

Regional Cross-border Livelihood Analysis

Introduction

Under COMESA, the *Pastoral Areas Coordination, Analysis and Policy Support* (PACAPS) project has been working on improving the understanding of livelihoods within pastoral communities living along borders. This process promotes better regional cross-border early warning, inter-country information sharing and harmonised response strategies in neighbouring countries. This Technical Briefing Paper sets out the process of cross-border harmonisation based on two pilot studies¹. This highlights the lessons learnt, challenges and looks at future opportunities to take this work forward in the Horn.

Why do we need cross-border livelihood analysis?

In crisis years, the goal of a regional perspective is to keep nationally-based information systems alert to events “next door”. This helps to predict the livelihood effects of shocks in border areas, and brings all actors in the region to a common forum in order to share information and harmonize early cross-border emergency response. In non-crisis years, the emphasis is on establishing a regional livelihoods-based response analytical framework as the tool to measure the impact of predicted change on pastoralist livelihoods and understanding appropriate interventions. By understanding the characteristics of the border zone communities, regional development program design and implementation can be more effective and timely by being better informed of the pastoral communities' needs.

The purpose is to have enough current information to be able to understand some of the following:

- i) What impacts have previous events/shocks had on border households' asset base and food/cash income?
- ii) Do the above shocks/events have the same impact on communities living on both sides of the border?
- iii) What are the inter-relationships between these communities? e.g. markets, migration etc.
- iv) What would be the most appropriate response strategy for these cross-border communities?

Stages of cross-border analysis

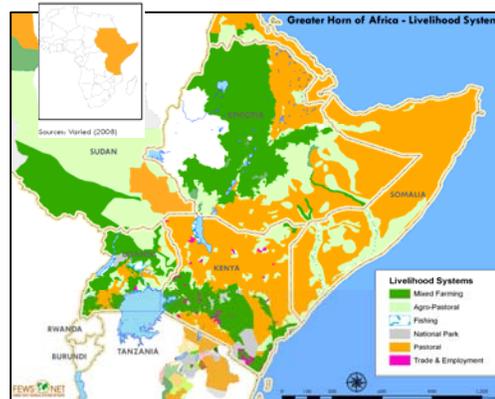
Stage	Activity
Stage 1	Map regional border livelihood zones
	Identify all livelihood information and data spreadsheets for these zones
Stage 2	Comparative review of existing data of the adjacent zones
	Identify information gaps and baseline year differences
Stage 3	Engage with partners to identify field research methodology and tools and information to be collection based on identified gaps
Stage 4	Collaborative planning of cross-border field research e.g. travel

¹ Refer to PACAPS Cross-border Livelihood analysis report: two border pilot profiles – the Ethiopian/Somali hawd and Filtu-Dolo Ethiopia/Mandera Kenya Aug 2009

	arrangements
Stage 5	Inter-agency field teams proceed to border livelihood zones
Stage 6	Analysis of field and baseline data comparing the adjacent border zones
	Produce cross-border livelihood profiles

Identifying cross-border zones

This entails collecting the livelihood zone information and maps for the region and fitting them together like a jigsaw puzzle. The type of livelihood zone i.e. pastoral or agricultural in most case matched the bordering countries. Livelihood zoning has been done in most countries in the region using similar criteria. Livelihood zones are defined as a delineation of areas within which people share broadly the same patterns of livelihood based on agro-ecology, production system and the marketing system. Although these zones do not follow administrative boundaries, some countries (e.g. Kenya) have defined the livelihood zones by using the smallest administrative unit (sub-location).



Identifying required information

The information collected during cross-border livelihood analysis includes specific key and current parameters to be able to compare the two bordering livelihood zones. The baseline years for these pastoral livelihoods zones are not always the same. However, to get a clear comparison, it is important to analyse current livelihood information from the same timeframe. Specific information is collected to understand the change in the livelihood zone since the baseline year and compare the bordering zones. Information includes description of the zone; a timeline of events; current livestock holdings and herd dynamics per wealth group; food and cash income and expenditure patterns; seasonality of production and consumption; seasonal migration patterns; access to markets in country and across borders; coping strategies and other relevant general issues including security, inflation, clan relationships and access to social services.

Challenges of cross-border livelihood analysis

Available up-to-date baseline data

It is rare to find up-to-date livelihoods baseline information. To get a current snapshot of the border livelihoods, a comprehensive and complete set of information must be collected. Livelihood baselines are constantly being updated in the region and livelihood assessments along bordering zones. Organisations leading in these assessments (SC UK, LIU, FSNAU, FEWS NET and Oxfam) should include a check list of required information for cross-border comparison. Ideally, livelihood baseline research should be coordinated and bordering zones should be assessed at the same time. The other reason why a full current quantitative livelihood picture would be useful is that previous baselines use different reference years, making comparison of the two zones more difficult. For instance, the last baseline for the Ethiopian *hawi* describes a good year while that of the

Somalia *hawi* a bad year². The recent HEA baselines conducted by LIU in Ethiopia use the same reference year for each region which makes comparisons of neighbouring livelihood zones easier.

Access to border areas

Due to fragile political system, security and border restrictions in the Region, access to border areas is difficult with varying travel requirements. Failure to present the right travel/identity documents to different authorities causes delays in travel. Prior to border assessments, security clearance and travel documentation must be fully prepared to avoid any security situations for the teams or delays.

