-IIEP.

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Foreword

The study entitled 'The education of nomadic peoples in East Africa' was commissioned by the African Development Bank, financed by a Japanese Trust Fund, and carried out in 2001-2002 by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP/UNESCO), in collaboration with the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA/UNESCO) and the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office of UNICEF (ESARO). The study focused on Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It has provided a comprehensive and rare insight into the challenges, constraints and opportunities for using education as part of an intersectoral approach to meet the development needs of nomadic communities.

It is estimated that nomads constitute about 6 per cent of the African population and can be found in no less than 20 African countries. Nomadic populations are generally included under the category of disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups and represent a particular challenge for development in general and education in particular. In all of the countries covered by the study, the rate of primary school enrolment for children in nomadic communities is significantly below the national average. This explains why in all these countries, and indeed in other African countries with nomadic populations, there is a growing awareness of the need to make significant progress in extending services to nomadic communities if national targets for Education for All (EFA) by the year 2015 are to be met.

While many development agency actions have given some attention to the socio-economic needs of nomadic communities, they have not necessarily been guided by a definite policy or intervention approach. National policies and programmes have all too often fallen short of meeting the specific challenges posed by the lifestyle of nomads. Nomadic peoples tend to be marginalized, primarily because of the harsh and precarious conditions and high mobility of their way of life. Furthermore, their low participation rates in the few and often ill-adapted formal and non-formal education programmes contribute to denying them the chance to effectively

participate in planning and development activities. Consequently, nomads tend to adhere to their traditional lifestyles, without necessarily having sufficient control over the social and economic factors that determine their situation. This too often leads to a higher incidence of poverty among nomads in comparison to sedentary populations.

By virtue of its multinational scope, the study ‘The education of nomadic peoples in East Africa’ presents a comprehensive range of issues useful for purposes of both policy formulation and practical intervention. The key lessons and recommendations relate principally to the following: the development of national policies and programmes to effectively respond to the socio-economic needs of nomadic children; the identification of existing and potential resources and opportunities for improving human development services and living conditions of nomadic populations; and the strengthening of the capacity of central and local government authorities to design and implement targeted interventions for poverty reduction and educational development.

We are confident that this publication will be of interest not only to social scientists but will also provide insights for policy-makers, national and international non-governmental organizations, donor agencies and others working in international development. It constitutes a major resource of policy measures and intervention options for reaching out to nomadic groups effectively and responsively.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Japan for the financial assistance that made the study possible.

Omar Kabbaj
President,
African Development Bank Group



Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General,
UNESCO



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List of abbreviations

ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANLP	Afar Nomadic Literacy Programme
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CiC	Children in Crisis
DEO	District Education Officer
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DTC	Distance Teaching Centre
ECD	Early Childhood Education, Care and Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EDAM-IS	<i>Enquête démographique auprès des ménages – indicateurs sociaux</i>
EFA	Education for All
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
ETP	Education and Training Policy
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists.
FFW	Food for Work
GDP	Gross domestic product
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
GTZ	German Technical Co-operation Agency
HDR	<i>Human development report</i>
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IBEDC	Innovative Basic Education for Disadvantaged Children Programmes
IICBA	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
IADEO	Intents, Activities, Displays, Evaluation and Outcomes
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning

List of abbreviations

MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
NDP	National domestic product
NCNE	National Commission for Nomadic Education
NER	Net enrolment ratio
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIR	Net intake rate
NPHC	Nomadic Primary Health Care Programme
OOS	Out of school
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSLE	Primary School Level Education
RBU	Redd Barna Uganda
RoK	Republic of Kenya
SCF/USA	Save the Children Fund/USA
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
UK	United Kingdom
UNDOS	United Nations Development Office for Somalia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP/EUE	United Nations Development Programme/Emergency Unit for Ethiopia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO/PEER	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/Regional Programme of Education for Emergencies, Communication and Culture of Peace
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNNEP	UNICEF Nomadic Education Project

UPE	Universal Primary Education
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCEFA	World Conference on 'Education for All'
WFP	World Food Programme

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Executive summary

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the context of a renewed commitment to *Education for All* (EFA) at Dakar, this study examines the apparent failure of most attempts to provide educational services to nomadic groups.

Some see this failure as a pastoralist ‘problem’, arguing that pastoralists are quite prepared for their children to be educated but that they have tended to shun schooling because the provision is inappropriate in terms of relevance, location of schools, etc. Others take the view that, inasmuch as the education system is aligned with modernity, most formal education programmes are confronting for nomadic culture and for what nomadic children need and want to know for their way of life. This contested view of pastoralism has been taken as the framework for the review of the wide range of literature.

One important consequence of these disparate views about the value of modern education is that much of the literature is concerned to argue for or against one position or another. As a result, although some small-scale initiatives have been described in great detail (especially where they have apparently been successful!), what is actually happening in general in terms of educational provision for nomads is less well documented.

Chapter 2: Development and integration

Development and integration form the basis of the second section, where we first consider the issue of sedentarization. This is due to the fact that, for many, the only way pastoralists can ‘develop’ is by ceasing their nomadic way of life and becoming settled or ‘sedentary’, a transition that is considered to be the obvious first step to a ‘higher stage’ of evolution. Again, some of the issues involved generate strongly opposing views, for example about the importance that nomadic groups attach to cattle as a status symbol, and whether or not they are over-grazing pastures and thus contributing to desertification. Moreover, although some nomadic

groups do appear to be settling, this does not demonstrate the superiority of a settled way of life but rather the impact of external pressures – usually from government.

In considering modernization and productivity, we next show how pressures to modernize and increase the productivity of nomadic groups have had limited impact, partly because successful dryland pastoralism is probably a more efficient mode of exploiting drylands than any currently available alternative, without abandoning pastoralism itself. Nomadic pastoralist groups are not always the poorest of rural people. It is incorrect to see pastoralists as resistant to change in general, although they might be resistant to specific pressures to change in their culture.

Finally, we consider the issues of conflict and violence. While there is pressure on land, sadly one of the more important factors is probably the impact of armed conflict, which has become more deadly with modern weapons. It is important to understand the history both of the groups themselves and of their relations with the ‘settled’ communities.

Chapter 3: What kind of educational provision?

The general implication for educational provision is that the nomadic groups themselves must perceive what they are being offered as an improvement to what they already have. Various approaches that have been attempted are described and the extent to which they have responded to the needs of nomadic groups are examined.

The objectives, curriculum, delivery methods, timetabling and relevance of a wide range of programmes are considered. In most cases, a balance will need to be struck between the ‘integrative’ and the ‘distinctive’ qualities of any programme for nomads. This applies not only to the content of the course materials but also to the medium of instruction. Crucially, it also applies to the delivery and support systems. Thus, there have been several experiments with different forms of boarding and mobile schools. Their appropriateness depends on the specific situation of each nomadic group, and in particular on whether each of its members move together or whether some stay.

We consider the potential of open and distance-learning and of non-formal alternatives to school. Several of the experiments have been

successful, albeit on a small scale. It appears that the most appropriate approach might be a mixture of open and distance-learning with a short period of residential schooling.

There are also several issues that affect many of the children on the margins of schooling. For example, school-feeding programmes have been promoted as a way of attracting and retaining children at school. But while some are successful, others have found the problems of administration and delivery too complex. Faced with erratic supply, parents have simply withdrawn their children from school.

Chapter 4: Pastoralists and formal state education

We examine the reasons why so many programmes have failed. There are debates as to the extent to which formal schooling is relevant to nomadic children and how much it can add to their existing knowledge. However, the most important issue is probably the frequent mistrust of education among nomads – parents and elders fearing that education will spoil their children and lead them away from their traditional values and lifestyle.

Non-formal and distance-education approaches can go some way to alleviating these fears, by taking the education to the children without necessitating that they leave their community or abandon their daily duties such as herding. Overall, the non-formal approach has proved more successful and cheaper to implement. However, as long as non-formal education is not recognized at the same level as formal schooling, both in administrative terms and in people's perceptions, its 'success' will ultimately be subject to its capacity to convey out-of-school children into otherwise unsuccessful, unresponsive formal education systems.

Chapter 5: Change and complexity

We review the very limited evidence about the impact of educational programmes on nomadic groups. There is a considerable amount of anecdotal evidence about the estrangement that might take place between nomadic children who succeed in schooling and their parents, but once again little robust quantitative evidence. In contrast, we show that there is some enthusiasm among adults for literacy programmes.

The crucial issue of the inclusion of ‘educationally disadvantaged’ nomad children into national education systems must be considered in the light of the way those systems and relative policies understand and react to:

- (a) the integration of nomad children within their own household’s economy;
- (b) the causes of their school drop-out or under-enrolment; and
- (c) the causes of the marginalization of nomads at the social, economic, and political levels.

The opposing schools of thought reflect an idealized understanding that is at odds with the reality of people’s lives, where the boundaries become blurred as individuals and families move between them and maintain links across them. As pastoralism adapts to new pressures as well as to new opportunities, arguments that pastoralists either have a negative attitude of education, or have effectively rejected it, are increasingly outdated and unconvincing.

Chapter 6: Summary and conclusions: Education policies and nomad culture

Nomadic pastoralists will send their children to school under certain conditions and for specific purposes, for example when they are of a certain age, in a group, for the purpose of furthering a particular lifestyle. Essentially, there are a number of supply and demand issues that need to be addressed. From the providers’ perspective, these issues are of mobility, remoteness, low motivation of teachers, parental ‘ignorance’, child labour and curriculum relevance. From the perspective of the nomadic groups, what is provided is culturally distant in an alien language and an alien place, which is neither secure nor welcoming for their children. Although they are unlikely to know much about what goes on in the school as they tend to be excluded, it is also of low quality.

The literature reviewed here suggests that none of these problems are immutable. However, the differential treatment of boys and girls is fundamental to their belief system and social norms. The resilience of gender inequalities is such that they are unlikely to be effectively addressed by isolated initiatives and will require a comprehensive approach. This would include addressing not only the content and infrastructure of

educational provision, but also the factors that legitimate the pastoralists' belief system and social norms.

The main problem is that low educational participation among nomads has simply not been a priority. It is not difficult, therefore, to see why the friends of pastoralists see education as fundamentally antagonistic to pastoralists' interests. However, there are dangers in seeking justification of the limited participation of pastoralists in education. Asserting that pastoralists are distinctive and arguing that it is only the education system that needs to be reformed is likely to merely reinforce prejudices that pastoralists are resistant to change and justify a continuation of current policies of neglect and inflexibility. Moreover, such an approach focuses attention on pastoralists and their reasons for being unenthusiastic about education, rather than drawing attention to the shortcomings of specific government policies. The present pattern of inequality in educational participation merely reproduces and deepens marginalization of pastoralists. How serious are the government and its major donors in claiming to address this issue?

Once a governmental commitment has been made, a debate on the strategies that will be most effective in increasing and sustaining participation will be possible. What is needed is not a variety of uncoordinated projects, each operating on the basis of its own paradigm of development, but a national pastoral multisectoral strategy developed in conjunction with representatives of the pastoral communities and recognizing their specificity.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In *Section 1*, we outline the context and purpose of the overall study. We consider the issue of definitions in *Section 2* and, finally, set out the structure and organization of this document in *Section 3*.

1. Context and purpose of the study

Nomadic groups of the hunter/foodgatherers, itinerant worker and pastoralist types are found in large numbers in at least 20 countries in Africa. Our focus here is on nomadic pastoralists. These groups constitute a sizeable proportion of the worlds' population, expanding in some areas, retracting in others, but showing little sign of *disappearing* in their main areas. Their societies usually have long traditions of self-government, with sophisticated institutional structures and exceptionally high levels of social capital. They often provide a substantial part of national food production: They are a viable people and a valuable national resource (see Aminu, 1991: 51).

Education for All (EFA)

Many attempts have been made to establish education services to meet the learning needs of nomadic pastoralists but they have, on the whole, failed. This largely appears to be due to the failure of educational provision to respond appropriately to the nomadic way of life, to the nomads' traditional culture and to their need to retain flexibility in dealing with changing and possibly adverse circumstances, such as droughts, above all other needs.

The World Declaration on Education for All (1990) drew attention to the need to remove educational disparities within countries and ensure that particular groups¹ did not “suffer any discrimination in access to

1. Although some groups were identified (for example, those from orphan-headed households), children of nomads and pastoralists were not.

learning opportunities” (article 3). It also encouraged “learning through a variety of delivery systems” and the adoption of “supplementary alternative programmes” (article 5). All of these statements provide the opportunity for governments to reassess their policies and priorities to address the disparities that have prevented them from achieving Education for All (EFA).

From the perspective of EFA, therefore, low educational participation is not a ‘pastoralist problem’, but rather an issue of national significance directly impacting on the performance of governments in attaining these international development targets.

Pastoralism and education

It is first important to recognize that, in order to survive successfully in the drylands, pastoralists require high levels of individual and social specialization. They can be very confident, articulate and entrepreneurial, have good negotiating and management skills, and show a strong sense of dignity and self-respect. Although their lack of formal schooling is often seen as a problem (e.g. Ezeomah, 1990), they are therefore far from being a mass of drifting unskilled ‘under proletariat’. Krätli (2000) calls this the central paradox when discussing the issue of providing education for nomadic pastoralists.

However, given climate change and restrictions on pastures, pastoralists in East Africa are probably among the most economically disadvantaged in economies that are already poor. This is both generally in terms of the precarity of their subsistence livelihood and in particular in terms of their access to services provided by the state (including basic education). Daily life often requires a focus on the problem of survival, leaving few resources (whether of money or time) to be invested in the education of their children.

It is important to note that while many officials in ministries of education acknowledge only limited success in providing schooling or non-formal education to nomadic groups, they also plead poverty. Many of them understand the main issues involved in providing education for nomadic groups (as many can claim to have near relatives who are or were nomads). However, they argue that they have focused on bringing the majority of children into the education system rather than just nomadic groups, which

would have been much less cost-effective in terms of the numbers of children reached. However, given the renewed emphasis on EFA and the requirement to prepare plans for achieving that objective, the problem of providing education for nomadic groups, among other disadvantaged groups, is becoming more visible.

This will probably involve intersectoral work. For example, most habitats that nomadic groups occupy temporarily are found to have the most underdeveloped transport and communication infrastructures, making it difficult to open schools. Even where schools exist, learners have to travel very long distances to what may often be a very poor quality education. Access to health services is equally poor (Tekeste, Tsehaye and Dagneu, 1998).

Any study of the provision of education for nomadic pastoralists and their reaction to it must therefore treat – if only briefly – at least three other issues:

- What is the current situation and likely evolution of nomadic groups? To what extent are they integrated or excluded from national development?
- How has the poverty situation in the country affected nomadic groups in particular, and how are they included, or not, in the country programme of poverty reduction?
- How do programmes in other sectors (agriculture, health, transport, etc.) affect the current situation and likely evolution of nomadic groups?

The overall purpose of the study, therefore, is to gain a clearer understanding of these issues for the nomadic communities in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and from there to design programmes that are more likely to succeed in providing nomads with access to learning opportunities. This is particularly important where programmes will require external support, as donors require documentation on the issues and problems and the feasibility of proposed solutions.

2. Definitions and differentiation

Nomads are variously defined. Broadly speaking, they are ethnic or socio-economic groups who constantly travel and migrate in large or small

groups in search of means of livelihood within a community or country or across international boundaries. These groups contrast with the settled or sedentary population living in villages, towns and cities, and tied to fixed locations by agriculture, employment, housing and social and cultural factors. This bipolar picture is complicated, however, by differences of usage and by variations in the extent to which all the members of any group are permanently on the move.

Pastoralism, sometimes used interchangeably with the term 'nomadism', reflects a lifestyle based upon maintenance of herds of animals that depend mainly on natural vegetation for their food. This dependence, along with migration to water, away from disease and in response to other pressures, determines the seasonal and daily movements of pastoralists (Awogbade, 1991: 2). While all members of a 'pure' nomadic pastoralist group will be on the move, there are some groups where a substantial fraction of the group are settled in permanent habitats, with perhaps only the younger men travelling with their livestock for periods of several months at a time.

Although the pastoral nomad is the classic example and the predominating one in discussion of nomadic education in Africa, many other occupations and socio-cultural groups are based on a mobile lifestyle. Examples include the migrant fishermen of Nigeria (Ezewu and Tahir, 1997), the Romany Gypsies of Europe, circus and fairground people (Danaher, 1999), hunter/foodgatherers such as the Hadzabe in Tanzania (Bugeke, 1997: 71), migrant agricultural workers and New Age Travellers in the United Kingdom.

Problems with the classification of nomadic groups

In the *Blueprint on nomadic education* (1987), Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education (MOE) identifies stages of sedentarization in order to define nomads. Woldemichael (1995: 9) later echoed this when he said: "Rural sedentarism in Africa can be discerned as the last stage of the process that occurs over time in the mode of the pastoral production. [...] The three stages towards sedentarisation are nomadic-pastoralism, agro-pastoralism and transhumant-pastoralism". Nomadic pastoralists do not have a recognized place of residence and any crop production is only a supplementary activity. This economic basis contrasts with the livelihood of agro-pastoralists who engage in crop production and animal husbandry

in more or less equal proportions. They live in semi-permanent settlements, with goats and sheep tended by women and children becoming an increasingly significant activity while the males are away in search of pastures. Transhumance refers to movement of livestock over more or less regular routes, and pastoralists engaging in this activity have a recognized and permanent home territory.

Krätli (2000) correctly criticizes the approach of portraying nomadic groups in negative terms, with reference to what they are 'not-yet' or 'not-anymore'. Indeed, part of the problem here is that the definitions are being imposed on a population category and the categorization may well not be recognized by nomadic pastoralists themselves. Equally, Mohamed (1993, 2000) argues that the distinctions² are sometimes difficult to maintain.

In principle, however, this classification could be useful for those trying to provide services (whether of agricultural extension, health or education), as the appropriate service response is almost certainly different for those who are partly settled and those who are permanently mobile. The importance of nomad's mobility for the design of educational programmes is considered in *Chapter 3*. Nevertheless, simply classifying a group according to their stage of sedentarization is probably unhelpful even for those trying to provide services, unless one can also specify the age sets that are moving and those who are settled. Moreover, in very practical terms it is very obviously difficult for ministries to provide services for population groups that are regularly crossing national frontiers, however they are classified.

Part of any documentation on nomadic groups should therefore also include a specification of the sub-groups where these can be realistically identified as well as information about the degree and spread of their movement. To this end, group interview strategies have been employed for those nomadic groups being studied by the national teams.

2. He defines nomadic pastoralists as the most mobile with minimum agriculture, preferring large livestock. Semi-nomads are defined as less mobile, with a wider dependence on agriculture and transhumance, and with predictable and seasonal movements involving both small and large livestock and agriculture.

3. Framework for the review

The purpose of *this particular document* is to draw on the literature about nomads and educational provision for nomadic groups, so as to provide a ‘state-of-the-art’ review of the interaction between nomadic groups and education. This section describes how the review is organized in terms of the different sets of literature that have been drawn upon.

As we have suggested, it is very important to take context into account. This contextual literature covers a very large number of themes however and could therefore be organized in several ways. In *Chapter 2*, we set out the background for this and, in particular, discuss the presumed inevitability of integration and sedentarization, of modernization and productivity, and whether nomadic groups are as resistant to change as presumed. Finally, we address the antagonism between the host culture and nomadic groups, and conflicts and violence between the nomadic groups themselves. Although the focus of the study is on education, these contextual issues are very important.

In terms of the more specifically educational material, several problems were encountered in setting boundaries to and writing the review. First, although there has been a considerable volume of anthropological research into nomadic pastoralist groups (rather less on pastoralism), the literature specifically on education and nomads has understandably focused on their extant culture and economy. While the former does include material on their own approach to transmitting knowledge, skills and values from generation to generation (i.e. their own education system), there is little on the provision of state or parastatal educational services for these groups. Second, while many experiences of providing educational (and other) services for nomads have been reported, very few of them have been documented in an easily accessible form, which is one of the purposes of this study.

Third, it is also important to recognize that, broadly speaking, the literature that is relevant falls into two groups: those who see pastoralists as a ‘problem’, unable to develop beyond traditional economic practices and clinging stubbornly to outdated cultural practices, and the ‘friends of the nomads’ (Salzman and Galaty, 1990: 46) who see pastoralists as a minority community whose way of life and values are poorly understood and threatened by dominant social and political forces. This contested

view of pastoralism and its eventual resolution in terms of complexity has been taken as a framework for the review.

Indeed, this debate has been re-ignited by the recent worldwide review paper by Krätli (2000) on many issues pertaining to nomadic education. However, although the scope of the paper is held to be global, Krätli in fact focuses on Mongolia in particular and only includes evidence from one of the countries in our study area: Kenya (the other African countries he covers are Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania). There is obviously some specificity for Eastern Africa (as Krätli himself recognizes). Moreover, it is not always as comprehensive as it purports to be and is written from one particular perspective (see the response from T. Nagel to Krätli's research on Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) on the Pastoralist Forum). In addition, although Krätli concentrated almost exclusively on provision of formal or non-formal education for children, we shall also be looking at programmes for adults provided by ministries of education, other sectors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Pastoralists are a 'problem'

■ The stereotype

- Their way of life means that they are poorly integrated into the nation state and the national economy.
- With their traditions of raiding, pastoralists are perceived to pose a threat to law and order, a threat that has been greatly exacerbated by the widespread possession of modern weaponry.
- Their 'cattle complex' is irrational and the cause of over-grazing and land degradation.³
- Their mobility leads to multiple use of land resources and is inconsistent with principles of private ownership. It is therefore responsible for the 'tragedy of the commons'.

The pastoral production system makes destruction of the natural resource base almost inevitable and the lives of pastoralists are an unequal struggle against suffering (Pratt and Gwynne, 1977). On this basis, the logical solution to the problems of pastoralism and the objective of

3. There is considerable literature on this: An easy way in is *via* the Eldis Pastoralism Resource Centre.

development has been to eliminate pastoralism both as a way of life and as a production system. A rather stark version of this is:

“No matter how aesthetically attractive the race may be, or how deep its roots in history, they and their cattle must become settled if the large issues in Nigeria are to be solved in the interests of the Nigerian people. There can be no question of their preservation as nomadic cattle owners, owing loyalty neither to the soil nor to the Territory. The aim of policy should be their absorption into the country’s agriculture” (Goldschmidt, 1981: 107, citing Shaw and Colville).

For those whose view of pastoralism is that it is an inferior form of livelihood, “an evolutionary cul-de-sac” (Krätli, 2000: 8), education was not so much a right of citizenship but a means of transforming pastoralism and modernizing pastoralists. Although not universally held, these ideas have shaped the way in which much of the education has been provided, how the curriculum has been designed and taught and how performance has been measured.

■ The literature

This literature therefore seeks to explain why pastoralists have tended to avoid the education provided. For some “conventional approaches are largely felt to be unworkable in subsistence pastoral conditions” (Gorham, 1978: 1); others point to the “irrelevance of an imported western model of schooling and its incompatibility with prevailing social and cultural values and practices” (Sarone, 1984: 16). This emphasis on explanations means that there are few attempts to describe in detail the initiatives that have been attempted to reduce disparities between nomadic groups and their more settled colleagues. Tahir (1997) provides a compilation of Nigeria’s comprehensive approach to education and pastoralism. Gorham’s report (1978) on what has been tried, where and how – ranging from the boarding schools of Kenya to the tent schools of Iran – remains a useful, if seriously dated account. While Krätli’s review (2000) is similarly large in scope, it has a very different tone to Gorham’s non-judgemental approach.

Surprisingly, there does not appear to be any attempt to locate the debate within the context of EFA so as to “broaden the means and scope of education”(World Declaration on Education for All: article 5) and develop more tailored and imaginative approaches. A search through all the country

submissions to Dakar showed that there was very little indeed (see *Appendices*).

In *Chapter 3*, therefore, we examine *educational provision* from this perspective, considering: the aims, content, curricula and pedagogy of what is actually provided; the practical problems of providing schooling or other fixed provision to mobile groups; types of schools and centres; the potential role of non-formal educational approaches including open and distance-learning; the apparent success of Koranic schools in including nomadic groups; and the implications of all this for reaching EFA targets.

'Friends of pastoralism'

This literature almost always begins from the starting point that pastoralism is at a crossroads and in crisis. A variation on this theme is to present pastoralists as skilful and rational users of a variable natural resource base who are struggling to maintain their livelihood in the face of external ignorance and prejudice (Baxter and Hogg, 1990; Behnke, Kerwin and Scoones, 1993; Scoones, 1995). The phenomenon of pastoralism losing ground (both literally and metaphorically) as national economies become more oriented to agriculture, services and tourism, and as urban populations increase as a proportion of national population, is seen as a global phenomenon.

The key proposition, however, is that state-provided⁴ education is inherently antagonistic towards pastoralism (Krätli, 2000) and that it is, by implication, partly responsible for the crisis in pastoralism. However, the general literature on pastoralism (Salzman and Galaty, 1990; Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999) is limited in its analysis of the effects of education – whether positive or negative – and its impact on the viability of pastoralism and the well-being of pastoralists. Given that levels of enrolment are usually very low, it is difficult to argue that education can be seen as responsible for a crisis in pastoralism, in the same way that it is a mistake for “mainstream explanations for the failure of educational provision in pastoral areas [...] (to) blame the recipients” (Krätli, 2000: 24). This is obviously an important point for this Review and we shall return to it in subsequent sections.

4. The rather clumsy qualification 'state-provided' is used here as we also wish to differentiate between formal education (usually school) and a variety of non-formal alternatives.

Chapter 4, Are pastoralists and state education inherently antagonistic? examines the following issues: the potential problems posed by formal schooling systems for pastoralist children; whether or not pastoralist children actually need formal schooling at all in terms of what it can or actually does add to their knowledge, skills and values; the relative attraction of non-formal alternatives; and whether these non-formal alternatives can truly be considered as different from the many other out-of-school schemes in existence.

What happens on the ground?

In fact, it is usually more useful to analyze change in the context of ongoing adaptation, a process that is dynamic and multidirectional, rather than to search for unidirectional causality. Pastoralism is, then, not a pure idealized form, but rather a living culture and economy encompassing practices that might seem on the surface to be inherently antagonistic to the pursuit of pastoralism. For example, while sedentarization is the complete opposite of pastoralism, it is not a new feature of pastoral societies (Salzman and Galaty, 1990; see also Mohamed, 1993) nor is it necessarily negative, representing a state of being inherently in conflict with pastoralism. Salzman and Galaty (1990) reject the notion of idealized conceptual poles separating pastoralists on the one hand and agriculturalists and town dwellers on the other (and Krätli's subsequent research among the Turkana and the Karamojong appears to concur).

Thus, better off pastoralists may settle because they have the resources and inclination to invest in other assets as well as animals, whereas those who are poorer may be driven to settlements and towns by drought, excessive stock theft or other personal circumstances. They live and work with the intention of rebuilding their herds and:

“would often resist any suggestion that they are, themselves, anything but pastoralists. Here pastoralism as a commitment a way of life or a value orientation must be distinguished from a strict definition of pastoralism as an actual practice”

(Salzman and Galaty, 1990: 18)

In *Chapter 5, Change and complexity*, we provide a series of vignettes to illustrate how neither position corresponds to the reality of

what has happened. We show the importance of historical context and contingency, the influence of state policies from the colonial periods onwards, the presence of adult literacy programmes, the impact of schooling in terms of mobility and reintegration of the Maasai and recent changing attitudes to notions of conventional schooling.

Chapter 2

Development and integration

The assumption in much of the development literature is that nomadic pastoralism is an evolutionary *cul-de-sac* that is environmentally destructive, economically irrational and culturally backwards. The only way pastoralists can develop is by stopping their traditional way of life, the obvious first step onto a higher stage of evolution being to settle or sedentarization. Krätli shows how evidence has accumulated against such myths and traditions from different disciplines; however the same myths continue to be reproduced by those without a specialized knowledge of pastoralism, and he would include educationalists in that category.⁵ In this section, we consider whether or not nomads are actually settling; the issues of over-grazing, modernization and productivity; the nature of 'poverty' amongst nomads; and whether or not they are 'resistant to change'.

1. Are nomads settling?

There are several potential pressures on nomadic groups to settle. One can, slightly artificially (as they interlink and overlap), divide these into internal and external factors. Potential *internal* factors that have been cited include the 'cattle complex', 'over-grazing' and a perceived need by the nomadic groups for access to services (or a belief that the living conditions of those who have settled are better). This need or belief is considered in *Chapter 4*, where we examine the hypothesis that nomadic groups are antagonistic to state-provided education in general. Potential external factors are: adverse climate change leading to drought and famine; lack of grazing lands due to pressure from governments not to cross

5. Although, just as Krätli and others correctly criticize educationalists for misunderstanding pastoralism, one might suggest that some of those who are writing knowledgeably about pastoralism lack some grounding in the educational realities of developing countries. Many of the features and inadequacies that they point to are not specific to the problem of children of nomadic or pastoralist populations, but are also faced by many of the 130 million children out-of school around the world. We shall refer to this point subsequently.

international borders; the designation of some traditional grazing areas for other uses by government; population growth leading to occupation of lands previously used by pastoralists; sedentarization programmes; and armed conflicts leading to dispossession of pastoralist livestock. Climate change is rather too general to be dealt with explicitly here and armed conflict is dealt with in a separate section. The extent to which any of these potential factors actually impinge on any particular group is, of course, an empirical question.

Cattle complex

Colonial officials regarded pastoralism as a primitive mode of production and efforts were made to discourage it. Such views were given credence and sanction by crude racist anthropologists who propagated myths about the sociological correlates of pastoralism, such as conservatism and the so-called ‘cattle complex’. Thus, it is said that pastoralists are culturally impelled to overstock: “a person stripped of stock is stripped of the most active social relationship and thereby of selfhood and self-respect; so it is no wonder that almost every one strives to keep some livestock and those fortunate few who have incomes from trade and regular employment continue to invest in stock” (Markakis, 1993: 148, citing Baxton). However, others argue that pastoralists operate a multiresource economy:

“Throughout their history pastoralists have engaged in a multiplicity of economic activities, making use of a wide diversity of resources within their reach and often modifying their animal production to the demands of other pursuits. Above all they farm a bit, they also trade, they handicraft, they smuggle, they used to raid and make war on their own, or for others, and they managed the labour of others working for them” (Odegi-Awuondo, 1992: 9).

Nevertheless, colonial governments have used this as one justification for confining African populations to demarcated tribal reserves, in order to make more fertile land available to white settlers.

■ Overgrazing

One of the arguments for trying to get the pastoralists to settle is that they are ‘overgrazing’ in the sense of covering wide tracts of land, so that

there is insufficient land for already settled communities and that they are unable to limit the number and range of movement of their animals. Moreover, it is presumed that increasing productivity through more efficient use of land can solve all deterioration of pasture or desertification. Therefore, development policies should start by controlling and regulating herd management practices and rangeland tenure in order to prevent overstocking. However, there are two counter-arguments to this:

1. *First*, simply looking at the tracts of land over which a population group physically moves – and in this case grazes – is an over-simplified version of the real impact of any community on land resources. We need to look at the overall level of resources consumed by a population sub-group, including the land resources that are used to generate the food they eat and the energy they use. Typically, this is done by calculating the ‘ecological footprint’ (see *Box 1*).

Box 1. Ecological footprints

Ecological footprints are an attempt to express the resource use and waste assimilation requirements of a population in terms of land area, providing a measure of the total land the population would require if it were to be self sufficient, given its consumption pattern. They allow comparison of at least some of the relative ecological costs of different countries’ consumption (United States of America: 5.1 hectares/person; India: 0.4; world: 1.8) as well as estimating how different populations are using ‘imported’ resources (London’s ecological footprint is 120 times its actual area). Globally, they suggest that we have already exceeded ecological limits: The estimated ecological footprint of the developed world alone exceeds the global supply of ecologically productive land (Wackernagel and Rees, 1996: 85, 91, 149).

On this more comprehensive basis, the United States of America (USA) would be the most overgrazed country in the world. For example, one estimate based on the ‘ecological footprints’ explained above is that the world could support 7.9 billion people at the Chinese level of consumption, but only 1.2 billion at the USA level using existing technology (Chambers, Simmons, Wackernagel, 2001: 129). In fact, the nomadic way of life is much more sustainable than that of the

north – and those who imitate it in the south – simply because it operates at low levels of resource use. The problem posed by the fact that other more resource intensive communities ‘need’ more land can hardly be blamed on the pastoralists.

2. *Second*, during the 1980s, it began to be realized that erratic rainfall and frequent unpredictable drought should be seen as the major factors determining the availability of pasture, and not livestock and tenure (e.g. overgrazing; Behnke and Scoones, 1993 cited in Krätli, 2000). Within this new analytical framework, ‘traditional’ pastoral systems are more adaptable to drought and coping with uncertainty, and show higher returns than ranches under comparable conditions, returns that could not be maintained with settling or mixed agriculture solutions. Mohamed (2000) also argues that agro-pastoralists have been marginalized in national policy and had their indigenous technical knowledge undermined. He cites their strategy as avoiding risk through mobility, herd division techniques, herd maximization, species diversification, innovative feeding patterns, selling of unproductive livestock, slaughter and preserving foods. Traditional pastoral strategies of flexibility and opportunism appear to be a crucial, cultural capital to be supported and used as the basis upon which development interventions should be built (Ellis and Swift, 1988).

Government pressure

Sandford (1978) describes the background rationale of this policy plainly: The combination of development-induced population growth and a process of resource shrinking are making pastoralism unsustainable for an increasing number of households. Indeed, most politicians over several decades have argued, and continue to argue, that the welfare and development of nomads requires that they become settled and cease living their mobile lifestyle (Obanya, 1997: *viii*). How far this can be achieved without the nomads losing their distinct cultural identity or creating new social or environmental problems as a result is a moot point (UNICEF, 1978: 122).

In Kenya, as elsewhere, the government has often sought to engineer the settlement of nomads as their mobile lifestyle has been seen as an impediment to their education, to their integration into national society and to improvement in their standard of living (Akaranga, 1997: 38). At the

inception of the twenty-first century, settlement is considered inevitable, as in many places the pressure on land is increasing drastically and maintaining a nomadic lifestyle without coming into conflict with sedentary farmers and land owners is becoming ever more difficult. However reluctantly, settlement is seen as a necessary survival strategy (Dyer and Choksi, 1998: 101-2; Ezeomah, 1997).

In Nigeria, the introduction of successive laws and decrees in 1965 and 1978 regarding land use and grazing rights has contributed directly to shaping the movement patterns and the pressure on nomads to settle, as free-ranging pastoralism has become increasingly difficult and conflict-ridden as a way of life (Ezeomah, 1997; Aminu, 1991: 50). Comparable issues apply in the United Kingdom (UK), where trespass and vagrancy laws, particularly the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, have made it increasingly difficult for Travellers to stop overnight without prosecution (Rafferty, 1998: 4; Klein, 1997: 39).

Thus, in Tanzania, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) emphasizes the urgency of educating pastoralists on the need to decrease the size of their herds in order to reduce pressure on the land. Instead, they should apply modern methods of animal husbandry, such as the use of better cattle feeds and preparation of fodder and pasture management, with the goal of improving animal products for wider markets (Bugeke, 1997: 78). The author says: “they are increasingly being transformed into agro-pastoralists, proletarianised and dispossessed of their major means of production, namely land and livestock” (Bugeke, 1997: 60).

Is there a natural progression?

There are contradictory trends in different parts of the world. Thus, Woldemichael argues that Eritrea currently has few nomadic pastoralists, with the majority being either agro or transhumant, and that it is not necessary to try to sedentarize the population as they are doing this themselves anyway. This is part of what he considers to be a natural progression. Although criticized by Krätli, it is important to note that Mohamed (2000: 27), who writes about the same groups as Woldemichael, also mentions that some of the pastoralists have settled on the outskirts of towns during the last 50 years where they sell milk, find manual labour, depend less on natural grazing and use purchased fodder. He suggests that although they have a better standard of living and have distanced

themselves from other pastoralists, most pastoralists still migrate seasonally with their herds.

Moreover, the presumption of a linear evolution from nomadic livestock keeping to sedentary farming is, in itself, suspect as – historically – pastoralism is a specialization that developed *from* agriculture, and not the other way around.⁶ Krätli cites research on the Western Tibetan plateau (Goldstein and Beall, 1991) and more recently in Rajasthan, India (Kavoori, 1996) that suggests that under certain conditions – and even in a context of global trade links – nomadic pastoralism is actually expanding. He also cites studies on settled pastoralists contradicting received wisdom about the effects of sedentarization, finding worse nutritional status and health conditions among those who have settled than those who continued with a nomadic lifestyle. Once again, the extent to which living conditions have improved or deteriorated as a consequence of sedentarization is an empirical question. Are there adequate conditions to settle in terms of shelter and work? In Djibouti, many ex-nomads have settled in a poor and precarious part of the city.

The reluctance to settle in some instances is not merely sentimentality or conservatism. As in the case of the Rubari in India, it is perhaps legitimately feared that settlement may lead to adverse economic pressures, loss of cultural identity, decay of community and unemployment (Dyer and Choksi, 1998: 102).

2. Modernization and productivity

In recent years there has been something more of a tacit acceptance of the right (or perhaps even inevitability) of ‘alternative’ economies to exist. Therefore, rather than attempting to settle the nomads as had been common in the past, educational programmes that are able to modernize the technology and economic efficiency of traditional pastoral and herding systems are promoted. This, it is hoped, will improve both their livelihood and potential economic viability by disseminating the advantages of, for example, modern methods of agriculture and animal management (as well as the corresponding agricultural extension and veterinary services).

6. See for example Sadr, 1991.

Moreover, there are some fears that the socio-economic viability of nomad culture will be impaired if moves towards settlement are overly rapid, although there is a real suspicion that these concerns are as much influenced by the desire to improve overall productivity for the economy than a concern for the nomads themselves. The implicit interest in integrating nomadic 'production' into the overall national domestic product (NDP) is borne out in some measure by in-country declarations of intent, such as that from Nigeria, where the "nomadic education programme [...] is intended to enable the nomadic population to improve upon their productivity, especially given that they exercise a dominant control of the protein sector of our national nutrition" (Aminu, 1991: 51). Suleman and Khier (in: Ezeomah, 1997) note that educating Sudanese nomads will produce a range of potential advantages, including the enhancement of cultural and citizenship qualities as well as mere increased economic productivity.

The problem of permitting a continuity of the traditional (means of production) into the era of the global (economic markets supplied by modern agro-technology) is clearly enough articulated by such 'high-profile' parties as the UNESCO Regional Director for sub-Saharan Africa, who rather damningly observes how traditional nomadic systems have "failed to meet the challenges of the present economic needs ... and cannot, therefore, hope to meet future needs which will be characterised by rapid technological changes" (Krätli, 2000: 6).

In this context, education could be seen as one vehicle for bringing nomadic pastoralists and their backward and inefficient production system into the twenty-first century, that is "for transforming nomadic pastoralists into modern livestock producers" (Krätli, 2000: 9). Degefe and Kidane document how, in Ethiopia, formal education is being employed to introduce "agents of change within pastoral communities":

"After acquiring knowledge and skills in modern cattle raising and modern farming method, basic care and nutrition, they will go back to the community where they came from as change agents to improve the living conditions of their people." (Degefe and Kidane, 1997: 36-37).

Despite this shift away from an emphasis on sedentarization, it is hard to see anything really different in the 'new' educational policies,

attitudes or approaches, when education is still seen as a means to change traditional people and their systems so that they become modern and economically viable. Indeed, it appears that we may be simply observing only an alternative version of the 'westernization through education' model, except this time by using western models of agricultural efficiency and market-oriented – indeed market-dominated – educational prescriptions for the improvement and modernization of 'systems of production'. Moreover, this 'productivist' perspective assumes that one can separate pastoralism as a way of life from pastoralism as a system of production, and that individuals will be 'emancipated' through education from their traditional way of life as pastoralists, but will maintain the same productive role as herders. Krätli gives contrary examples of the Tungus (Evenki) reindeer nomadic pastoralists and the transhumant camel herders Rabaris of Kutch, in West India.

Krätli also reviews the evidence about the supposed beneficial effects of education on pastoral productivity (2000: 10-11), finding only limited support for the thesis. However, one suspects that this arises partly due to the pre-existing market mechanisms of exchange (involving possible exploitation), which do not allow the pastoralists to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered. However, given the usually low levels of enrolment and the selected nature of the minority who do attend school, it is difficult in any case to see how one can reach a conclusion, one way or another, based on comparing those who attend school and those who do not. More direct evidence from the Sudan is provided by Mohamed (2000) who concluded, on the basis of simple calculations, that cattle rearing is a more cost-effective and productive industry in terms of feeding a family over a year than sorghum or millet farming. A six-month old sheep is valued at 500 Riyal (approximately 150 United States dollars-US\$), and this figure could buy 1.5 tons of sorghum or millet, which could feed a family of four for 1 year. In order to grow 1.5 tons of millet or sorghum, a farmer would have to plant three *feddans* (a very large field size). The input costs would be higher, the labour involves at least 7-8 months of intensive work and, when using traditional knowledge and technologies, the harvest is less certain.

It might be sensible to try to increase productivity as a humanitarian goal, but it becomes a problem if the approach is inappropriate. In particular, the assumption that in order to increase productivity it is necessary to separate pastoralism as a way of life from pastoralism as a means of

production, abandoning the first in order to modernize the second, is unrealistic. It is hard to imagine how the transhumant herder, of relatively simple material culture and basic technology, could hope to remain thus when in receipt of all the baggage and trappings of modern agricultural technology and their associated ‘world view’. Increases in productivity by nomadic groups are being pursued at the expense of the sustainability of their way of life. While one might suppose that the triumph of modernity is inevitable, recent history suggests that very little is inevitable.