Partner collaboration

Engaging with partners and planning collaborative inter-agency assessments is challenging. Finding a suitable time for all parties and agreeing on the process and common field tools can take months of organise. However, if a common consensus can be reached, an inter-agency collaboration can be successful. It adds to the credibility of the research and a shared ownership ensures a greater impact of the advocacy.

Team composition

The technical demands on team members are high requiring team members to have capacity/skills in the agreed research approach and local knowledge of livelihoods for at least one side of the border. Efficient utilization of the team knowledge and expertise should be used during the planning stages and designing the sub-teams. For the pilot cross-border harmonisation zones, two teams with representatives who have knowledge of both sides of the border carried out the field research simultaneously. However, to get best results, one team should assess both sides of the borders. Each border zone field assessment took 3 weeks.

Lessons learnt for future cross-border livelihood analysis

Cross-border analysis will benefit regional focused programs (including USAID RELPA, USAID Food for Peace, DFID safety-net programme and ECHO RDD) and future regional initiatives. This process has been the first step towards building good partnerships among cross-border organizations and actors. Disseminating cross-border profiles will encourage individual countries and their early warning systems to share further livelihoods information on a regular basis. Finding common ways of using country level information for regional analysis will improve early warning and intervention co-ordination across the region.

Future opportunities in the region

It would be beneficial to continue the cross-border harmonisation along all borders within the Region. The PACAPS project focused only on the pastoral livelihood zones along the Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia borders. It would also be interesting to include the agro-pastoral and riverine livelihood zones into this

² Although baseline years maybe different, when a defined problem of a current year such as price increase or production reduction is run through both sets of baseline data, the impact is the same, although the outcome differs due to each LZ coping capacity.

analysis to understand the full inter-relationships and dependencies of these cross-border populations.

Table 2: Cross-border pastoral livelihood zones for Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia

*Grey shading reflects the 2 pilot cross-border zones

West Golis & Guban Pastoral, Somaliland	Shinile Pastoral, Ethiopia	
Kakaar-Dharor Pastoral, Somaliland	Shinile Pastoral, Ethiopia	
Hawd North-west Pastoral, Somaliland	Harshin-Dagahbur East Pastoral, Ethiopia	
Hawd North-east Pastoral, Somaliland	Lowland Hawd Pastoral, Ethiopia	
Southern Inland Pastoral, Somalia	Afder Pastoral, Somali Region, Ethiopia	
Dawo Pastoral, Somalia	Mandera East Pastoral, Kenya	Filtu-Dolo Pastoral, Ethiopia
Southern Inland Pastoral, Somalia	Eastern Bushland Pastoral, Kenya	
South-east Pastoral, Somalia	Wajir South-western Grassland, Kenya	
Moyale Weyamo pastoral LZ, Ethiopia	Pastoral – all species, Kenya	
Market-isolated cattle and shoaat pastoral, Ethiopia	Pastoral – all species, Marsabit, Kenya	
Arid predominantly pastoral livestock and trade, Southern Sudan	Pastoral – all species, Turkana, Kenya	

Future opportunities outside the region

The process used for the cross-border analysis in the East African region could be replicated in other regions.

The main general lessons to be taken to replicate this process in any region are:

1. **Consensus on a common livelihoods approach** to ensure technical rigour and compatibility with existing livelihood analysis in country
2. **Complete and up-to-date baselines** as the basis of the cross-border process, although if time and resources allow the baselines can be done (or at least updated) at the same time as the cross-border assessments. Additional cross-border questions should be added to baseline assessment checklists for all border areas.
3. **Strong collaboration** with national early warning systems, Government, implementing agencies and donors. Joint planning and technical arrangement by cross-border partners would be a strategic step towards avoiding disagreements over methodology, processes, basic objectives and expected outputs.
4. **Multi-disciplinary assessment teams** achieved through strong collaboration with appropriate partners and mixing insider and outsider perspectives
5. **Political stability and general security** along borders to facilitate access and ensure safe and hassle free travel
6. **Realistic timelines and resources** Cross-border livelihood assessments can be expensive requiring high levels of technical expertise, travelling over large distances and careful planning with relevant visas and travel documents.
7. **Inter-governmental and inter-agency initiatives** established to follow up on emerging cross-border livelihood issues and jointly plan and coordinate response. This would require the political will and commitment of Governments, implementing agencies and donors.

Uses of cross-border livelihood profiles

Due to the nature of this region, the cross-border communities suffer from precarious security coupled with susceptibility to harsh climatic conditions. The

challenge is to produce timely and evidence-based early warning. The livelihood profiles provide:

- A context for regional food security analysis cutting across borders
- A better understanding of impacts of shocks on both sides of the borders with probable response strategies e.g. population/livestock sudden influx
- A benchmark to monitor important indicators to understand these border communities. These include the trend in livestock numbers, herd dynamics; changes in seasonal activities – migration to access pasture and water; price fluctuations on both side of the border and market access; security; environmental degradation; changes in food and cash income opportunities and response strategies.
- Information to design interventions appropriate for these border areas with consideration for the neighbouring communities.
- A reason to avoid double survey of groups: duplication of efforts on both sides of the border
- One platform for use in advocacy because of similarities in different countries