Poverty and impoverishment

As a corollary to this lack of modernization, one of the presumptions in setting up this study was that pastoralists were among the most economically disadvantaged. This takes on added significance in the context of the recent emphasis on Country Strategies for Poverty Reduction. Yet pastoralists are not inevitably the poorest of rural people, as to *become* a pastoralist – a specialization that developed out of farming – presupposes access to the initial capital (to buy stock) as well as pasture and water resources. While destitution *from* pastoralism is indeed common and impoverished pastoralists may indeed go back to farming or become hunter/food-gatherers, workers, servants, watchmen, food-aid dependants or bandits, the process of adopting a pastoralist way of life simply cannot be the result of impoverishment.

The problem is that writers often ‘deduce’ pastoralists’ poverty from certain indicators – such as the lack of permanent housing and mobility, or the use of child labour – that are simply part of a traditional lifestyle and economic organization. For example, a recent report on a participatory education workshop⁷ in Kotido District, Uganda, described pastoralists’ poverty as follows:

“A man owning, 1,000 heads of cattle, for instance, is still sleeping on hides, wearing a sheet only or a jacket with a sheet wrapped around his waist, or even a jacket with the rest of the body parts below naked. He eats out of a calabash, cannot pay school fees, taxes or hospital bills” (Owiny, 1999: 11).

Their ‘disadvantage’ is, then, the condition of not having any cash income and not adhering to a settled lifestyle. While these are clearly disadvantages if they want take part in settled society, they are not if they

want to continue to be pastoralists. The issue is how one assesses poverty among rural communities; many pastoralists certainly do not see themselves as poor (Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999).

Formal education is supposed to equip nomads against impoverishment, to “equip [nomad] children to earn outside the community they were born into” (Save the Children Fund/SCF, 2000); and, ultimately, to eradicate poverty by opening access to alternative livelihood options. However, once again it is difficult to find solid empirical evidence.⁷ The only research on the role of education in eliminating poverty identified by Krätli was by Holland (1992) on two groups of Kenyan Maasai. Holland found little relation between education and subsequent employment. While the increasing commoditization of cattle and labour was generating new jobs, especially for the non-educated (cattle trading, waged herders), the flow of immigrants from non-pastoral districts, where formal education is more established, has made competition for employment, which requires literacy, particularly hard for youths from pastoral groups.

Insofar as this is a representative finding, it is crucial that educational interventions with nomadic groups take place within an overall poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP). If nomadic groups conclude that an educational programme – or a wider development intervention including education – has not helped them, then they are unlikely to continue to participate.

Resistance to change

In the literature, the ‘change’ that is usually talked about is the change in pastoralists’ attitudes and practices *towards* modernization and eventually settlement, rather than changes by the provider institutions. Woldemichael (1995) agrees with Ezeomah, saying:

“They do not resist change, innovation and development. Rather they tend to resist measures aimed at destroying their cherished culture and resources which they have obtained through familiarity with their environment [...] and their knowledge in the use of available resources. Their skills, knowledge and organizations, if encouraged

7. Of course, it is true in general that there are not very many tracer studies to provide such evidence.

and facilitated rather than belittled and obstructed, could benefit their communities and wider society as well as themselves.”

Woldemichael adds: “As a matter of fact, the research [in Eritrea] has not come across any evidence of ‘resistance’, and the [...] main reason is in fact the distribution of schools” (1995: 33). On the other hand, he also documents how far they travel each day to get to school, implying that pastoralists are making a substantial effort. Mohamed (2000) counters this by describing many empty schools (although that was of course 6 years later). There may be disillusion.

Furthermore, anthropologists have pointed out how pastoralism is a mode of perception as well as a mode of production or way of life. An awareness of the non-viability of pastoral livelihood strategies, in the face of shrinking resources and lowering social status, appears to trigger in pastoralists an existential concern for their own existence and cultural identity, rather than an economic concern about the necessity of modernizing their production methods.

As Krätli (2000) puts it, the role of education then is:

“to modernize pastoralists ‘without uprooting their culture’ (Ezeomah, 1983). However, the attention given to indigenous culture is instrumental and, in practice, reduces it to a stock of ‘essential elements’ identified with the help of consultations with the nomads but ultimately chosen by experts (educationalists), to be blended or incorporated into the ‘nomadic education’ curriculum with the explicit intent of making schooling more appealing to the nomads (Salia-Bao, 1982; Lar, 1991a, 1991b).”

However, like all social formations, pastoral societies are dynamic organisms, with change being an inherent and diachronic process. Several authors agree that pastoralism is in transition from being a highly self-contained social and economic system based on a moral economy (e.g. Dyer and Choksi, 1998) to a market-oriented system in which transactions are increasingly motivated by the accumulation of assets, rather than by building social capital. However, some of the changes will be independent from any external pressure to change and not necessarily in the direction of such pressures. The point is that an adaptive community will also find ways of adapting institutions to their own needs.

3. Antagonism, conflict and violence

Antagonism, mistrust and violence between nomadic groups and ‘host populations’, as well as conflict between nomadic groups themselves, are issues characterized by anecdotal evidence rather than reliable data. We therefore ask whether there is anything to be learnt from other situations of potential antagonism, for example, of that between refugees and a host culture, which is better documented.

Between nomadic groups and ‘hosts’

The extent to which there is antagonism or mistrust, or lack thereof, between nomadic groups and the remainder of the population in the country who are settled will depend on a large range of socio-historical factors, many of which lie outside the scope of this study.

Leggett (2001) also observes that when problems erupted in Somalia in the early 1990s, the North Eastern Province experienced a significant influx of people, increased availability of weapons and a loss of markets, especially for camels and small stock. Reporting from the field, he says that: “Insecurity continues to be a problem, with the road which provides the shortest link to the rest of the country rendered unusable by persistent banditry.”

■ Do numbers matter?

To a certain extent, the presence of antagonism will depend on the relative size of the two (sub-)populations. Obtaining an accurate count of nomadic populations is, itself, a major task;⁸ but we should also recognize that, in these countries, there are large shifts in the ethnic group composition of a specific geographical region. For example, in Kenya, the number of Somalis has increased from 246,000 to 419,000 over a twenty-year period. Thus, even approximate estimates of the relative size of nomadic populations would be sufficient; but we can illustrate the difficulty of reaching a view based simply on looking at the relative size of the nomadic/pastoralist and stable populations by considering the treatment accorded to refugees in different countries in recent times.⁹

8. As we have mentioned, this is of course further complicated when some or all of the groups regularly cross national boundaries.

Thus, there have been substantial shifts in the size of refugee populations in East African countries over the last 20 years, both in absolute numbers and in terms of their size relative to the 'host' population. *Table 2.1*, taken from Perouse de Montclos (1998) shows that Sudan had the largest number of refugees in absolute numbers in both 1980 and 1992, but that the ratio of refugees to population hardly changed and remains at less than 3 per cent of the overall population at any one time. In contrast, while Djibouti had a small and declining number of refugees during this period, it has had the highest ratio of refugees, who comprised nearly 10 per cent of the overall population in 1980 and nearly 17 per cent in 1992. The country that experienced the largest relative increase in refugees during this period was Kenya, and it was the suddenness of the increase that, in part, explains the hostility of the Kenyan Government to the influx of Somalis in 1992 (Perouse de Montclos, 1998).

Nevertheless, despite the difficulties faced by the Somali people – whether or not they are refugees – in Northern Kenya, many succeed in integrating with the local populations partly due to mixed ethnic lineages (Perouse de Montclos, 1998). Even if competition for access to water or to pastures does sometimes degenerate into violence, one must not underestimate the capacity of mediation or the tradition of hospitality of pastoralist societies. In Mauritania, Ahmedou (1997, Footnote 15) suggests that: “The recent history of the regions of Gorgol and Guidimagha is a succession of wars of alliance and ‘métissages’ between all these groups that, linked by cultural affinity, have cemented their community and destiny”.

9. Although circumstances are different, nomads and refugees both represent groups who are identifiably very separate from the society which surrounds them. Both refugees and nomads fall outside the standard frameworks of sedentary communities. It should be noted that although the initial movement of refugees is usually sudden, and the assumption is that where possible they will return home once the current crisis has passed, their stay in the new environment they move to may be short or long-term, and may lead to permanent settlement in the new location (Egwu, 1987). For example, refugees in Djibouti have been in camps for 11 years and are now sedentary. This is another link to the situation of nomadic pastoralists, although in very many ways the situation of nomads and that of refugees are also quite different (see Ezeomah and Pennells, 2000, for a comparison).

Table 2.1 Ratio of refugees to host populations in East Africa
(in 1,000s)

Country	1980			1992			Change in ratio
	Population	Refugees	Ratio pop. to refugees	Population	Refugees	Ratio pop. to refugees	
Burundi	4,500	234.5	19	5,823	272	21	--
Djibouti	400	42	10	467	28	17	---
Ethiopia	30,400	11	2,763	52,981	432	123	++++
Kenya	15,134	3.5	4,324	25,230	402	63	++++
Sudan	18,700	490	38	26,656	726	37	+
Tanzania	18,600	150	124	27,829	292	95	++
Uganda	12,600	112.5	112	18,674	196	95	++
Zaire	29,300	400	73	39,882	391	102	--

Source: adapted from Perouse de Montclos, 1998.

+/- less than 10% decrease or less than 10% increase in ratio.

+/-- between 10% and 50% decrease or increase in ratio.

+++/--- between 50% and 90% decrease or increase in ratio.

++++/---- over 90% decrease or increase in ratio.

Conflict and violence between nomadic groups

■ The consequence of colonial interventions

In the early nineteenth century, pastoralists were the dominant forces in East Africa. Cattle rustling was a widespread cultural practice and regarded as a sort of sport among the pastoralists. Markakis describes 'aggressive confrontation' as an essential component of the pastoralists' strategy and notes that both fighting to establish rights over pastureland and water and raiding to replenish depleted herds are accepted practices among the pastoral groups (Markakis, 1993: 1). However, it was a controlled practice, in that it had first to be sanctioned by the elders. A significant amount of literature shows that guns did not play a prominent role in the military organization of many East African pastoral and semi-pastoral communities (Osamba, 2000; Sandron, 1998).

Salih (1992: 24) also points out the disincentives:

“[...] armed conflicts generally followed predictable patterns and were soon followed by pressures for a truce or a reconciliation. Killing was relatively limited partly because of the weapons used and partly because payment of compensation to aggrieved relatives could be expensive in terms of livestock.”

However, colonial officials regarded pastoralism as a primitive mode of production and efforts were made to discourage it. Governments demarcated tribal reserves for African populations in order to make more fertile land available for white settlers. By thus restricting movements, when the animals of one group died, the only way to replenish stocks was through cattle raiding (Ocan, 1995 : 9). Moreover, as access to land shrunk and populations of animals and people in restricted areas increased against available resources, acute competition for water and pasture between settlements became inevitable.

■ Current situation

The result is that in many countries today, pastoral existence is under considerable stress and many groups are involved in a violent struggle to survive. The cattle rustling phenomenon has undergone a fundamental transformation, from a cultural practice of testing a person's personal bravery and prowess to bloody warfare between various groups, all of which pose serious challenges to social structures,¹⁰ survival, and the moral foundations of pastoralism. Instead of being a means of obtaining a few animals and improving one's fighting prowess, raiding has evolved into a military operation using conventional war tactics and involving thousands of livestock. Not only are young men killed, but women and children are also brutally murdered. Huts, stores and harvests were set on fire and shops looted.

However, having lost all or most of their animals and being continuously threatened with physical extinction, men have little choice but to loot under the cover of 'civil war', while women, children and the elderly are compelled to go to refugee camps or urban slums. Although a risky strategy, it often pays (Markakis, 1993: 95). Indeed, after all these

10. See Osamba's (2000) analysis of the situation in North Western Kenya.

years “the key to a mutually beneficial production relationship between the state and pastoralists has not yet been found” (Markakis, 1993: 110).

The new forms of violence are characterized by the commercialization of banditry and cattle rustling, sometimes referred to as the ‘crudest form of primitive accumulation’ (Markakis, 1993: 13). Cattle rustling, usually between nomadic groups – and Markakis was commenting on rustling between the Pokot and the Karamojong – has pauperized thousands of pastoralists in East Africa, “For without a gun, therefore without cattle in an ecology where cattle are the only answer: in the [...] short run you cannot help being a pauper, a destitute” (New Vision, 1990: 8).

■ Role of the state

In northern Kenya, violence and warfare have created an environment of insecurity. The twin phenomena of banditry and cattle rustling have become endemic in the region, affecting approximately 2 million people ranging from the Turkana in the North, the Samburu and Pokot in the centre, and the Keiyo, Marakwet and Tugen in the South. The bandits are therefore the *de facto* administrators of northern Kenya. Moreover, when the state confiscates livestock, these latter are often stolen by government officers. At one level, the plunder creates a destitute and demoralized society; at another, it generates an armed and brutalized one. The people see the gun, not the state, as their saviour (Allen, 1996: 122).

4. Summary and implications for the role of education

Although some nomadic groups are settling, this does not necessarily demonstrate the superiority of a settled way of life, but rather reflects external pressures (see *Section 1*). The presumption that nomadic pastoralist groups are systematically overgrazing cannot always be sustained. Efforts to increase the productivity of nomadic groups must take into account that successful dryland pastoralism is probably more efficient than any currently available alternative. It is incorrect to see pastoralists as resistant to change in general; they may only be resistant to specific pressures to change in their culture. Similarly, it is not always the case that nomadic pastoralist groups are the poorest of rural people. While there is pressure on land, sadly one of the more important factors is probably the impact of armed conflict (see *Section 3*).

Role of education

Education is seen to go hand-in-hand with sedentarization, both as a contributing factor and as a result of the process (Dyer and Choksi, 1998: 94; Ezeomah, 1987a: 5). Krätli (2000) summarizes how education is expected to promote sedentarization in the following passage:

“ [...] by imposing a standard system designed for sedentary people and therefore making it necessary for the nomads to stay near settlements, if they want their children to go to school; by habituating nomad children to a sedentary lifestyle in boarding schools; by antagonizing nomad’s culture and inculcating in the children the values and world-views of sedentary society. There is also an expectation that education as such, seen as a way of fully developing the individual, will naturally emancipate nomads into wishing the ‘more evolved’ sedentary lifestyle”.

Ezemoah and Pennells (2000) also note that most programmes for nomadic populations still have implicit goals of encouraging a sedentary lifestyle; and, according to a study by UNICEF on the challenge of implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Children, “educational programmes for nomads have failed primarily because decision makers have sought to use education as a tool for transforming nomadic populations into sedentary ones” (Dall, 1993: 26). Other recent research also underlines how projects of directed change are embedded into education programmes for nomads and how such programmes antagonize local patterns of learning and socialization.

If officials and planners saw schools as one way to change a conservative but troublesome people in order to ensure that “the nomads will, one day, cease to be nomads” (Alkali, in Tahir, 1991), pastoralists, unsurprisingly had a different perspective. There is a consensus in the literature that pastoralists have seen schools as both the symbol and purveyor of a new and alien culture. Almost inevitably, therefore, the (initial) pastoralist response was one of disinterest, of passive resistance. In a study of the Maasai, Holland concluded that “parents see no value in education and see no good coming out of it” (1996: 109) Education was perceived as a threat to the immediate viability of pastoralism as it removed labour from the then production process and threatened the age grade system, the pillar of Maasai society (Sarone, 1984; Heron, 1983). In the

long term, it made it more difficult for those who went to school to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to herd animals. Education was believed to alienate the young from prevailing social norms and values (Holland, 1996).

This is true not just for Kenya but also in other parts of Africa (Tahir, 1997; Gorham, 1978), in Asia (Dyer and Choksi, 1997) and across the world (Krätli, 2000). However, the general literature on pastoralism (Salzman and Galaty, 1990; Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999) is limited in its analysis of the effects, whether positive or negative, of education and its impact on the viability of pastoralism and the well-being of pastoralists. However, in the same way that it is a mistake for “mainstream explanations for the failure of educational provision in pastoral areas [...] (to) blame the recipients” (Krätli, 2000: 24), so, given the usually very low levels of enrolment, would it be a mistake to see education as responsible for a crisis in pastoralism.

Other pressures

Indeed, the role of education in the overall process of change needs to be kept in perspective. For despite the persuasiveness of the critiques of the potential impact of education upon pastoralism, education was only one tool, and probably a minor tool, in an overall approach in which the state used a whole range of policies, laws and regulations to weaken pre-colonial and pre-capitalist production systems. It was an approach that relied on neglect and obstruction on the one hand and active intervention on the other. Neglect was the dominant approach in terms of the provision of social services including education (Närman, 1990), a policy that was adopted primarily on non-educational grounds (Turton, 1974). Active intervention was more typical when the objective was to assert the power of the state in terms of law and order, or to advance and protect preferential economic and political interests. The state:

- confiscated land and introduced new forms of land tenure;
- encouraged settlement and the adoption of agriculture (Anderson, 1999);
- challenged the economic power and political status of warriors by outlawing raiding and imposing punitive and collective penalties for infringements;

- promoted production for sale rather than primarily (but almost never exclusively) for consumption and the maintenance of social networks.

All of these various measures had a direct and immediate impact on pastoral livelihoods in a way that education never did. Moreover, school attendance has always been very limited, so the role of education in the broader process of the transformation of pastoral economic and social systems should not be over-estimated.

Implications

Although nomads may be settling, this process is very slow. Therefore, the problem of the education of nomads *as nomads* is not *going to go away* and is now one of the major challenges for education provision. Moreover, we now have sufficient experience to realize that for any programme in the social sector to work, it is the nomadic groups themselves who must perceive what they are being offered as an improvement on what they already have. As Nkonyangi clearly points out, “Most pastoral people are not looking for handouts, such an attitude is repulsive to them. What they want is something they can really participate in as their own right from the beginning” (Markakis, 1993: 195). Sustainable development requires grassroots support.

In *Chapter 3*, we examine the kinds of educational provision that have been made. We show how the implications vary according to the specific situation of each nomadic group: for example, whether each member moves with the group, or whether some of them stay.

Chapter 3

What kind of educational provision?

In this section, we examine the *objectives, content, curricula* and *pedagogy* of what has been provided, and how to deliver schooling, open and distance-learning, and non-formal alternatives. In addition to analyzing, in general, the wide range of practical issues involved in appropriate – or more often, sadly – inappropriate provision, we contrast the relative failure of these forms of provision with the apparent success of Koranic schooling in many nomadic areas.

1. Objectives, content, curricula and pedagogy

Aims

Ezeomah and Pennells (2000) give several examples of different kinds of educational interventions as well as general primary education for children from nomadic groups. These include skills training for pastoralist youth in Tanzania (Bugeke, 1997: 75); and a range of skills including income generation, business skills, family care, literacy support and livestock management for women in the *Gobi Women's Project* in Mongolia (Robinson, 1999: 188).

In addition to any of the 'modernizing' aims discussed above, the aims of nomadic education programmes usually fall into two areas: (i) citizenship aims; and (ii) improving quality of life, with literacy seen as vital to both (Ezeomah, 1993: 50-51). In Nigeria, the 1986 policy guidelines for education of nomads, developed from their national education policy of 1981, identified 'integrative objectives' ('inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes') and 'distinctive objectives' ('objectives tailored to the learning needs of nomads as distinct from other members of society') (Ezeomah, 1997: 22-23).

Medium and organization of instruction

■ Local or national language

In Nigeria, the use of the nomads' mother tongue or of the national language in schools is also an issue bearing directly on identity (Muhammad, 1991: 109-117). Ezeomah and Pennells cite Nwoke (1993: 82), who says that "the English curriculum specifies additionally that its purpose is to facilitate progress to higher education and to promote a national language".

The issue of using local languages has a relatively long history. On the whole, the international consensus now is that one should start the educational process in the local language – assuming one can find the teachers – and only introduce the national or international language when the children are literate in their own. Some argue that even this is not sufficient: Based on a study among the San and Khoe in South Africa, Krätli (2000) argues that local languages are part of the culture and will not survive independently from the maintenance of the resources and modes of production on which the culture depends. While this is convincing, there probably must be a limit to the responsibility of the education system itself.

■ Organization of instruction

Multi-grade: In Chad, there had been attempts to use multi-grade classes to bring about improvements in quality of basic education. However, implementation was ineffective and inefficient, putting too much pressure on teachers with little training or support. It has been suggested that a new approach adapted from the Columbian *Escuela Nueva* model might be more successful, especially with nomadic groups (Harris, 2000). This model is based on the concepts of self-learning and participation by pupils. Motivation for the pupil to self-learn is based on the provision of numerous 'learning corners' and easy-to-follow guides; and the teacher is also expected to learn from other pilot schools and monthly meetings. Participation includes student committees and projects involving the community. While the *Escuela Nueva* was successful in Columbia, one would want to caution that, in general, transplanting a successful programme from one context to another, totally different one is fraught with dangers.

Timetabling: Instead of boarding schools, some countries in Africa (Mozambique, Uganda and Eritrea) have adopted an evening or flexible school timetable trying to minimize: (a) the drop-out of children through labour commitments or other aspects of students' life conditions; (b) the economic disadvantage of turning away child labour from the pastoral economy; and (c) the consequences of children's education becoming unappealing to their families. Flexible age entry may also be adopted in order to facilitate older out-of-school children.

Curriculum relevance

In Nigeria, national primary school curricula were adapted for nomadic schools in 1990, in order to be culturally relevant to the nomadic child while remaining "on a par with" non-nomadic schools, and to satisfy the national policy of integration and equity (Ezeomah, 1993: 1).

In principle, there is agreement that nomads should be closely involved in the process of planning their own curriculum, to turn the tide on a long history of ineffective education based on irrelevant curricula since the 1920s.

Discussing the pastoral areas in Ethiopia, the Christian Relief and Development Association say that most government schools are often empty or abandoned as the education system is not flexible and pastoralist-oriented. Extending compatible education programmes is very important. Such a programme must enable females, who are often left out of schools due to cultural burdens, to be given the opportunity to benefit from formal and informal education. To this effect, it was proposed that more Koran schools be built and boarding facilities and schools with feeding programmes expanded.

Lack of curriculum relevance has become one of the major explanations for pastoralists' supposed low interest in education and for the high drop-out rate from schools in pastoral areas (and also, of course, for other disadvantaged groups – see *Appendices*). The basic argument is that school curricula are developed by sedentary people for sedentary people (or even by urban dwellers for urban dwellers) and are therefore largely irrelevant to nomads' experiences and concerns. Woldemichael gives a contrary view (see *Box 2*).

Box 2. Eritrea-Woldemichael

Woldemichael (1995) presumes that nomadic communities have no particular problem with the content, relevance or utility of the curriculum, with the effects of schooling (in terms of taking children and youth away from the community), or with the overall relation of the education system to their own cultures and way of life. This may be true of nomadic communities in Eritrea but: (a) the evidence he provides hardly supports that argument; and (b) it would make them very unusual and therefore even more worthy of comment.

The issue is, of course, who decides whether curriculum is relevant? For example, is teaching the marketing of livestock relevant? Is teaching about desertification and the 'need' to decrease the number of animals to improve their quality and prevent overgrazing relevant? Krätli cites the Nigerian example where standard subjects such as mathematics have undergone 'cultural adjustment' through introducing relevant sets of problems and examples (FME, 1987). Nevertheless, relevance is still functional to the orthodox goals of sedentarization and modernization, the main aim of adaptation being to make school more appealing to nomads, its influence more persuasive and its transforming work on pastoral society more effective.

On the whole, lack of relevance is probably not a major reason for low enrolment and drop-out rates among pastoralists, any more than it is among many other rural sedentary groups: A parental decision to send their children to school is as much – or more – about the advantages of someone in the family being able to communicate with the outside world and about receiving a school-leaving qualification than about what is learnt (see *Chapter 4, Section 1*).

On the other hand, a non-antagonistic cultural environment, together with appropriate attitudes and behaviours, do appear to play a bigger role. Krätli cites three examples: Mongolia achieved 100 per cent literacy, with about 50 per cent of the population being nomadic, using a standard curriculum that was non-relevant to the pastoral way of life, highly academic and teacher-centred (Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Culture – MOSTEC, 1999). The 1981-1990 Nomad Education Programme in Somalia, described as successful because of its 'relevant'

or contextualized curriculum (Brook and Brook, 1993), was based on non-intrusive sixty-day adult education courses with candidates selected by the elders – two for each nomad group. The successful tribal education programme in Iran used a standard curriculum, but implemented it with an innovative approach based on the conviction that nomads were a cultural resource to be preserved and supported (Hendershot, 1965).

Who should be the teachers?

The low living standards and staff motivation present additional problems. There are concerns as to who should teach nomads, who they should teach, and where, when and what they should teach. Mohamed says that teachers can be:

- assistants from the community, with some degree of literacy, who need training;
- permanent teachers who may not be from the community but are interested in working with the nomads;
- teaching supervisors who are interested in working with pastoralist families and whose role will be to supervise teachers and prepare teaching materials;

Teacher motivation is a problem, not just with nomadic groups but also more generally in rural areas, with erratically-paid low salaries, lack of resources and harsh living conditions. It is commonly recognized that, ideally, the teachers should be from the same pastoral background as the pupils, and this is certainly the practice in Eritrea and Mongolia. However, a pastoral background is not, of course, always a guarantee that the teachers will settle in the job rather than trying to move to town (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology/MOEST of Kenya, 1999). The problem is compounded where there is corruption in government employment and therefore in the posting of teachers.

2. Bringing and keeping nomadic children in school

The actual location of schools represents probably the major issue related to how education should be provided. In particular, given the constraints on the children of nomadic pastoralists being able to attend fixed conventional schooling, it is natural to think of the potential for alternative forms of provision, such as boarding or mobile schools, evening

shifts or simply of a very different calendar for provision. Formal school systems in permanent buildings are obviously designed for sedentary people in well-connected and relatively densely populated areas. Mobility, a sparse population, harsh environmental conditions and remoteness are clearly technical obstacles to the provision of these formal schools. The problem is whether one takes the school to the nomadic group by providing mobile schools and programmes that travel with the nomads, or whether one provides incentives for nomads to send their children there even while they are mobile (Aminu, 1991: 49).

One of the additional difficulties with providing stationary schools for nomadic groups is that in some countries schools in pastoral districts may have a majority of non-pastoral children, as those schools may be subsidized or easier to get into than schools in agricultural areas. The prevailing school culture may therefore be anti-pastoralist, despite the original intention (Krätli, 2000, citing: Habeck, 1997 – on Siberia; United Nations Development Programme-UNDP/Emergency Unit for Ethiopia, 1996; Närman, 1990 – on Kenya; and Rybinski, 1980 – on Algeria).

Where they have the resources, government ministries respond to mobility, the sparse population and remoteness by introducing various alternatives to the standard formal education structure. Most agree that there is no single model for providing opportunities for formal education. Rather, there are a range of circumstances that must be addressed specifically in each case. Ezeomah and Pennells (2000) provide an overview of the strategies that are commonly used, such as mobile schools, distance education and boarding schools.

Mobile schools

Mobile schools have generally used specially constructed tents or temporary shades under trees or thatches staffed by teachers who move with the nomads and their mobile school during migrations. The well-known examples are the community mobile schools in Nigeria (see *Box 3*) and the tent schools of Iran (see *Box 4*). Of the latter, the founder wrote that the teachers in the tent schools in Iran noticed how the nomad children learned surprisingly quickly and appeared exceptionally outspoken and willing to participate in lessons. Moreover, “when the children pass to the city schools, they almost invariably excel their city cousins” (Hendershot, 1965: 20).

Box 3. Community mobile schools in Nigeria

The community education programme includes a nomadic project intended to increase access to pastoralists in Adamawa and Taraba States through training teachers who are from the pastoral communities and are willing to travel with them.

The aim of the pre-service training programme is to train 60 (two groups of 30) teachers in a three-year period to sit for the grade 2 examination. The course has had a high level of student retention; self-study modules have been developed; and there is a high level of community support.

Areas of concern include:

- the project focus on split movement/semi-sedentary groups rather than the total movement groups originally targeted (people from this group were not willing/able to attend the course);
- entry qualifications varied widely and for some the course has been too short;
- there have been only seven females trainees in the two groups of 30 students;
- traditional methods of teaching (as opposed to more participatory methods) dominate;
- students do not have sufficient English to understand the language used in the modules;
- textbook provision is very limited.

Ezeomah also writes about single teacher mobile schools that largely failed, for a combination of reasons, including lack of government policy, using non-nomadic teachers, an irrelevant curriculum and lack of effective administration (Ezeomah, 1997: 19).

There has been substantial experimentation with mobile or tent schools. Krätli (2000) cites examples in Algeria (Rybinski, 1981), Iran (Hendershot, 1965; Varlet and Massumian, 1975), and Nigeria (Udoh, 1982). In Mongolia, *gers* (the white tents of the nomads) are used: These are low-cost and the teachers, themselves nomads, move with the group.¹¹

11. Source: <http://www.virtualcentre.org/en/dec/tgoolbox/Grazing/HuSeMonP.htm>.

Box 4. Tent schools in Iran

Tent schools were introduced in Iran (then Persia) as part of the Tribal Education Programme. The programme was presented as a genuine commitment to bring education to the tribes and a radical change of direction from the previous attempts to sedentarize them; but it was also conceived as a way to consolidate the control of the young Shah “over a divided and rebellious country” (Krätli, 2000, citing Barker, 1981). The founder also saw education as an instrument to transform them into loyal citizens (Hendershot, 1965: 6).

Hundreds of tribal schools were built in the settlements and tent schools were introduced to cater for small groups of mobile households. The equipment of tent schools was kept to the minimum, with just one blackboard, one case of equipment for science and nature study, and the teachers’ and pupils’ books. A training centre for tribal school teachers was opened in 1957, after an attempt to substitute the first group of virtually untrained local teachers with well-qualified city teachers had failed. Initially, the programme covered only primary education, with secondary education being introduced in 1968. In 1973, there were almost 50,000 pupils enrolled in tribal schools (90 per cent boys), about 20 per cent of whom were in some 600 tent schools. At its peak, the programme reached about 10 per cent of school-age children.

The standard national curriculum was adopted, however the methodology was very different: There was no corporal punishment and no regimentation, and the timetable, representing 8.5 hours of lessons per day, was more than two hours longer than in existing schools. Although teaching was in Persian, a foreign language, pupils could read and write within a few months.

Box 5. Mobile schools in Kenya

During the last 20 years, no significant attempt has been made to provide the children of practising pastoralists with an education in terms that are consistent with their pastoral lifestyle. Efforts to do so tend to be confined to small-scale, innovative projects such as the one implemented by the Nomadic Primary Health Care Programme (NPHC) in Wajir. Recognizing the problems faced by pastoralists, the NPHC initiated a mobile

schools, or *Hanuniye* project in 1995 that is intended to overcome the exclusion of pastoralists from education due to their mobility.

The *Hanuniye* project has based its implementation strategy on what might be called the *dugsi* approach, which has a mobile teacher living with the family, or herding group of which they are a part, in just the same way that a Koranic teacher would do. The attraction of this model is that it is consistent with daily mobility needs – with lessons designed to fit around household labour arrangements – as well as long distance mobility.

As far as participation is concerned, the *Hanuniye* project enrolled 3,148 boys and 2,830 girls as students between 1995 and 1999 (Hussein, 1999). Assuming these figures are accurate, it is a remarkably high number, representing approximately 50 per cent of the total district primary enrolment. What is even more notable is the approximate equivalence of the figures for girls and boys. Such a significant and quick uptake of the programme challenges previous notions of pastoralists being uninterested in, or dismissive of education, and suggests instead that it is the way in which education was made available that has been the major stumbling block to their effective participation.

Mobile schools have encountered problems with the design of the collapsible classrooms, lack of finance to supply and maintain adequate numbers of the tents, and the reluctance of non-nomadic teachers to travel and live a nomadic lifestyle (Tahir, 1997: 56-57; Ardo, 1991: 82-83). In Sudan, the UNICEF Nomadic Education Project (UNNEP) in Darfur States used collapsible classroom tents and attempted to provide skills development in animal husbandry as well as basic education through a modified version of the national curriculum. The results were mixed: Few male adults participated in the adult education classes and there was high drop-out. The intended mobility did not function. When the nomads dispersed into small family groups during the wet season, it did not prove possible to continue classes with the (face-to-face) model used. The tents were found to be inappropriate and were not used, but were felt to be a status symbol for the communities that held them (Gore, Eissa and Rahma, 1998: 7-9, 44). Indeed, in Nigeria today, for example, almost 20 years since the first attempts were made (see *Box 5* above), the “mobile school system

is sparingly used due to the enormity of problems that are associated with the model”(Tahir, 1997: 56).

Are boarding schools a solution?

A more traditional response to the ‘problem’ of the pastoralists’ households need for their children to help with the herds has been to enrol their children in boarding schools. Thus, in Kenya the most common response when the issue of education for nomadic groups is raised is to refer uncritically to the primary boarding schools programme of the 1970s, although, in fact, these petered out in the 1980s. Low educational participation among pastoralists was simply not a priority. Yet it was an initiative based on previous colonial approaches (Turton, 1974) that was being shunned. It operated significantly below capacity and failed to reduce either gender or regional disparities in participation.

Boarding schools are currently discussed in Tibet as the solution to the high rate of drop-out among their very sparse population (Krätli, 2000, citing Bass, 1998). In Qinghai Province, Central China, a project of basic education provides additional boarding schools in very remote areas using permanent tent camps (Krätli, 2000, citing Children in Crisis – CiC, 2000).

Krätli (2000) cites a few recent experiments in school self-sufficiency that has been based on animal husbandry rather than farming. The new tent-boarding school at YakCho, in the Qinghai Province, China, has a herd of yaks (one per child) provided by the families that ensures the main ingredients of the local traditional diet, although ‘in order to make the school completely self-sustaining’ the project intends to construct an agricultural polytunnel at the school site (CiC, 2000: 4). Similarly, the School Camel Programme in Samburu, Kenya, establishes herds of 10 camels (three of which are provided by the families) in selected schools and, for each school, this programme trains the school committee, consisting of a few girls and boys and one teacher, in camel husbandry. The camels are used as practical learning aids (MOEST, 1999).

‘On-site’ schools, which are in fixed concentration locations in the nomads’ wet season and dry season areas, have also been used. In Ezeomah’s handbook, the movement patterns of Fulbe nomads are analyzed in terms of the logistical implications they have for organizing mobile classes. For the system to function, the teacher/organizer must be

familiar with the nomads' movements, and in their turn the nomads must organize their family or group movements in such a co-ordinated way as to make for viably-sized classes. Ideally, the primary teacher should also serve as an adult literacy instructor to the nomadic group (Adepetu, 1993: 179-183). Parental preferences are critical for on-site schools.

In general, parents do not like the idea of giving custody of their sons and daughters to people they do not know, to whom they are not related and whose moral integrity they sometimes doubt (SCF/USA, 2000; MOEST, 1999). Very similar concerns are shown by Romany and Irish traveller parents in the United Kingdom (UK), "worried that their offspring will learn to take drugs, swear and hear about sex from young house-dwellers" (Krätli, 2000, citing Kenrick, 1998: 2). The success of boarding schools therefore depends first on the quality of life within the school, and second on the extent to which there is effective security in and around the school, especially where there is a risk of HIV/AIDS.

School feeding programmes

One attempt to make 'fixed' schools more attractive has been the introduction of school feeding programmes. In areas of low food security, poor families can often barely afford a 'square meal' and resort to inexpensive, low protein food for their children. A considerable number of children arrive at schools without eating anything in the morning and perhaps walking long distances. This contributes to the occurrence of short-term hunger, with detrimental effects on studies, concentration and health, resulting ultimately in poor school performance.

In order to counter this, the World Food Programme (WFP) of the United Nations has been organizing school feeding programmes in various developing countries since the 1960s, as a way of encouraging children to enrol and stay in school. While they have nearly always been successful at increasing initial school enrolment and attendance, such programmes – with the crucial operations of storage, preparation and distribution to children being localized within each school – are extraordinarily difficult to implement. There have been some successful examples, but in many cases the programme managers simply cannot keep up with the administration of regular feeding programmes or there are problems of storage and/or theft, or a combination of several such problems. The result

is, unfortunately, that parents tend to withdraw their children from school when feeding becomes erratic.

Moreover, although school feeding programmes relieve hunger – especially at breakfast time, which would also be true in many ‘developed’ countries – they rarely have any significant nutritional impact, partly as it is already ‘too late’ to effect a serious change in nutritional status (the best age for feeding programmes is pre-school) and partly as they can only provide a relatively small fraction of the nutritional requirements for children of that age. Krätli (2000) also cites research among ex-nomads in Turkana District, Kenya, showing that food supplements at school do not compensate for the deficit in nutritional status of children from settled households compared with those who remain nomadic. Indeed, due to a series of negative evaluations and partly because of concerns about the impact of the programmes on the sustainability of local agriculture, the WFP has started to wind down school programmes:¹² Currently, less than 10 per cent of the food supplied through the World Food Programme is channelled *via* schools.

3. Non-formal approaches, open and distance learning

Non-formal approaches to providing education have been promoted for over 40 years in an effort to reach out to those not regularly attending formal schools. Similarly, the resurgence of interest in open and distance learning (ODL) is partly due to the realization that existing models and methods of delivering basic education are not up to the task of providing EFA by 2015. The use of educational radio for EFA has often been neglected, despite strong grassroots support. However, although some ODL practice is promising in terms of cost-effectiveness, much remains problematic in terms of quality and sustainability.

Non-formal alternative pedagogies

It is recognized that the educational apparatus is bureaucratic and rigid and is, by and large, unresponsive to the needs and living conditions of children from marginal or disadvantaged communities as well as to

12. Although there has been a recent large-scale initiative (US\$ 200 million) from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to feed hungry children in Africa that will be channelled via the WFP.

their changing contexts and changing circumstances. For example, nomad children in Delhi State, India, find it hard to enrol in school as in order to be admitted they are required to exhibit ration cards, which they rarely have, or to provide a permanent address on the application form, which they obviously would not have (Krätli, 2000). Similarly:

“Nothing can be gained by trying to get more children to school unless those schools can be improved to the point of usefulness; and one essential mechanism for doing this is to involve children, parents, teachers, communities, and government officials in processes which will shift schooling in a more responsive direction” (SCF, 2000: 15).

Indeed, some non-formal education programmes are attempting to provide a service that enhances the life and survival of pastoral societies as such, rather than trying to transform them into something else.

An example from northern Uganda

The Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) programme used in northern Uganda was designed to address specific needs that were identified and developed between 1996 and 1998 through discussion and agreement reached during pre-project activities, including a review, consultation and planning meetings, a needs assessment, study and curriculum preparation.

The key points included: facilitators from the communities; community contributions towards the welfare of facilitators, learning centres, space and learner attendance; Nakarimojong as the language of instruction; teaching schedules corresponding with children’s labour needs at home; content designed to provide a minimum survival kit ‘3Hs’ (*head, heart and hands*). The tailored curriculum included livestock education; crop production; environment management; rural technology; home management; rights and obligations; peace and security; and human health, sex education and HIV/AIDS.

While the aims are clearly wider than just providing a funnel to primary schooling (and the programme has been seen as a success in those terms), the ABEK programme is meant to ‘develop [in the Karimojong children] a desire to join the formal schooling’ (Owiny, 1999: 7). The programme was recently reviewed by Odada and

Olega (see *Appendices* for details): While they showed that only one per cent of children were transferring to primary schools, more recent data suggests that this has risen to around 10 per cent. In Ethiopia, the founders' description of the Afar Nomadic Literacy Programme (ANLP) initiated in 1997 also says that it 'provides a bridge to more formal mainstream education' (Krätli, 2000, citing CAA, 2000).

The problem is that as long as formal schooling remains the only route to income-generating opportunities and social status, non-formal programmes tend to be defined by their relationship to the formal school system. They either become antagonistic to or, eventually, compromised so as to be functional for the formal system and not for the recipient society (see *Chapter 4, Section 1*). This is also true of adult literacy programmes, where 'graduates' frequently demand equivalence with formal schooling.

Such programmes must therefore be carefully organized and their potential links with the formal system established. Thus, if the aim of ABEK was for the children to progress to primary schooling, it has not, so far, been very successful; if not, then both the providers and nomadic groups must be clear about their respective aims and purposes.

Open and distance learning for children from nomadic groups

Open education approaches can, in principle, offer opportunities for nomads to access education while on the move, as they do not require nomads to settle in one place or attend a rigid institutional programme such as a boarding school. If they achieve this flexibility, they might help to support the preservation of the learners' nomadic lifestyle and culture, including migration, herding and clan-based cultural intercourse.

Open and distance education also allows for the development of alternative, culturally-tailored curricula. These can have a modernizing agenda as readily as a traditional one: For example, teaching modern animal husbandry techniques (National Commission for Nomadic Education – NCNE, 1999) or raising awareness of the importance of education (Umar and Tahir, 1998: 31-39). Ezeomah argues for the planning of distance education programmes based on detailed knowledge of the patterns and conditions of nomadic life. He analyzes the communications networks used by Fulbe nomads, arguing that these should be used as the basis of

communication in distance education programmes along with transistor radios, which are commonly accessible to the nomads (Ezeomah, 1998a: 3-9). He also argues for the need for programme providers and nomads to discuss, and agree in advance on, the convenient movement patterns and study schedules.

■ Some examples

There are proposals in Nigeria for a multimedia distance learning system for school education and adult education (NCNE, 1998a: 11). National scholars comment that such plans are easier to propose than to implement in practice (Ezeomah, 1990: 10, 16; Tahir, 1998: 16-21).

In Lesotho, a basic literacy and numeracy project was organized to help herd-boys, whose lifestyle was very fragmented into blocks of time away herding, following by blocks back in the village, then finally blocks off to work in the mines at a later age. The Distance Teaching Centre (DTC) organized courses and produced printed study materials; the village community leaders held the materials, organized regular study meetings and supported the young boys. Despite the communities' commitment, the learning gains were reportedly disappointing (Murphy, 1978: 36-40).

In the United Kingdom (UK), children of fairground, circus and bargee families also suffer discontinuity of schooling due to their mobile lifestyles. A European Union-funded project has linked up traveller children with one another and with a tutor and learning resources by using the Web, accessed by each pupil through an individual workstation with wireless modem and interactive multimedia compact disks (Cdi). There is a central tutor workstation to control the interactions and distribution of learning activities to the learners. Partner colleges near the winter quarters of the fairground families co-operate in developing and providing the multimedia materials (Mykytyn, 1997).

In Australia, teachers from the Brisbane School of Distance Education travel for part of the year to provide education to circus and show people (the former following an erratic and ad hoc schedule of movement, according to the contingencies of business and competition, the latter following relatively regular and predictable itineraries as they follow scheduled agricultural shows). During the remainder of the year, the school sends out printed distance education packages to the children,

who may be mentored locally by their mothers or by a hired tutor (Danaher, 1999a).

4. Adults

Levels of literacy in most countries in the Horn of Africa are low: They are lower still among nomadic groups. While there have been mass programmes in the region in the past (for example in Ethiopia and Tanzania), there has been little response during the 1990s, either by governments or by donors, to the adult component of ‘basic education’ promoted at the Jomtien Conference. Indeed, it has been argued that adult literacy programmes were doomed to fail due to the way in which they have been imposed. Some (such as Street, 1995) have argued that as reading, writing and arithmetic skills are only one form of literacy among many, we should assume that populations are equally interested in a multiplicity of literacies rather than just reading, writing and arithmetic. Clearly, such an argument has a lot of resonance with nomadic communities.

What do adults want to learn?

- Among settled communities

In fact, the evidence from surveys in this part of Africa – at least in Kenya (Carron, Mwiria and Rhoga, 1989), Tanzania (Carr-Hill, Kweka, Rusimbi and Chengelele, 1991) and Uganda (Okech, Carr-Hill, Katahoire, Kakooza and Ndidde, 1999) – overwhelmingly shows that the majority of those who are currently participating in an adult literacy programme, as well as the majority of ‘illiterates’ who are *not* currently participating, want to learn *how to read, write and count*. When asked what were the benefits of literacy, the first response of the majority in all districts was reading, writing and arithmetic in general. ‘Top-downness’ is not only a disease of managers; it can afflict academics as well.

Other advantages/benefits cited by respondents ranged from those that were meeting practical needs of learners such as improved family health, food security, increases in family income and ability to pay children’s school fees, to those that were attempting to meet their strategic needs. These latter included the ability to participate in civic activities in their communities, for example by attending local council meetings, taking part in voting activities and decision-making not only at family level, but also at

a community level. Further benefits cited were increased self-confidence and self-esteem as well as the capacity not to be cheated and manipulated. However, these were nearly always given *after* citing reading, writing and arithmetic.

■ Are nomads an extreme case? The Ugandan example

The results of surveys among participants from settled communities are also true for some pastoralist communities, where one might have thought that kind of argument was more powerful. Thus, Okech interviewed 161 ‘non-literate’ participants in Kotido and Moroto, the Karamoja region of Uganda, who all are, or have recently been, pastoralists. He asked them what their major problems were, why illiteracy might be a problem, and what they would like to learn first and why. Even though they, unsurprisingly, placed famine, lack of water, disease, insecurity and poverty before ignorance/illiteracy, the vast majority wanted to learn how to read, write and count before any other skill that one might have thought corresponded better to their reported problems.

Open and distance learning for adults

The radio seems to be the obvious vehicle for open and distance learning. An early example was the Nomadic Fulani Educational Radio Programme, broadcast by Radio Plateau in 1981. The purpose of the programme was to popularize the nomadic education project among the nomads and “to affect their minds towards social change” (Ezeomah, 1983: 44). The programme failed through lack of field support and the difficulty of informing the target audience as to when to listen. Ezeomah (1997: 16-17) suggests that it would have been more effective to organize the listeners into listening groups. There was also the perennial problem of ensuring that the target audience had adequate access to radio sets and batteries. Another Nigerian experiment was mobile cinema in Bauchi State, to mobilize the nomadic population and persuade them of the value of education (Ezeomah, 1983: 30).

Although no one has yet discovered the magic solution, there have been a number of recent experiments, some of them on a large scale. For example, in Mongolia, distance education was used to reach a very thinly scattered population in the Gobi Women’s Project. Radio broadcasts, centrally-produced booklets with locally developed supplements, ‘travelling

boxes' of materials and face-to-face contact with voluntary tutors were combined for the course. This latter dealt with livestock, family care, literacy, and income generation and business skills. Extensive preparation was carried out, which was vital as the environment was extremely difficult in terms of the absence of communication infrastructure a very large geographical scale. Even so, the printed materials and radio broadcasts did not coincide as planned, due to delays in print production coupled with the distances involved. However, the project established distance education in Mongolia as a means of delivering basic education on a mass scale (Robinson, 1999).

Umar and Tahir (1998) describe a nomadic radio series, *Don makiyaya a ruga* ('For nomadic pastoralists in the homestead'), developed in Nigeria. The radio series had been a general magazine format, open broadcast without extension support services. It was transmitted for a period of over 13 weeks in 1996, its purpose being to raise awareness among nomads of the importance of education.

In June 1999, NCNE held a workshop to develop 'radio curricula for a distance-learning scheme for adult pastoralists'. The new basic education curricula developed were for animal husbandry, health education, political education and income-generating skills (NCNE, 1999).

There are proposals in Nigeria for a multimedia distance learning system for school education and adult education (NCNE, 1998a: 11). The problem is that such plans have had a tendency to be easier to propose than to bring to concrete reality (Ezeomah, 1990: 10, 16; Tahir, 1998: 16-21).

The Adult Education Department of Zanzibar has developed non-formal courses to train migrant fishermen in modern fishing, fish processing techniques and literacy. Literacy animators were trained and given teaching materials. The fishermen studied from printed primers and classes using a special curriculum for the 3 months they were away at a fishing camp, then enrolled into their home village literacy classes on returning home at the end of the season of absence. Plans were also made to develop distance education courses for migrant women farmers, however these were curtailed due to limited funding (Juma, 1997: 83ff).

5. Koranic schools and *madrassas*

The attempts to provide education described above are not taking place in a vacuum. In particular, many of the nomadic groups are Muslim and for them, as for the Islamic world generally, the mosque has been the traditional place for teaching. Indeed, the modern 'western' school as an institution for 'secular' teaching¹³ did not come into existence until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

There were widespread fears that the new schools would be a vehicle to introduce Christianity or, at the least, for the spread of ideas and values incompatible with Islam. For example, in Wajir, to allay these kinds of fears an Arab from Zanzibar was appointed head teacher and religious leaders from the district were incorporated into teaching in the primary schools (Leggett, 2001). Concessions to 'local feelings' were clearly inadequate to overcome popular resistance to schooling, however, and the colonial authorities resorted to using coercion, exercised by chiefs and the administration police, to compel attendance. The more common response by communities was to create separate Koranic schools.

The mushrooming of dugsi

Dugsi is a Somali institution of learning, that has existed for centuries, where children are taught to memorize and recite the Koran. The medium of instruction is Arabic, with oral repetition of the text being followed by reading and writing. *Dugsi* cater for young children, usually between 5 and 10 years old; they mostly cater for boys, but lessons are mixed and both girls and boys may attend the same lesson. There are no construction costs as there are no fixed structures, and there are no uniforms or equipment such as books, pens or exercise books. The *dugsi* are therefore much cheaper than primary school, but also more adapted to a pastoral lifestyle. They are not confined to town and settlement and the teacher, or *maalim*, may just as easily live with a herding group and move with them.

13. Of course, many of the early schools were mission-led, however they taught many other subjects as well as Christianity as part of their 'civilizing' mission. Much of their teaching was non-religious.

Although *dugsi* are widely perceived to be ‘traditional’ (NACECE and Aga Khan Foundation, 1994), they have flowered recently among the Wajir in Kenya:

“In 1967 there was only one ‘public’ *dugsi* in the whole of Garbatulla. Today there are more than 60 public ones, and individual families have smaller ones inside their plots. In 1984, there were not more than 20 *dugsi* in the whole town. At least they were countable. Today I think there are more than a thousand. In the area around Jogbaru school alone there are 66 *dugsi*” (Head teacher, Wajir).

From the perspective of mapping education provision, the extraordinary expansion of religious education – and in particular the mushrooming of *dugsi* – is a notable development.

From camel schools to madrassas

In many ways, traditional schools have always pre-existed the nation state and this is also the case in Mauritania: Here, too the ‘modern’ school conquered while the country was decomposing. Ahmedou (1997) describes how, with the Maures, the hierarchical basis starts from the tent. At the heart of each camp, the educational function takes place in the *mahadra*, where the entire tribal problem solving and dissemination and generation of knowledge is centralized. In particular, the author mentions mobile *mahadras* where teaching was carried out from the back of a camel and argues that the *mahadra* was transformed from a simple form of teaching to a kind of religious contract that appeared ‘natural’, but also had social and cultural functions. The author interprets this in terms of the school having the vocation to decentralize power and religious education, and avoiding the hegemony of the larger towns.

The new Muslim society drew on this form of ‘*mahadra*’ as being the only form appropriate for the Sahara and capable of disseminating Islamic culture and its religion throughout these ‘new’ societies. In this context, the *mahadra* has been supremely successful. The disciples have brought the Arab-Islamic civilization to the depths of the African jungle and also to Asia.

Can Koranic schools be adapted?

In response to anxieties amongst Muslims that they are being left behind by mass 'western' education, Islamic education has had to adapt. The modern *madrassa* are much more like a formal school with specialized buildings, a timetable, a uniform and a curriculum that is broader than Koranic education. Although Islamic education remains central to learning in the *madrassa*, subjects such as arithmetic and history are taught, with Arabic as the medium of instruction. To this extent, the *madrassa* are in competition with primary (and secondary) schools. Like government schools, *madrassa* tend to be confined to towns and some of the larger settlements. At the same time, *madrassas* admit only a small number of girls, if any.

However, the success and sustainability of Koranic schools is linked to: (a) the religious rationale for teaching, which means that teachers work for free, to please Allah; and (b) a teaching practice that needs only a wooden slate as a resource. The introduction of secular subjects (if accepted by the Koranic teachers), on the other hand, requires (a) textbooks and didactic materials from outside the pastoral context; and (b) extra training for the teachers, which in turn will mean that they have more marketable skills. Bennaars, Seif and Mwangi (1996) suggest that these factors may make even Koranic schools less accessible to nomadic groups.

6. Implications for Education for All

The key issues are: Can these various forms of provision draw children of nomadic groups into school, and what are the implications of the growth of Koranic schools for the attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE)?

The achievements to date

Diverse delivery models and technologies have been used for open and distance education for nomadic learners (usually adults), including printed materials, radio broadcasts sometimes involving the communities themselves, facilitated and self-help study group meetings, fixed location schools, mobile schools, mobile cinema, audio cassette tapes and the Internet. Using the channels and structures of nomads' communities may

compensate for the lack of facilities and systems that are generally more easily available in non-nomadic life and on which many open and distance education programmes rely, such as transport, mail, study centres, electricity, administrative offices, formal information channels and counselling.

As traditionally conceived, 'tent schools' may not be feasible under many migration regimes as pastoralists are not only mobile, they also have very low population densities. There are also administrative problems of resources and staff management when nomadic movements cut across state borders. It may therefore be difficult to design service delivery systems that are cost-effective, taking into account teacher/pupil ratios, acceptable distances for walking to school, overall population densities and settlement patterns. Innovative solutions will be needed that combine some mobility in education provision with boarding provision that is not designed to conflict with traditional pastoral cultures.

Nevertheless, the reality is that open and distance education approaches have until now had a limited impact on nomadic populations. Despite the general recognition and exhortation of the great potential that distance education has for nomadic education, the majority of what has been implemented has been unsupported open broadcasting or face-to-face teaching; and the majority of the learning environments have been fixed schools. There is a lack of experience, research and commitment associated with developing open and distance learning for nomadic education.

Centralized co-ordination is likely to be important (funding, course development and accreditation, other resources, learners and staff may cross administrative boundaries in maintaining the continuity of a project or programme for nomads). Yet communication within a large centralized system is likely to be tortuous and the differences in conceptualization among project participants (learners, staff and other stakeholders) will most probably be substantial. The greatest gap may be between the nomad learner and the project office co-ordinator.

Is Koranic schooling in competition or complementary?

Are Koranic schools likely to impede progress if children are sent to them instead of to non-religious schools? What are the implications for

regional and gender-based disparities in participation? The *Comprehensive education sector analysis report* (Republic of Kenya – RoK/UNICEF, 1999: 181) goes further and, describing the children of Muslims as a distinct “vulnerable group” asserts that: “it is undeniable that pure Koranic education keeps children away from the benefits of secular knowledge”.

Koranic teaching is obviously ‘relevant’: It is a religious obligation for all Muslims to send their children to *dugsi*, irrespective of whether they go to primary school or not. There is often collaboration between the *dugsi* facilitator and primary school teachers over issues such as the starting times of schools and other practical matters, to enable children to attend both kinds of institutions. Parents, teachers and children alike see *dugsi* and school as different, but not alternatives: “*Dugsi* provides knowledge for the Hereafter, schools are meant for survival in this world”; and: “Primary education puts you in better life on earth but Koranic education has the benefit of life after death”.

They are also seen as being complementary. Parents and teachers alike believe that attendance at *dugsi*, prior to joining a primary school, helps a child to adjust more quickly and to make faster progress in reading and writing – since these are basic skills that have already been learned in *dugsi*. Indeed, as primary schools are confined to settlements and towns, Koranic education may be all children in the rural areas can get. However this is not necessarily because the *dugsi* is preferred as an alternative to school – it is simply the only option.

Chapter 4

Pastoralists and formal state education

Many educational programmes for nomadic pastoralists have apparently failed, probably owing to the many practical difficulties involved in providing education to a mobile – or at least elusive – population. However, questions have also been raised in some of the literature concerning the appropriateness of formal education for nomads. We consider the reasons that have been proposed by these writers as to why nomadic groups may not want to send their children to school, and the contention that formal schooling does not ‘add value’.¹⁴ While there is conflicting evidence, these issues should concern any educational planner concerned with including these groups. Finally, we ask whether pastoralists are really very different from many other marginalized groups in respect of their response to education, by examining their attitudes towards the education of girls.

The rationale for education

Education – in the shape of schooling – has been represented as a fundamental human right since the foundation of UNESCO in 1948. It is taken to be ‘self-evident’ – with only a few dissenting voices (e.g. Bray, 1986) – that the sooner everyone in the world has completed primary (and, if possible, secondary) schooling, the better we will all be. The emphasis on Education for All (EFA) appears to be a powerful further push in the same direction.

Although education as the transmission of knowledge, skills and values from generation to generation is a fundamental process in all human societies, formal schooling as a perceived necessity has only been established in ‘developed’ countries for around a century. Indeed, in

14. As the most comprehensive and recent exponent of these views, the argument presented here is to a large extent based on Krätli’s paper (2000).

historical terms, schooling developed as a peculiar¹⁵ method of concentrating learning inputs and confining them to the period before adult/working life and only later was seen as one of the main avenues for individual economic and social mobility.

In the traditional societies within ‘developing countries’, however, schooling is seen mainly as a vehicle for household economic and social mobility, and only recently become a more general aspiration. The specific goal of EFA was focused on the presumption of children’s rights, and although accepted and promoted worldwide it is, of course, a very recent phenomenon. The realization that the ‘A’ in EFA really means everyone (including nomadic groups) has substantial cost implications that are only just being factored into policy making.

1. Theories of formal schooling in the pastoralist context

The provision of formal education can, however, be presented as antagonistic to nomadic society and traditions when viewed from the perspective of EFA, as Krätli and others contend. This thesis is based on an alternative view of the function of education for the transmission of ‘indigenous knowledge’, and is addressed in some detail by Krätli (2000). As a mechanism of cultural transmission, a ‘good education’ should promote the efficient adaptation of a society to its particular environment. Therefore, the informal and non-formal educational processes, already extant in nomad society, will be those that promote their own cultural forms and modes of subsistence, with advantages adapted to their specific environments. However, formal education promotes a world view and a human environment derived essentially from the western historical context where it originally developed. It is therefore more relevant to western culture and socio-economic realities, where nomadism never formed a part of the socio-economic or cultural dynamic, is an anathema and can therefore be represented as at a lower level in the evolutionary scale of human development. The structures of formal (western) education can

15. It is peculiar as it is best suited to the specific situation where there is a demand for a pre-service trained workforce. Given the increasing redundancy of many ‘traditional’ industrial workplace skills, there has, of course, been a resurgence of lifelong learning in developed countries over the last couple of decades, with increasing labour flexibility/insecurity and the information revolution leading to increased demand for retraining or at least skills upgrading.

therefore be argued to threaten the integrity of pastoral society and its specific needs, a process which can happen in three ways:

First, by focusing almost exclusively on individual children, formal schooling detaches a child from the livelihood and welfare of its household, which conflicts with the structural organization of pastoral economies (and many other traditional societies) in which the basic unit is the household, not the individual. Parents may not consent to their children attending school as it is not in the best interest of the household as a whole. Representing such an action as the contravention of a fundamental individual right may, therefore, not only be inappropriate, but legitimate state interventions well beyond the scope of education, while simultaneously circumventing valid issues of accountability and the quality and availability of educational provision. Krätli (2000) draws attention to the contentious issue of child labour in this respect, pointing out that although generally viewed in negative terms (particularly in the west), traditional families and children themselves may regard household work in a far more constructive light as being educationally beneficial.¹⁶ Save the Children Fund USA (SCF, 2000: 70) makes the point that: “only parents who did not have their children’s best interest at heart would let them grow up without work responsibilities” and that:

“Children’s work is perceived as a process of socialisation, progressively initiating children into work and transmitting skills that will enable them to support themselves and their parents and contribute to the community [...] the most important thing one can do for a child is to teach him or her to work [...] death can overcome the parents at any time; that’s why it is essential to train children young to the work of the parents” (SCF, 2000: 69).

The imposition of formal western-style schooling in traditional societies, such as that of nomadic pastoralists, is far from being as straightforward or as beneficial as some would like to maintain. Certainly it is true that the nomadic peoples, who are the subject of this review, may have good reason to be cautious of the potentially negative aspects consequent on consigning their children to the kinds of formal schooling initiatives that have prevailed

16. Indeed, intelligent governments (if that is not a contradiction in terms) may agree: In Nepal, child labour, although vilified by UNICEF, is a major protective device against children joining the guerilla movement.

until recently, and in many cases are still the only options presented for them. At the very least they are parting with a key household labour resource – personnel who share herding responsibilities and other household tasks – for an uncertain profit, with the added risk that the process may even ‘deculturate’ the children and dispossess them of important traditional skills and knowledge.

Second, the emphasis on the universal value of primary schooling means that it may be difficult to recognize the ideological dimension of educational practices on the ground (although see Bray, 1986). Although equity in the state’s provision of services to its citizens is obviously an important goal in principle, the flags of equity and children’s right to education may veil, more or less, deliberate practices of cultural assimilation of minority groups into the dominant society. This process has a long and rarely honourable history, for education has long been recognized as a key instrument for social change and control, and particularly for reshaping minority or subjugated peoples into a form more acceptable to the ruling members or majority. From a potentially enormous list of examples stretching back into the annals of history, one might cite the Jesuits’ famous boast to “Give me a child when he is seven and I will show you the man [...]”, the enforced Christianizing of diverse and disparate indigenous peoples across the globe, from the Native Americans of both North and South America, to the more recent brainwashing of millions during the Chinese Cultural Revolution of the 1950s and 1960s. The mind of the twentieth century western rationalist has followed on from that of the earlier missionary in being appalled at the ‘ignorance’ of tribal peoples and their obstinate adherence to traditional belief systems and practices.

Developing this view, Krätli (2000) draws attention to the range of problems associated with cultural alienation in sending a child to school, reviewing different examples from Somalia (Jama, 1993), Nigeria (Lar, 1989), northern Kenya (MOEST, 1999), Senegal (Dall, 1993) and Kutch in India (Dyer and Choksi 1997) as well as Mongolia (UNICEF and Ministry of Health and Social Welfare/MOHSW, 2000) and Tibet (Bass, 1998), whose nomadic peoples share similar experiences of the negative and potentially alienating aspects of formal educational programmes, especially with respect to girls, who are seen as particularly vulnerable.

The cultural issue is a complex one, however: Mohamed cited a project in the Sudan funded by the Catholic Agency for Overseas

Development (CAFOD) that was successful, but where further funding was refused because the communities initially refused to commit themselves to having girls attend. The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) then tried to offer support, but the government refused to accept aid that was going to be tied to one particular school or group; they were only prepared to accept general educational support.¹⁷

Even when education systems have theoretically been organized on principles of democracy and responsiveness to local community needs, the programmes that are actually implemented may promote the language, culture, economic systems and interests of the dominant group. Krätli provides several examples: Alaska (Darnell, 1972); Bedouins in Israel (Meir, 1990); children of non-Han nationalities in Tibet (Bass, 1998); Bedouins in the Negev desert (Abu-Saad *et al.*, 1998); the pastoralists of Kazakhstan (DeYoung, 1996); Siberia (Habeck, 1997); India (Rao, 2000); Romany Gypsies in the United Kingdom (Okely, 1997); and the Orang Suku Laut fishermen of the Indonesian Riau Archipelago (Lenhart, 2000).

Third, the satisfaction of basic learning needs is thought to bring out, as a consequence, the empowerment of individuals. In principle, this seems particularly appropriate for nomads, given that, in most cases, they are minorities suffering problems of under-representation, social, economic and geographic marginalization as well as incorporation by hegemonic groups. However, in practice the notion of empowerment is often presented as an automatic result of the elimination of disempowering illiteracy!

For those pastoralists who take up schooling, they may do so either for the personal advantage of acquiring new skills, income, or other benefits that may advantage their household, or because pastoralism is no longer considered to be economically, or perhaps even socially and culturally, sustainable. Parents under these circumstances might decide to have one child – often their eldest son – educated, with his eventual wages being expected to provide a valuable and probably more reliable supplementary income for the household economy as a whole. Krätli (2000), citing Dyer and Choksi (1997), points out that:

17. Of course, given donor emphasis on SWAPs, this is quite ironic!

“parents who have come to such a decision are primarily interested in the symbolic value of formal education, as a rite of passage out of pastoralism into the ‘modern’ world, and as a way to gain social status. As long as the education provided carries that symbolic value, they do not seem to be bothered about its quality or content.”

This explains some of the difficulties experienced by those trying to provide non-formal alternatives.

He further remarks that strategies to make education more superficially relevant to their interests by, for example, introducing stock-raising knowledge into the formal education curriculum in order to make it relevant to livestock keeping, are unlikely to impress, for “from their point of view, they turn to schooling because they have lost trust in pastoralism as a viable option for their children” (Krätli, 2000). In such a context, where the traditional way of life is seen to have lost its value, formal (and therefore non-traditional) education carries a symbolic advantage for its very difference to the traditional way of life, as well as being the potential vehicle to a new and a more viable one:

“Bad quality, irrelevant schooling will be preferred by them to high quality non-formal education focusing on effective generation of relevant skills but lacking the symbolic value and status associated with ‘going to school’” (Krätli, 2000, citing Dyer and Choksi, 1998; 1997).

2. What can – and does – formal schooling add?

We have already mentioned the argument that one of the main functions of providing formal education for nomadic pastoralists is to modernize them. Krätli (2000) goes further, arguing that:

“[...] because, within their respective countries, they control important ‘national’ resources (land and livestock), the productivity of which should be improved to match national requirements, education is seen as an instrument to change nomads’ attitudes and beliefs, as well as to introduce ‘modern’ knowledge and ‘better’ methods and practices. In short: to transform nomadic pastoralists into modern livestock producers”.

Evaluating knowledge styles

Current ideas regarding ‘learning’ and education systems, informed by theories of human ecology, take a very different view of the purpose of education as the means by which people gain ‘adaptational’ advantage in their environment. In this context, notions of formal schooling as ‘adding’ (something of significant importance or value) to pastoralists’ knowledge are debatable. As one form of a diverse range of potential adaptations (across the world), pastoralism requires its own specialist knowledge and skills, which are passed on from generation to generation as part of the cultural inheritance:

“Successful dryland pastoralism requires extremely high levels of specialisation, both at the level of the individual (for example veterinary and medical knowledge, knowledge of plants and soil properties, management skills and endurance of harsh living conditions), and of the society (for example resource management and risk spreading institutions; institutions for the generation and transmission of knowledge; institutions for the reproduction of, e.g. support for psycho-physical endurance, moral economy, livestock care¹⁸). At the individual level, such expertise is the result of many years of ‘on the job’ training, full-immersion in the pastoral context, watching older relatives, and first hand experience. At the societal level it is the result of adjustments, inventions and selection over many generations” (Krätli, 2000: 40)

The range of skills and understanding that the nomad acquires from early childhood onwards is also learnt, albeit ‘informally’, rather than being somehow acquired as a sort of genetic inheritance! For example, the assumption that formal schooling will be able to supplement, or otherwise provide, what ‘innate’ understanding does not, is also challenged by field observations such as Galaty’s research with the Maasai (Galaty, 1986, cited in Krätli, 2000), where boys without any formal schooling at all performed much more complex classifications and identifications of family cattle than those who had actually been to school. Although learned in the non-formal environment of their pastoralist homelands, Maasai boys had learned ‘valuable’ skills in the context of a meaningful life situation that school

18. A good example of ‘support ideology’ is the *Pulaaku* ethics amongst the pastoral Fulani.

children in the formal and, essentially 'unreal' context of the classroom, had understood rather less well.

Essentially, there is still relatively little (essentially anthropological) research that examines this whole issue of pastoralist adaptation from the viewpoint of the psychosocial mechanisms and the cultural traditions that they inform, which – taken as a whole – comprise the socio-economic and cultural entity of pastoralism as a whole. The nature of the relationship between formal school education (of an essentially western mode and structure) and traditional pastoral knowledge falls into the same relative vacuum of understanding.¹⁹

■ Cost of schooling

Many governments now acknowledge the low quality of education being provided and that provision of basic school amenities, hygienic standards and safe-learning environments are often sadly wanting. To this, add the relative high costs of an essentially inferior service and the final discouragement that even educational qualifications, once gained, do not guarantee employment. Although some governments might wish to remain blind to the real causes of their schooling crises by blaming the illiteracy and ignorance of the children's parents as to the value of formal education (e.g. MOEST, 1999: 17), changes in these attitudes have become noticeable over the last 20 years. The understandable concern that many parents expressed over the real employment opportunities for their children following schooling, taken together with the drain on the family home-based economy, are now being taken more seriously (see, for example, Berstecher and Carr-Hill, 1990). In the particular case of pastoralists, while schooling may provide opportunities for income-generation *outside* the pastoral economy, the children lose the opportunity of specialization *within* the pastoral context (Semali, 1994; Dyer and Choksi, 1997b). Sarone (1984) illustrates this argument among the Maasai of Tanzania. Krätli (2000) says that some parents may decide to take the 'risk' of sending their children to school because of the prospect of high rewards

19. To exemplify their distrust of official information, Krätli cites the example of a study of drought early warning systems (Buchanan-Smith and Davies, 1995): Supposedly 'robust' information such as weekly government bulletins on the availability of pasture in specific areas, based on satellite images, were disregarded by the herders in favour of less precise but more 'reliable' word of mouth.

in terms of income or status, but they will make a careful selection of who goes to school, and who stays within the household, in order to minimize the risk of losses to their own economy. Based on his fieldwork in Mongolia, Krätli suggests that, from the point of view of the pastoral household economy:

“[...] the perfect education policy is one capable of producing one or more educated household member, who will be able to provide links with the city or with the wider society, possibly increasing economic differentiation. Consequently, the selective education of one or few children is not to be seen as negative, as limited appreciation of the benefits of the service or as economic incapacity to educate all. On the contrary, it is more likely to be a sign of a prosperous and carefully managed pastoral economy, within which the role of town employee has become part of the division of labour. Although formal education is provided as an alternative to pastoral economy, it appears to be used by pastoralists as functional to it, and, therefore, only to the extent to which it actually is functional to it”.

The trouble is that it is difficult to establish that formal schooling is functional for pastoralists. Thus school education may not meet parents' and pupils' expectations of high status and well-paid employment, but it is certainly effective in promoting a belief in the superiority of modern science over traditional knowledge.

3. Boys, girls and nomadic education

To a large extent, our commentary on Krätli's arguments has been based on the view that much of what he says would be applicable to many other marginalized rural communities. We examine this in more detail by looking at the arguments about girl's education.

The literature on pastoralism and education is, as Krätli (2000: 4) says “scarce, disparate and inaccessible”; any understanding from a gendered perspective is almost non-existent. However, there are well-documented reasons, in general, why girls are less likely to attend and, if they do enrol, are more likely to drop out than boys. Gender inequality is rooted in individual and social bias against girls and operates not in isolation, as a bad example of discrimination, but in association with other factors.

- (i) Poverty – it is very difficult for households to educate all their children and a choice has to be made between paying for boys, or girls, to go to school. Prevailing values mean that parents are less likely to be prepared to send their daughters to school, or that girls will drop out at time of economic stress.
- (ii) Labour needs – given that girls have been ascribed the role of providing domestic labour and childcare, the contribution of girls, from a young age, to the household economy is often deemed to be too valuable to lose.
- (iii) Status – given the dominance of the view that girls primarily need to be prepared to be wives and mothers, educating a girl is a waste of time and money. Where the separation of girls from boys is seen as desirable as soon as a girl shows signs of maturity, even if she goes to school she should leave before she ‘is spoiled’ or ‘develops immoral habits’.

All commentators recognize the importance of poverty – the first factor – especially where there are school fees. However, Colclough, Rose and Tembon (2000) also say that eradicating poverty will be insufficient. Based on detailed school surveys in Ethiopia and Guinea, they conclude that gender inequalities in schooling outcomes, measured in both quantitative and qualitative terms, will not necessarily be reduced as incomes rise.

Leggett (2001) says that it is difficult to judge whether the domestic labour demands on girls – the second factor – represent a genuine and significant constraint to their participation in education, or whether it is an argument used by parents, and others, to justify attitudes which place limited value on investing in a girl’s education. Girls in the district’s town and settlements are living within an urban or semi-pastoral context rather than one typical of the rangelands, and their domestic duties are thus likely to be broadly similar to those of girls in farming or urban communities in other parts of Kenya. After all, the gender division of labour that makes girls responsible for a whole range of domestic chores is not peculiar to Wajir, but is typical of labour relations throughout Kenya. Under these circumstances, the argument that it is girls’ domestic labour responsibilities that prevent them from attending or completing primary school cannot account for the large disparity between the national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 88 per cent, and that in Wajir and North Eastern Province of

less than 20 per cent. Moreover, the GER there for boys was 32 per cent, almost double that of girls at 16.8 per cent (1998 figures – UNESCO, 1999; Kakonge, Kireka, Gitachu and Nyamu, 2001: 9).

It is the third factor – *status* – that must be critical. Schooling is not seen as a good investment for girls who will move to a different household after marriage; in some cultures the woman is, in any case, supposed to be less educated than her husband, so that a girl's education would reduce her choice of potential husbands; and sending a girl to school – and especially a boarding school – exposes her to the risk of pregnancy. Thus, Bonini (1995) argues that, given the limited number of schools, the lack of access to secondary and the conflict with the pastoral way of life, Maasai parents in fact have a very restricted set of educational opportunities for their children. *First*, there is very little point in schooling girls as any advantage to be derived from their education is transferred to the family of the husband. *Second*, as the Maasai are polygamous there is a relative shortage of females, so that the parents arrange the marriage of their girls at a young age in exchange for a number of heads of cattle. Neither side, therefore, has any interest in girls receiving secondary education: The husbands want the girls for whom they have paid; and the girls' parents might be worried that they choose somebody else. For the boys, parents tend to adopt a supple strategic approach. They might send the one to school who appears to be least capable with the animals in order to reduce the indirect costs; or they might send the most intelligent one who has the best chance of succeeding; or again they might send the boy who most likes the animals because he is the one most likely to return to the village after schooling.

One might expect that there would be an additional impediment for girl children among nomadic groups, as parents might fear that girls who go to schools get 'spoiled' to the extent that they make decisions to marry outside the society. There are studies suggesting that parents decide not to send their daughters to school because they perceive threats, rather than benefits in doing so (Csapo, 1981). If this is correct, increasing the number of school places will not help. However, Krätli (2000) cites research showing that sedentarization does not seem to affect parental choice with regard to girls' education (Fratkin *et al.*, 1999), suggesting that there is no additional block to girls' schooling among nomadic groups. Indeed, he gives examples where the first-born son, on whom the ritual continuity for

the management of the family herd may depend, may be kept out of school (Holland, 1992). For example, Ponsi, studying non-enrolment among the Samburu of Northern Kenya, says:

“First born sons, upper primary age girls and some of the non-first born sons (needed for herding) will remain outside the modern school system as long as the nomadic way of life proves to be a viable alternative” (Ponsi, 1988, cited in Krätli, 2000).

In certain societies where females are particularly associated with cultural continuity, they will be the ones to be kept out of school. On the other hand, in non-formal education programmes that are responsive to community needs, girls do appear to enrol in large numbers (the ABEK programme reported as high as 67 per cent). And, in Mongolia, the girl is the one chosen for education (Dyer and Choksi, 1997b).

4. Overview of the role of education for pastoralists

While for those seeking to achieve EFA it is taken for granted that education is a ‘good thing’, it is important to realize that not all nomadic pastoralists will agree; and their reasons for disagreeing must be understood in order that they can be persuaded otherwise.

Relevance of education

There is frequently mistrust of education among nomads, with nomadic parents and elders fearing that education will spoil their children and lead them away from their traditional values and lifestyle. In this respect, non-formal and distance-education approaches can go some way to avoiding the feared influence of attending a full-time day school or a boarding institution, by taking the education to the children without requiring that they leave their community or abandon their daily duties, such as herding.

In contrast to these misgivings about the social effects of education, there is also a strong body of thought, and energy, devoted to using education as a means to empower nomads, to counteract their marginalization and disenfranchisement and to enable them to achieve self-realization. This is seen as a process and shift in consciousness, which must also include the non-nomadic policy-makers and implementers of programmes. Ezeomah advocates ‘redemptive egalitarianism’ in determinedly providing relevant

education for nomads (Ezeomah, 1998b: 111), while Anyanwu invokes ‘transformative research’ to enlighten policy-makers and educators as a way forward (Anyanwu, 1998: 44).

Krätli’s arguments

Krätli sets out his arguments, the untested assumptions and the outstanding problems in the form of a table. It is clear that many of the ‘untested assumptions’ are also assumptions that are made by educationalists – and other policy-makers – about other cultural minorities. Equally, the difficulty with the ‘problems’ in the third column is that they are mostly insoluble through educational policy or praxis; if not directly political issues such as the point about cultural assimilation, they depend on a much wider social context for their resolution.

While Krätli may be correct to criticize educationalists for their lack of understanding of nomadic pastoralism, it is also important to remember the realities of provision of formal (and non-formal) education in many of the developing countries where there are substantial nomadic populations. Indeed, this is explicitly recognized in, for example, Eritrea, where there is no special provision for nomadic groups, but where the emphasis in national policy is on the inclusion of all disadvantaged groups (including nomads).

Table 4.1. Summary of Krätli’s arguments about the role of education for pastoralists

Rationale	Key arguments	Untested assumptions	Problems
Individual development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – education is a fundamental right – education is a means of empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – education in practice is equal to education in theory – out-of-school children are neglected children – individual livelihood is separated from household livelihood – disempowerment is an individual problem that can be fixed at the individual level – disempowerment is caused by lack of education and will disappear with education – inclusion into formal education is always a benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – conflict of interest with pastoral economy – legitimates authoritative policies and increases the state’s control – legitimates cultural assimilation of minorities in the name of children’s rights – hides the ideological dimension of education in practice – hinders the analysis of education systems on the ground – hides the social dimension of disempowerment and misses its real causes – hinders understanding of the causes of school drop-out
Nomads’ development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – education should trigger sedentarization – education should trigger modernization – education should generate national political unity – education should enhance life and survival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – education is a tool for transformation – nomadism is a stage towards sedentarization – education will diminish poverty – education will increase productivity – educated pastoralists will ‘emancipate’ from their traditional way of life and modernize, but maintain their role as livestock producers – formal education is additional, not alternative to traditional development of pastoral expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – hinders the understanding of nomads’ actual educational needs and problems – uses a simplistic representation of pastoral poverty – antagonizes pastoral livelihood in the name of livestock productivity – legitimates cultural assimilation in the name of development – educated pastoralists cease to be interested in herding – education may be antagonistic to traditional learning

Conclusion

What is notable about the explanations offered for the historical lack of interest in schooling is that they are based primarily on a perceived threat to the belief systems of the community, not on the threat that they might have posed to their production system: pastoralism. Rightly or wrongly, what has become conventional wisdom is that schooling would undermine the established religion and dominant social values, not the material culture of the people.

On the other hand, it should not be assumed that it is difficult in all countries to enrol children of pastoralists. For example, the first initiatives of the nomadic education programme in Nigeria in the 1980s were seriously jeopardized by a response far beyond the numbers calculated during the planning phase. Krätli (2000) cites comparatively high levels of participation in non-formal programmes for out-of-school children in West and East Africa (Save the Children Fund, 2000; Oxford Committee for Famine Relief/Oxfam UK, 1999; CEI-AA, 1999; MOEST, 1999); Central China (CiC, 2000, Bass, 1998); and Mongolia (Mongolia fieldwork, 2000).

Leggett (2001) also says that the most significant initiative mentioned during the course of this research was made in the 1980s – the opening of the first primary school solely for girls – and this in a society in which gender segregation is viewed positively. Opened in 1988 as a pilot project, the school increased its enrolment from 122 girls to 469 in 2000. The school appears to be an example of an outstanding pilot project, but it has never been replicated.

Given also that many pastoralists appear to be interested in at least a limited form of education, both for themselves as adults and for their children, we must examine what works in what context as well as how we understand messy reality. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Change and complexity

Part of the problem with the approach in each of the two preceding chapters is that they are monolithic: Either designing educational programmes for pastoralists is a ‘problem’; or the problem is with the educational enterprise itself and pastoralists should be left alone. In fact, the real world is of course somewhere in the middle; and the purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the complexity of the situation. Thus, we examine the historical continuities with colonial neglect of pastoral areas; we show how differences in state policies *can* make a difference; we look at some of the impacts of schooling; and finally discuss changing attitudes.

1. Importance of history in the Kenyan context

Due to the fact that, during the colonial period, the state concentrated its resources on European and some Asian children, the current pattern of regional inequalities reflects in part Christian missionary activity. While they established schools in Maasailand before the First World War, the Muslim pastoralists of North Eastern Province were almost entirely neglected in – or protected from – the educational impetus associated with the spread of Christianity.

The colonial state used selective examinations and school fees to control the number of Africans progressing ‘up’ the system. The objective was to ensure that there would be enough people to fulfil basic administrative tasks, but not so many that there would be a danger of them becoming a pool of educated, but unemployed, malcontents. The result was that those who did complete primary education could almost always get either government service jobs or relatively low-grade jobs in trade and commerce. This connection between education and employment, which remained valid until the beginning of the 1980s, provided the empirical basis for the widespread belief that schooling was an essential pre-condition for personal development and enhanced social status. In contrast, the lack of employment opportunities in the pastoral districts is commonly

seen as a restraint on the growth of education, as the only choice appears to be to continue with pre-existing economic practices (Gorham, 1978).

The widespread belief in the benefits of education, together with a rejection of discrimination, became of course an integral part of many nationalist movements. After independence, most governments prioritized the expansion and improvement of education (usually along with health services). Despite setbacks, this emphasis has usually been maintained as education has been regarded as a tool for the modernization and transformation of society. To this extent, the criticism made against education in relation to pastoralism – that it is a tool to convert pastoralists into ‘something else’ (Krätli, 2000) – is accurate, but much too narrow. For education as a tool for transformation has been applied to society as a whole and not just to pastoralists.

At independence in 1963, there were less than 1 million pupils in primary education, but nearly 3 million by 1977. However, the expansion was uneven. While there were many areas with less than 50 per cent participation in the first few years of independence, by 1977 this was only true in the pastoral districts. The Kenyan Government’s response was to build boarding primary schools that were relatively expensive and an ineffective way of trying to reduce regional inequalities. The consequence has been that the pattern of regional disparities that emerged more than 25 years ago has barely changed.

2. State policies: the Maasai example, comparing Kenya and Tanzania

The Maasai on the two sides of the Kenyan-Tanzanian border have experienced different educational policies and are engaged in different kinds of socio-economic activities; so that the role of school is also seen as different.

Schooling during the colonial period

During the colonial period on the Tanzanian side, only a few state schools were set up and missionaries also tended to focus their efforts on more densely populated areas. The relationships between missionaries and Maasai were sporadic and weak. On the Kenyan side, there was

more governmental effort, financed by taxes on herds and various fines, for example for raiding.

On the eve of independence in Tanganyika, the infrastructure was very weak. In the 1950s, the average participation in the primary cycle in most regions was between 20 per cent and 30 per cent (with participation in Kilimanjaro being much higher, at 70 per cent) while it was less than 10 per cent for Maasai children. In Kenya, Sarone (1984) estimated that around 13 per cent of Maasai children had received at least one year of instruction.

On the whole, one can say that the impact of the colonial administrators was comparable for Maasai on both sides of the border (although those in Kenya were rather more inserted into the system). However, the gap opened up following independence.

After independence

Kenya: After independence, at the beginning of the 1970s, the Kenyan Maasai experienced what one could call a 'land reform/revolution' in which the new independent state denounced the irrationality of pastoralism and set up breeding farms on their pastures. The objective of the government was to convert the Maasai to the commercial livestock breeding that accompanies the development of agriculture. As they were worried that their lands were being taken over by farmers, they integrated these breeding farms into their economic and social practice, thus changing their semi-nomadic lifestyle. Those who had received a school education benefited the most from this privatization. The others grouped around collective/co-operative ranches, some of which were later divided into agricultural parcels. This agricultural development policy meant that education became increasingly necessary. In turn, this led to cultural change; and especially regarding the difficult warrior period (13-25 years) of the Maasai.

Tanzania: Although there were similar circumstances, there was much less desire to assimilate; but the elimination of pastures – to be replaced by national parks and agricultural lands – continued. However, the majority of the Tanzanian Maasai conserved their pastoral lifestyle, even if they are now under relentless pressure to diversify.

Pedagogies and scholarization

In Tanzania, education was treated as possibly *the* most important factor of development; and, at the end of the 1960s, Nyrere instituted 'education for self-reliance', with the new schools being principally situated in the *ujamma* communal villages (and therefore not very relevant to pastoralists). Education had to be a community service rather than an instrument of individual self-promotion. These policies were reinforced through the Musoma Declaration in 1974.

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the massive expansion of primary schooling after Independence did not benefit the Maasai. Despite government efforts, regional (and Maasai) inequalities persisted. The lack of schools was not a sufficient explanation; there was also the importance of retaining pastoral education as well as pastoralism itself.

Given the small number of places and of schools, parents based their choices upon quite simple criteria: the number of children and their gender (see above). The content and nature of schooling has little relationship with employment opportunities, particularly as so few manage to complete secondary education. Instead, the outcome is to master Swahili, the language of administration and communication. Hence the argument that the criterion of success is not having passed Primary School-Level Education (PSLE), but rather having fluency in Swahili.

In Kenya, educational policies tended to emphasize secondary education. In Maasai areas, the number of schools was multiplied and participation rates increased. However, large disparities between rich and poor Maasai began to appear; Närman, 1990). Nevertheless, among most parents, school is seen as a means of social promotion. For these parents, sending children to primary education is only a precursor to secondary education: In contrast to Tanzania, pastoral education has only a minor role and will not help them improve their livestock management. Instead, education is seen as an important status marker.

3. The impact of schooling

Education, mobility and reintegration among the Maasai

Bonini (1995) suggests that while educators believe that the age set system and mobility are the principal obstacles to the schooling of the Maasai, they are only partial explanations. *First*, children can only move up to the warrior class when they are adolescents, which means that they will have finished primary school or be in the final years. If they are initiated, this frequently takes place during the long holidays, so that they can return to school after their convalescence. During term time, they rejoin their peers after the school day is over. *Second*, only a fraction of the group move with the herds and those are mostly 'warriors' who are no longer of school age. There are a few school-age adolescents who join up with the warriors, but they are usually those who, when at the encampment, look after the herd and so have not been going to school anyway. *Third*, Maasai children are used to changing households, with children occasionally being 'lent' to other households who do not have any children or being sent to stay with relatives near school during the school term. Maasai parents could therefore easily leave their children with 'teacher parents'. Perhaps more important is the dispersed nature of their residential settlements, which means that children often have to travel long distances to school on foot.

Instead, the authors suggest that it is the pastoral activities themselves that conflict the most with complete scholarization, as the family units depend on the children for the day-to-day task of looking after the herd. Looking after the family stock will usually require a minimum of four shepherds, as there are different animals involved with different needs in terms of pasture, etc. She emphasizes the long apprenticeship needed not only to choose the appropriate pastures for each animal but also to be able to recognize each animal in order to account for the herd.

For the Maasai, the point of schooling is that their children will learn to read and write. The principal advantage from the parents' point of view is that their offspring can interpret the language of administration and communicate with their neighbours in the markets and when travelling. Scholarizing their children, therefore, represents for the parents another method of integration into civil society through the capacity of their children to read, write and above all speak Swahili. Lack of continuation after

primary is not considered as a failure. Indeed, some authors have suggested that Maasai parents encourage their children to fail the PSLE. However, if the children do not learn sufficient Swahili, then that is considered a failure: For some this reflects the inferior quality of primary schooling, for others that schooling as a whole is a waste of time.

On the whole, therefore, the impact of schooling on the Maasai has been minor. Only a small percentage actually go to school and, more importantly in terms of the arguments in the previous chapter, those children who do go to school appear to be leading two parallel lives and usually return to pastoralism. At the same time, most parents agree that a schooled child will never make an excellent shepherd. However, if schooling is meant to lead inexorably to modernity, it is not working very well.

Unintended effects

Whether or not educational programmes achieve their intended effect (in terms of enrolment and examination achievements), there are many unintended effects. For example, there are those children who by the simple fact of staying at home become ‘excluded’, ‘illiterate’ or ‘educationally disadvantaged’. There are those who are enrolled but fail to complete the course, or who complete the course but fail to get the job they or their parents expected, or in fact to any job at all. Or again, those who have fallen pregnant at school, or have been humiliated or alienated from their own cultural backgrounds and the lifestyles of their families, without others taking their place. Finally, there are those children whose families have reduced their mobility (to the detriment of the household economy) or settled in order to enable them to attend school. People who have experienced a process designed to make them leave pastoralism, may fall back into the institutional setting and social organization of their communities as *aliens*, dependent but no longer fully belonging.

In Siberia in the last decades, ‘as a result of the education in boarding schools, the Evenki children gradually became alienated from their parents’ lifestyle’. A UNDP Report on the situation of education in Afar, Ethiopia, warns that:

“[...] there is a danger that students may become estranged from both their families and their society by their educational experience,

and thus be less competent to contribute in the long term to the advancement of the Afar people” (UNDP-EUE, 1996: 7).

The problem is that the promise of formal education may divide families, raise expectations in the children that the parents will never be able to match, or vice-versa. Yet while this would normally be seen as socially disruptive, with marginalized groups such as pastoralists it is seen as a positive move towards integration. The evaluation team for an Out-of-School Programme in northern Kenya describes the ‘willingness of children to learn’ and antagonism to their parents in quite positive terms, saying that:

“Some were quite bitter towards their parents, who could not let them go to school. Others [...] ran away from their families, joined the OOS Programmes and lived with relatives” (MOEST, 1999: 60).

Among the elders of the Rabari of Kutch, in India, Dyer and Choksi show how education is viewed as having a negative impact on the cultural ethos of the community:

“Over time, the clash between the two cultures of home and school leads to fragmentation between educated and non-educated members of the ethnic group [...] amongst those who have gone through school, a disenfranchised youth is growing [...] While [school] does provide part of the means towards making successful economic adaptations, it also brings with it social tension and stresses that challenge the cohesion of the ethnic group” (Dyer and Choksi, 1997b: 89-90).

4. Changing attitudes

West Africa – Mali

When modern schooling first started, if pressured to send their children to school heads of Touareg clans would send children from their servants’ families rather than their own. This mistrust continued after Independence, but attitudes changed after the droughts of 1973 and 1984, and the armed rebellion and repression at the beginning of the 1990s. Eventually, parents realized that schooling appeared to help youth find work (other than pastoralism) and that it was a vehicle for Touaregs to enter the administrative classes. Bergeret (2000) compares the experience

of two schools in different parts of Mali. At one, a parents' representative suggests that 'parents are beginning to recognize the value of school'; while at the other school, the director reports an annual loss of 15 per cent of enrolments, which he ascribes to the long distance away from the camps and to the view that: looking after the herd is more important and valuable than going to 'the French school'.

Approaches vary substantially across Francophone Africa. In January 2000, Emmanuel Saghara, Regional Director of basic education in Gao, convened a seminar for educators and administrators from Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad. Chad maintains 'nomadic schools' in which the teachers move with the larger encampments. Niger prefers semi-sedentarization, in which children are schooled for 6 months but spend the remainder of the year moving with the group. Mali favours providing the infrastructure for appropriately located 'sites' with wells for water and school buildings, around which pastoralists can continue their nomadic life style.

The Kenya Wajir illustrate changes

Pupils who completed primary school education were able to find jobs that provided a reliable source of income (in contrast to the uncertainties of pastoral production) and that occasionally gave access to resources, power and influence. The promise of employment has been a major influence on decisions about whether to send children to school.

The impact of education on economic well-being and social status is understood to have been all the more telling as there is now a conventional wisdom that those who first went to school were mostly the children of poorer households. At a time when attitudes to schooling were distrustful, and when chiefs were required to compel attendance, the children attending school were either those who had little ability for caring for animals or those whose families could 'spare them for school' because they had few animals. Those with large herds needed their children to look after their herds, and in any case, had the influence and status to ensure that their children would not be the ones compelled to attend. Despite the problems of obtaining employment in the 1990s, education continues to be perceived as a way out of poverty. Not because of its ability to transform pastoralism, but by enabling those who live on its fringes to rebuild their herds and, with them, their social networks.

Having an education may not yet be seen as quite as prestigious as 'having herds'. Nevertheless, both are increasingly recognized as being important as it becomes harder to survive by pastoral means alone (Salzman and Galaty, 1990). Krätli also suggests that the town employee has become part of the division of labour (Krätli, 2000: 41), providing a source of income that is not subject to the same vulnerabilities as herding and that can prevent distress sales of stock. In effect, investing in education for some children represents a livelihoods diversification strategy designed to strengthen the household economy within the context of a continuing engagement with pastoralism.

Pastoralism remains the foundation of Wajir's economy, but its relative importance is changing. While production itself is still organized around household and kinship mechanisms, it is adapting to increased integration within the cash economy. Diversification of the household economy means that the practical skills and knowledge provided by indigenous education are no longer the sole forms of knowledge that are useful.

This has been a voluntary process, driven to great extent by poverty and a lack of alternatives. The people moving to towns have by and large been forced off the range by excessive stock losses following drought and/or raiding. In effect, they are no longer predominantly practising pastoralists, even though their aspiration is invariably to rebuild their herds and restore some of their wealth.

Cultural resistance towards educating girls is the clearest expression of the persistence of deeply entrenched attitudes that have been unaffected by contextual changes in the District's economy and demography.

The primary boarding approach – for all its shortcomings – did at least recognize those diversities of contexts as well as that what worked in the densely-settled, agricultural communities would not necessarily be appropriate in the different ecological conditions of Kenya's pastoral districts.

For the Nomadic Primary Health Care Project (NPHCP) is, in status, a district agency operating under the umbrella of the district administration. That project, and the similar one in Samburu District, suggests that there may be ways of reconciling the formal methods and procedures of primary school with the more flexible methods of non-formal education.

Eritrea illustrates ambivalence

Woldemichael records the reasons pastoralists give as to why their children do not attend school: distance; poverty; lack of health service; nomadic life; water; and lack of understanding of the value of education. However, he suggests that pastoralists are progressively realizing the benefits of education:

“Today the problem is how to cope with demand and many school-age children are being sent home because of lack of space in schools. The reason is simple enough and it is because people have realised that education can improve one’s standard of living through gainful employment” (Woldemichael, 1995: 32)

From this, he argues that their educational disadvantage is not the result of resistance and supports this by documenting how far they travel each day to get to school. Mohamed (2000) counters this by describing empty schools (although of course that was 6 years later). Moreover, worldwide evidence suggests that parents were progressively less confident in the schooling-employment connection from the late 1980s onwards. On the other hand, the majority of girl students interviewed expected to become government officials and teachers.

From the point of view of the teachers, children from these communities are disadvantaged educationally due to: distance; lack of parental understanding of the value of education; poverty; parental oppression of girls; nomadic life; students tending animals after school; and lack of school buildings and teaching/learning materials.

It is interesting to note the different order of priorities between parents and teachers. In many ways, this reinforces the need for teachers from nomadic communities. The teachers see teaching practice and organization as relatively unimportant and, while recognizing the role distance plays, place more emphasis on community behaviour. The community response appears to be more balanced, citing distance first, followed by poverty. The girls interviewed saw their educational disadvantages as the result of enemy presence during the war; parental repression; illiterate parents; over-protection by parents; and early marriage. None blames schools.

Nevertheless the rates of repetition in all the schools Woldemichael visited were high, which raises questions as to the quality of teachers. Two problematic areas identified are the medium of instruction (often Arabic is emphasized over local languages, resulting in language overload) and religious education. Those schools using a local language have less repetition than those using Arabic.²⁰ Religion is also becoming a problem in urban schools, with children of another faith being expected to leave the classroom.

Woldemichael also advocates separate curriculum being designed for each of the main occupational groups. He sees this as a way to provide them with the skills needed to survive in the harsh environment (that they have known for generations). Again this shows a somewhat over-optimistic view of the role of education and a pessimistic view of pastoral communities ability to survive and thrive. He also suggests that in order to address some of the special problems faced by girls, water supply be given priority and grain mills provided, as these would ease the girl child's most arduous tasks. He says that these areas were highlighted by research, although they were not mentioned by either the students or the teachers as one of the reasons for their educational disadvantage.

One would have thought that the earlier discussions about distance would have led, naturally, to a discussion of one-teacher schools or of mobile schools, (which was the model during the armed struggle and is hardly discussed by Woldemichael). The latter is dismissed as out-of-hand, being expensive and unnecessary as sedentarization is happening anyway; a watered-down version of the former is proposed in the form of 3-4 teacher schools.

20. However, he points out that in order to teach in the vernacular, the ministry would need external support to establish an institute.

Chapter 6

Summary and conclusions: Education policies and nomad culture

The World Declaration on Education for All, 1990, focused attention on educational disparities within countries and on the specific needs of particular groups, although the children of nomadic pastoralists were not mentioned, perhaps as they were seen as separate from the 'host' societies. However, the renewed commitment at Dakar means that the low rates of educational participation of children of nomadic pastoralist groups are a problem of national significance in attempting to meet International Development Targets (IDTs).

Does the evidence support either of the opposing positions?

There have been many attempts to establish education services to meet the learning needs of nomadic pastoralists. On the whole, they have failed. For some, this is because pastoralists are unable to develop beyond traditional economic practices and cling stubbornly to outdated cultural practices. For others, pastoralists are a minority community whose way of life and values are poorly understood and threatened by dominant social and political forces. This contested view of pastoralism and its eventual resolution in terms of complexity has been taken as a framework for this review.

It is correct to say that the inevitability and benefit of the settlement of nomads is an assumption underpinning the great majority of nomadic development and education projects. Sometimes this may concur with the nomads' own wishes, such as when their access to grazing land has come under pressure (Ezeomah, 1987b: 26-30); very often, it is a 'top-down' policy. The extent to which the nomads affected accept the idea, as opposed to being manipulated by it, is central to the validity and strength of settlement-oriented projects in which they are involved. Indeed, it is also clear that levels of enrolment have been very low, whether because

nomadic groups are ‘resisting’ education or simply because it is not being made available to them. Many have concluded from this that pastoralism is an obstacle to the achievement of EFA.

It was an explanation that appealed to those who saw pastoralism as being ‘old-fashioned’ and inconsistent with the idea of a national economy and a nation state. Such critics of pastoralism have wanted to modernize it, transform it or if necessary eliminate it. However, this explanation was also adopted by the ‘friends of the pastoralists’. They justify the limited participation of pastoralists in education by arguing that it has been used (ineffectually they would add) as a tool to transform the pastoralists into something else – labourers, farmers, soldiers, etc. Central to both positions is the argument that education is designed to transform pastoralism and is, therefore, antagonistic to it. Both schools of thought reflect the application of distinct conceptual poles that understand pastoralism to be separate from, and in opposition to, sedentarism (whether rural or urban). It is an idealized understanding and one that is at odds with the reality of peoples’ lives, where the boundaries between these poles become blurred as individuals and families within broader kinship groups move between them and maintain links across them. Moreover, as pastoralism adapts to new pressures, as well as to new opportunities, Leggett (2001) suggests that arguments that pastoralists either have a negative attitude towards education, or have effectively rejected it, are increasingly outdated and unconvincing.

The lack of flexibility of the state?

We have documented the wide range of approaches that have been attempted over a long period. In the span of time from the 1970s and earlier, through the 1980s and 1990s, despite changes and developments, by and large the same issues have continued to emerge: These include the interface between nomads and the state, the extent to which the state can or should support and protect nomads’ traditional way of life, and the extent to which the nomads wish to become assimilated into the state as opposed to maintaining their traditional clan loyalties above all else. How education contributes to this set of balances looks set to remain topical for some considerable time to come.

Indeed, education policies often appear to antagonize nomads’ culture at many levels: in their principles and goals, in their explanatory paradigms;

in their solutions and implementation; in their approach to evaluation. A Maasai scholar explaining the failure of the Kenyan education policy in the 1970s underlines “the practical irrelevance of an imported Western model of schooling and its basic incompatibility with prevailing social and cultural values and practices” (Sarone, 1984).

In particular, few formal (mass) education programmes have performed with any degree of success. The limited examples have either been delivered within a non-antagonistic cultural environment and a sympathetic local education structure (such as in Somalia), or are ‘planted’ into an existing pastoral support ideology (such as in Iran), or are matched by pastoral development policies successful in (a) decreasing labour intensity and (b) freeing children from the household’s labour demand (such as in Mongolia).

There are more examples of successful non-formal education programmes. These have the following features:

- They are delivered within a non-antagonistic cultural and human environment.
- They are based on two-way processes, are highly flexible in structure and content and maintain such flexibility over time, in order to be able to respond to changing needs.
- They take place in informal settings, in the case of primary education, and the school environment allows parents’ to maintain close surveillance over the physical and moral security of children (especially girls).
- They are willing to acknowledge social, economic and political hindrances to pastoral livelihood security beyond pastoralists’ control and provide skills *specifically* designed to increase that control (e.g. campaigning, lobbying, local advocacy, etc).
- They interlace with existing government institutions for education and development.

Overall, the non-formal approach has proved more successful and cheaper to implement. However, as long as non-formal education is not recognized at the same level as formal schooling, both in administrative terms and in people’s perceptions, its ‘success’ will ultimately be subject to its capacity to convey out-of-school children into otherwise unsuccessful, unresponsive formal education systems.

Ezeomah (1997: 28-9) summarizes the lessons learnt about nomadic education in Africa:

- Recognition of nomadic culture is necessary for programmes to be successful and more research is needed.
- Nomads dislike western delivery systems, not education as such.
- Education should be taken to nomads on the move, by various means.
- Education needs to be developed to suit nomadic lifestyles in order to succeed.
- Nomads should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their education programmes.
- Development of suitable skills and knowledge will improve individual nomads, their societies and their nations.
- Nomadic education is an international responsibility, as nomads spread across national borders.

The political dimension of curriculum and course design

Nomadic education can serve directly political purposes: The question of whose political purpose is implicit in every decision, from the initial decision to plan to implement a nomadic education programme, through designing the curriculum and delivery model to funding, recruiting learners and staff and evaluating the programme. This is not just a cynical twenty-first century comment. An analysis of one of the earliest ‘successful’ programmes – the Tent Schools in Iran – underlined its political agenda from the points of view of both the Persian Government (consolidating the power over tribes in turmoil) and the United States of America (preventing the potential spread of communist ideology among the tribes and ensuring access to Persia’s oil reserves). Shahshahani (1995) raises serious concerns about the manipulative use of education and the difficulty of defining unambiguous criteria for identifying the success of a programme.

The goals of nomadic education (whether implicit or explicit, imposed from above or identified by the nomads) may include integration, settlement, nation-building, improving economic prosperity, strengthening government control, development or protection and preservation of one’s own nomadic culture and society, developing life skills, or shifting towards empowerment and self-determination. The appropriateness of the curriculum, delivery methods, timetabling and relevance must all be considered. In most cases,

balances will need to be struck between the ‘integrative’ and the ‘distinctive’ qualities of any programme for nomads. This applies not only to the content of the course materials but also to the delivery and support systems. It also applies to the language or languages used in courses.

Different perspectives

The nuances highlighted in the previous section are reflected in the way in which the household labour force is increasingly being divided, so that some children are sent to school as judgements are made about the best way of improving the well-being of the family in the short and long-term. It reveals itself, too, in the way in which poor pastoralists, especially those who have been forced into another way of life in the peri-urban quarters of Wajir’s towns and settlements, try to use education as a way of rebuilding their herds as assets and social capital.

Essentially, there are a number of supply and demand issues (see *Table 6.1*) that need to be addressed. However, because of the difficulty of sorting out whether some of the issues are real or just as viewed from one side or another, we have preferred to talk about the providers’ perspective and the perspective of nomadic groups.

Table 6.1 Supply and demand issues

	Providers’ perspective	Nomads’ perspective
Low enrolment	Target group mobility because of nomadic lifestyle Remoteness of pastoral area Low motivation of teachers Parents’ ‘ignorance’	Cultural distance of service Alien language of teaching Cultural alienation of school Insecurity for children
High drop-out	Nomads conservatism Child labour Curriculum irrelevance	Low quality Parental exclusion Risk prone school environment Generally hostile

The literature reviewed here suggests that none of these are immutable. Nevertheless, there are some sticking points. In particular, one of the more enduring features of pastoralist communities – although not unique to them – is the subordinate status of girls and women. Based on beliefs and attitudes and legitimated by the fact that it represents a

social norm, explains why, to paraphrase the head teacher of Wajir Girls' Primary School, "in all aspects of education, giving girls a right that is equal to that of boys, is not consistent with prevailing values and beliefs." The resilience of gender inequalities is such that they are unlikely to be effectively addressed by isolated initiatives and will require a comprehensive approach as well as endurance and imagination if they are to be overcome. And while change will not happen until individuals modify their opinions and behaviour, public policy has an important role to play in stimulating and rewarding change. This would have to include consideration not only of the issues of appropriateness and relevance of the content for girls, but also of the infrastructure of educational provision (such as security at and when travelling to and from school); as well as the factors that legitimate the pastoralists' belief system and social norms.

Potential solutions: a mixture of distance learning and fixed schools

A whole range of approaches has been considered: boarding schools; mobile schools; distance education; self-sufficient (or self-reliant) schools; feeder schools; and non-formal programmes. To work, they must take into account a wide range of broader political issues such as the lack of political will, resistance to change in education systems themselves, the potential for interference with local knowledge and an unsympathetic cultural environment.

Open and distance learning appears to be one of the most promising approaches. However, resources are limited everywhere, reflecting political priorities. Moreover, economies-of-scale, the standard triumphal flag-waver of distance education programmes, may not readily be achievable with small, remote nomadic groups and intensive support systems. Less has been achieved in using these approaches for the education of nomads than had been seen as the potential. Unlike refugee education – where, for some education and training levels, materials and whole courses may be accessed ready-made from elsewhere – at the basic education level (where the bulk of nomadic education courses are likely to be) course content and materials must generally be developed locally to suitably fit the characteristics of the learners, while tuition, mentoring and other forms of learner support are likely to be relatively labour-intensive and thus costly.

It may be that one has to think in terms of a combination of short periods of residential schooling, when many nomadic groups remain stable for short periods, combined with support through open and distance learning techniques.

It is clear that nomadic pastoralists will send their children to school under certain conditions and for specific purposes, for instance when they are of a certain age, in a group, and in furthering a particular lifestyle. The problem is to know when, where, under what conditions and for what purposes. This is one of the main reasons for this empirical study.

Participation

Few dispute that education systems are, by and large, unresponsive to the needs and living conditions of children from marginal or disadvantaged communities as well as to the changing context regarding the potential of existing community resources for the educational process.

There is an emerging consensus that nomadic populations should be involved in the planning and implementation of initiatives for them in terms of curriculum, programme focus and delivery, rather than imposing policies and designs by a 'top-down' approach. Initiatives that build on what exists, for example drawing on the communications network used by nomad communities themselves in order to build a distance education programme, are more likely to succeed and be sustainable. Examples are in Nigeria (Ezeomah, 1987a: 6; Ezeomah, 1998b: 115ff), Kenya (Adano, 1998: 3) and India (Dyer and Choksi, 1998a: 101).

However, while there has been sensitive inference about the most appropriate form of provision based on detailed knowledge of, and sometimes interaction with, pastoral communities, there are no obvious examples where pastoralists have been 'in the driving seat'. Participation has, at best, been consultation and not partnership.

Donor and governmental priorities

Low educational participation among nomads has simply not been a priority. It is not difficult, therefore, to see why the friends of pastoralists see education as being fundamentally antagonistic to pastoralists' interests. The negative attitudes that pastoralists are accused of having are justified

on the grounds that schooling undervalues their indigenous knowledge, weakens their pastoral production system and threatens their culture. Whatever the validity of these criticisms, they could be applied to peasant production systems generally and not just pastoral systems.

However, there are two dangers in seeking justification of the limited participation of pastoralists in education:

- 1) A tendency to “overstate the immutable uniqueness of the pastoral way of life” (Galaty and Aronson, 1981: 18). There is now plenty of evidence that fixed ‘isms’ demarcating pastoralists from others do not accurately reflect the dynamic and adaptive relationships between pastoralism and other activities. Asserting the distinctiveness of pastoralism, and arguing that it is only the education system that needs to be reformed, is likely to merely reinforce prejudiced opinions that pastoralists are resistant to change and result in a continuation of current policies of neglect and inflexibility.
- 2) Such an approach focuses attention on pastoralists and their reasons for being unenthusiastic about education, rather than focusing attention on the shortcomings of specific government policies. The present pattern of inequality in educational participation merely reproduces and deepens marginalization of pastoralists. That none of the major reports into primary education in Kenya clearly condemns inequalities or commits the Government to significantly improve provision and participation in the pastoral districts raises questions about the seriousness of the Government and its major donors to address this issue.

Once government commitment has been established, there could be a debate about strategies that would be most effective in increasing and sustaining participation. What is needed is not a variety of unco-ordinated projects, each operating on the basis of its own paradigm of development, but rather a national pastoral multisectoral strategy developed in conjunction with representatives of the pastoral communities and recognizing their specificity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Outline of nomadic groups in Education for All (EFA) reports for case study countries²¹

Eritrea

- Part 1. Descriptive section,
The creation of social justice

One of the major challenges in equity has been the improvement in the life of the nomadic population. Although this is a major task and has been considered part of the overall transformation of the society, it is one of the dimensions that will entail sustained and careful interventions. To date, limited efforts at introducing an integrated development project for settling the nomadic people in specific areas have been piloted. The measures were taken in consensus with the local people in places where they could develop their livestock, introduce settled agriculture and obtain basic health, education and other related social services. The experience needs to be evaluated thoroughly in the future, however the general indication is that many communities in the nomadic areas have benefited from such projects.

- Part 2. Analytical section
 - 3.2 Primary education and completion of basic education

Sub-section – Impact on the promotion of equal educational opportunity, accessibility and continuity of basic education

A major concern in enrolment is the age for new entrants into grade 1. In the context of addressing equal opportunity at the right age and reducing

21. UNESCO. 2000. *The EFA 2000 Assessment. Country Reports*. Paris: UNESCO.

opportunity cost, the enrolment age for new intake is the sixth birthday, although in many areas this has not been implemented strictly. An age limit for grade 1 between the 7-9 age group was introduced, taking into consideration the social, cultural and economic situation of the rural and nomadic areas. More than 68.4 per cent of the new entrants were not of the official admission age in 1998 as compared to 78 per cent in 1993. In grade 1 in general, 2.4 per cent were under-aged and about 75.9 per cent over-aged in 1993 as compared to 4.6 per cent and 66.9 per cent in 1998. This would require a greater mobilization of resources, sensitization of the community, a rapid growth of the school system and management changes in enrolment so that schools do not favour older children.

- Part 2. Analytical section
 - 3.2 Primary education and completion of basic education

Sub-section – Relevance of education

Efforts at introducing relevance in the national curriculum have been a major concern that led to a curriculum review process in 1996. Efforts at introducing relevance and curriculum revision have been suspended until the new national *Human development report* (HDR) policy and strategy is finalized. However, pre-planning exercises and formative changes have been major achievements. Based on the curriculum research study, a situation analysis, content analysis and needs assessment survey have been conducted and basic documents were also prepared. A national Curriculum Policy Framework has also been prepared and is in the process of discussion. This will lead to the development of a (core) curriculum once the HDR policy is finalized. A preliminary survey on the educational need of pastoralists in Eritrea was also made. A major gap in terms of policy and practice is that no clear strategy has been developed in the management and organization of educational opportunity in nomadic areas.

Kenya

- Part 2. Analytical section
 - 5. Progress towards EFA goals and targets

Sub-section – 5.6 Complimentary and alternative approaches (non-formal and special education)

Non-formal education refers to any organized learning activity outside the formal school system. Following the Jomtien Conference (1990), the non-formal education programme emphasizes the educational needs of children and particularly those in difficult circumstances, such as the children of nomadic communities, street children, non-registered children and drop-outs from formal primary schools.

Progress towards achieving EFA goals and targets through complementary and alternative approaches has been made in the following areas:

Education for nomadic and pastoralist out-of-school (OOS) children

- Children and youth

Providing basic education for nomadic and pastoralist communities:

Finances have been put in place to reach and provide education to OOS children and youth in Wajir, Laikipia and Samburu Districts. Mobile schools have been organized in Wajir. In these types of schools, teaching is carried out in *manyattas* (*kraals*). Children are grouped together in the *manyattas* for teaching purposes. Both teachers and children migrate together with community/family as and when geographical conditions dictate.

In Laikipia, shepherd schools (*osiligi*) have been established for OOS children. Children and teachers operate in shifts. When children are not overseeing animals, they attend temporary classes where basic education is provided.

Samburu District has developed a non-formal education (NFE) programme that started in 1992 for OOS youth, mostly herders (*lchekuti*) who failed to attend formal primary schools because their parents wanted them to remain at home to oversee domestic animals. The youth, aged between 6 and 16 years, attend classes from 3.00 p.m., when animals are brought near homes from pasture. The NFE programme is carried out in nearby primary schools and pupils are taught basic literacy and numeracy. The *lchekuti* schools also prepare OOS children for further education. Some of the children join formal primary schools in Standards 3 and 4.

In the 1990s, the main urban centres of Nairobi and Kisumu witnessed an increase in the number of NFE centres and, correspondingly, in the enrolment of children. In 1993, there were 30 non-formal education (NFE) centres with an enrolment of 10,500 children in Nairobi. These centres increased to 120, enrolling 27,268 pupils in 1998. Kisumu Municipality had three centres with an enrolment of 250 pupils. The figures for this municipality in 1998 were 11 centres with an enrolment of 1,114 children.

Special education: Over the past 10 years, there has been steady progress towards provision of special education services. There has been increased access and participation, an increase in the number of teachers and an increase in the physical facilities and number of schools.

Enrolment in primary schools and programmes

Tables 23, 24 and 25 show the progress made in the special education sub-sector. For example, at primary school level enrolment in special schools has increased from 645 in 1990 to 8,978 in 1998. The number of schools rose from 62 in 1990 to 107 in 1998.

Somalia

- Part 1. Descriptive section
- 1.2 Demography

As no recent census has been conducted, the total population of Somalia is subject to several guesstimates exhibiting considerable variations. Largely on the advice of a consultant from the US Bureau of the Census, the United Nations Development Office for Somalia (UNDOS) makes

the following estimates: 1995 -6.26 million ; 1997 -6.59 million; 1999 -7,14 million; and 2000 -7.43 million. An average annual growth rate of 2.76 per cent for the period 1995 to 2000 is estimated. Although two decades of violent disturbances have led to major changes in the location of human settlement, the population can be classified into three categories: (i) nomadic pastoralists (52 per cent); (ii) sedentary rural (24 per cent); and (iii) urban (24 per cent).

- Part 2. Analytical section
 - 5. Assessment of basic education

Sub-section – 5.1 Early childhood education care and development (ECD)

Table A.1 Percentages of 4-10 year-olds attending Koranic School, 1996/1997

Population category	North-west	North-east
Urban	76	63
Sedentary rural	64	62
Nomadic	18	4
Zonal	59	39

Source: Njoe, 1996 and 1998.

From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that, even though the two systems are not strictly alternatives, the proportion of the 3-5 age group enrolled in either Koranic schools or kindergartens is small. Particularly important, as shown in *Table A.1* nomadic communities, which comprise more than 50 per cent of the total population of Somalia, are poorly served in Koranic education. This fact comprises a major challenge to the future development of the education system.

Partly responding to findings that Koranic schools are diversifying their curricula to include secular disciplines, since the civil war UNICEF, UNESCO/PEER (Regional Programme of Education for Emergencies, Communication and Culture of Peace) and some NGOs have provided sets of textbooks and other instructional materials to a small number of Koranic schools in various parts of Somalia. Potentially more significant,

in 1997 UNICEF assisted in launching an action research project based on 35 selected Koranic schools in the north-west zone, to pave the way for integration into formal primary school through improved curriculum. The project aims to stimulate diversified learning and initiate the development of literacy, numeracy and life skills at an early age, and to encourage entry into and continuation of primary school education. Materials have been developed and teachers trained for instruction in the Somali language, arithmetic and life skills. Plans are underway to replicate the project in the north-east and central zones. This project, an evaluation of which is intended, has been incorporated into UNICEF-Somalia's Master Plan of Operations, 1999-2000, which articulates the rationale as follows:

“A well-designed, age-appropriate, pedagogically sound and socio-culturally relevant early childhood education (ECD, ages 3 to 6) programme will not only promote cognitive and emotional development of young children but will also lay the strong foundation for more relevant learning in primary education. The Programme plans to initiate an action research with a view to developing a strategy for integrating Early Childhood Education (ECE) in existing learning centres, notably Koranic schools and NGO-run kindergartens” (UNICEF-Somalia, 1999: 61).

The available data on primary school enrolment – such as the survey data collected for the 1997 and 1998/1999 UNICEF primary school reports – do not include information on the pupils' early childhood education care and development (ECD) experience. Thus, it is not possible to calculate the percentage of new entrants to primary grade 1 who attended some form of organized ECD programme.

Although plans are underway to collect data on the interface between ECD and primary school, the more challenging task will be the development of a clearly defined role of the Koranic school *vis-a-vis* the formal primary school. At the root of the UNICEF project discussed above is the idea that the Koranic school can be developed to supplement or substitute formal primary education. The project should come up with empirical evidence on the proposition that Koranic schools should be strengthened to serve as feeder schools for rural or urban primary schools, with the former offering grade 1 or 2 and thus grade 2 or 3 being the point of transfer to the latter. This possibility is seen as a viable approach to the expansion

of access to basic education among rural nomadic communities, who constitute more than half of the population of Somalia.

- Part 2. Analytical section,
 - 5. Assessment of basic education

Sub-section – 5.1 Early childhood education care and development (ECD)

Sub-section – 5.3 Adult literacy

Largely due to the foregoing circumstances, several of the indicators of basic education could not be reported on as required by the EFA Technical Guidelines. Affected in this manner are the two indicators on ECD and primary school indicators requiring the age profile of pupils (Net Intake Rate - NIR and Net Enrolment Ratio - NER), repetition, survival rate, achievement and the three indicators of adult education. Furthermore, given the shortcomings of data on Somalia, even where the EFA quantitative framework has been attempted the findings need to be seen as tentative. Pertinent to this is the omission of Somali nationals studying outside the country – an important part of Somalia’s human resource base – in the estimation of the primary education GER. With these caveats in mind, the current status and future development of basic education in Somalia is summarized as follows:

Some attention is being given to early childhood education care and development (ECD), however it is inadequate. This sub-sector needs to be more systematically studied, among other things to establish how the provision could be developed to benefit all communities, including the rural and nomadic.

Tanzania

- Part 2. Analytical section
 - Problems and challenges

Sub-section – 9.3 Adult education

Other groups such as nomads, fishermen, pastoralists hunters/food gatherers and ‘hard to reach’ communities in the country have not had equitable access to adult education.

Uganda

- Part 1. Descriptive section
Progress towards goals and targets (1990-1999)

Sub-section – Universal access to, and completion of, primary education by the year 2000. Goals and targets, Innovative Basic Education for Disadvantaged Children (IBEDC) Programmes

There are a number of innovative basic education programmes for children in disadvantaged areas. For example, in the nomadic areas of Moroto and Kotido (Karamoja) we have Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK), which focuses its activities on bringing literacy to children who are not in formal schools. These children are taught in their *manyattas* (homes) at their convenience, with instructors from their communities taking part. The programme is at a two-year pilot phase in two parishes in Moroto and two in Kotido Districts. By September 1999, enrolment in both Districts was 9,265 children, 67 per cent of whom were girls. The programme is facilitated by Redd Barna Uganda (RBU).

Appendix 2

Curriculum relevance

The general problem of making a curriculum ‘relevant’ is that one is, as Krätli (2000) remarks, *trying to combine two systems of knowledge based on different cultures, and this assumes that:*

- (i) Culture can be reduced to a combination of essential elements on which to base the ‘cultural adjustment’.
- (ii) Pastoralists’ interest in basic education for their children results from a desire to learn how to improve livestock production.
- (iii) Modern science is so superior to local knowledge (and is recognized as such by pastoralists) that, even at primary level, education can be useful for pastoralists’ day-to-day tasks.
- (iv) The people who are now pastoralists, once modernized will still be livestock producers.

However, these assumptions are not supported by basic evidence:

- (i) This ‘building-blocks’ view of culture ignores the dynamic and relational dimension of culture, which in part explains *assumption (iv)* that pastoralists come through the transforming process of education but maintain their ‘essential’ character of livestock producers.
- (ii) Pastoralists’ demand for education appears to be driven more by an interest for the opportunities it promises *outside* of the pastoral economy than by a desire to acquire further pastoral specialist knowledge in school.
- (iii) The dryland environment is highly unpredictable, which poses problems for the routine application of modern science and favours more flexible local knowledge and ways of knowing.²² Local perceptions of modern science are low: In Egypt, for example, Bedouins practising

22. See Scoones, 1995.

desert cultivation think that agricultural engineers ‘just copy traditional ways of solving problems’ (Krätli, 2000, citing Danner and El-Rashid, 1998: 71).

- (iv) Pastoralism is a way of life and not just an occupation. To the extent that pastoralism as a way of life becomes unviable, one cannot predict the direction each individual household will take. Bedouin mothers wish their educated (mostly boy) children to become white-collar employees and high status professionals, and the girls to become teachers. In a survey of primary school children in Eritrea, “the majority would like to be government officials and teachers. a few mentioned professions such as doctor and aeroplane pilot [...]”(Woldemichael, 1995: 38).

But, once again, one is tempted to remark that the specificity of these complaints is overdone: One could make similar points about many disadvantaged cultural minorities in education systems around the world today.

Appendix 3

Review of Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK), Uganda

The review covers two parishes of Moroto district (Naitakwae and Kakingol) and two parishes in Kotido district (Lopuyo and Watakau). It was conducted by national personnel, a team leader and a team member. It is a review of the pilot phase implemented by the local District Education Officers (DEOs).

The objectives of the review are to:

- examine the overall scope of ABEK;
- assess the curriculum and materials;
- examine management and administration;
- assess the relationship between ABEK schools and formal schools;
- assess the gender sensitivity of ABEK;
- provide recommendations on the way forward;
- analyze the financial and resource management of ABEK.

Participatory methods of investigation were used, with no written instruments for fear of distancing the team from the stakeholders. Field visits to the relevant districts were conducted that included observing centre operations, discussions, meetings and consultations with local leaders. Instruments included brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews.

Methods of analysis used included: a strength, weakness, opportunity, threat (SWOT) systems approach and IADEO (intents, activities, displays, evaluation and outcomes); and curriculum analysis.

A selection of their findings²³ is as follows:

- Sixty-seven per cent female enrolment, 33 per cent male.²⁴ This is also the case for attendance.
- Centre attendance generally represents one third of enrolments.
- 1.1 per cent of children transferred to primary schools.
- Only 8.5 per cent of the transfers were girls.
- None of the 69 centres have completed all of the agreed tasks (shelters, stores, huts and pit latrines).
- The project has been financed 'very generously' (see *Executive summary*) by Redd Barna Uganda (RBU).
- Facilitators have problems with the manuals.
- Resource use needs attention.
- The intervention is appropriate and timely.
- Food for work (FFW) needs to be reconsidered.
- ABEK district personnel need more sensitization.
- The quality of manuals and supplementary readers must be addressed.
- The roles of supervisor, co-ordinators and trainers need to be clearly defined.
- Accurate recording and monitoring must be carried out.

23. The review also mentions that UNICEF/CIDA plan to establish 140 learner centres, which the authors consider a premature expansion. This is not clearly documented, but the implication is that donors are pushing for expansion and flag-flying (for example, naming of centres according to the country supporting them). Krätli (2000) concludes that ABEK is a pacification programme.

24. In both districts, female enrolments outnumber that of males, but in Moroto the percentage of males is significantly higher. The significance of this is not addressed in the research.

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Inquiries about the Institute should be addressed to:

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