Policy Processes Shaping Livestock Market Transformation in Turkana County

Summary
This policy brief focuses on policy areas that according to the literature review and stakeholders have the greatest influence on livestock trade efficiency in Turkana County and beyond. These issues include support to various groups of market players to enhance their bargaining power, effective market information generation and dissemination to various segments of the livestock value-chain and strengthening of inter-county dialogues to foster harmonization of levies, legislative framework and pooled infrastructural investments. Other intrinsic market bottlenecks identified by the study include remoteness, inadequately developed infrastructure, mobility of their suppliers, and the extreme seasonal variations in supplies which are considered as key impediments in moving herds to markets in the county.

1. Background
With an annual estimated value of Ksh. 5.9 billion (Turkana County Development Plan, 2013), the livestock industry in Turkana county is not only considered to be the biggest source of livelihoods but also an axis for investment and policy influence. In Turkana, 80% of livestock are marketed in secondary markets, undertaken by middlemen and are mainly subsistence in nature. Livestock off-takes rates are generally considered to be relatively low despite ongoing efforts to access regional and export markets. The current market trends in the county point to typical bottlenecks and opportunities experienced by any community in transition to would transition to an integrated market economy.

Centre for African Bio-entrepreneurship (CABE) with funding from Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa (OSIEA) has been working local partners to document and facilitate policy dialogues targeting innovative livestock marketing and trading initiatives to facilitate learning, and to inform policy and practice in Turkana county. The study focused on critical policy areas that according to the stakeholders have the greatest influence on livestock trade efficiency.

There is relatively huge investment in marketing infrastructure (processing plant): Lomidat category A slaughter facility, the establishment of various livestock market centres including Lokori, Namorouputh, Lokangae, Letea, Kanakurudio and a sales yard at various sub-counties. These are some of the important investments already taken besides the county government’s promise to establish at least one livestock sales yard (Turkana county CIDP) in every sub-county. However, the main challenges to market progression in the county are exploitation by middlemen, inadequate coordination of various players and limited basic information among pastoralists and traders.
Livestock trade in the county is still largely subsistence. In some parts of Turkana, barter trade is still exercised, often taking different forms mostly involving exchange foodstuffs and other household goods for small livestock. The livestock marketing associations, which are the vehicles for livestock trade were found to have weak capacity to handle the emerging market demands. Pastoralists’ cooperatives and Livestock Marketing Associations (LMAs) have attempted to streamline marketing channels but they are few and concentrate on a limited range of animals and animal products. The County Livestock Marketing Council (CLMC) is the umbrella institution and its major responsibility is to lobby and advocate for pastoralist rights within the County and beyond, besides supervising the operations of the LMAs. The collaboration of CLMC and LMA has not been institutionalised across the whole county. The coordination and operationalisation of levies for livestock traders is a point of concern. Livestock traders in the county often incur unnecessary and unexpected expenses while transporting livestock to the market. This reduces market performance and efficiency particularly due to unauthorized levies charged by law enforcement officers (Mwangi, 2005).

In the last 5 years, devolution in Turkana County has been successful as infrastructural development has been achieved with expansion of road networks and markets. Despite this effort, the pastoralists have not fully exploited opportunities for local, regional and international livestock and products market due to the subsistence nature of livestock trade in the county. Livestock trade is largely buyer-driven and significantly subsistence. The livestock numbers are relatively low and disproportionate to the existing market potential. (See details of CMLC and MoLFD databases in 2016 illustrated in Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB-COUNTY</th>
<th>No. of markets according to CMLC and Livestock department</th>
<th>Av. No. of cattle traded per day</th>
<th>Av No of Sheep and goats Traded</th>
<th>Average No. of Camels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkana East</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkana South</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loima</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turana North</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkana Central</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6,12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. West</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6,67</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other factors leading to market inefficiencies in the county are: high transport and trade costs, price fluctuations, weather variations, remoteness and insecurity. Where transport is available, it is often too expensive for traders to utilise. For instance, it cost between Ksh.400 to 500 to transport a mature goat from Lodwar to Nairobi, which is one of the key market destinations. This reduces competitiveness, when compared with livestock from other areas supplying Nairobi markets such as Makueni where transport cost ranges between Ksh.150-200 per goat.

2. Emerging issues for livestock market transformation

The pastoral livestock economy in ASAL counties (such as Turkana) is struggling to meet high market demands and commercialization. The county government and development partners have an important role to play in supporting producers, processors and marketers to organize into viable groups that can access credit, improve their entrepreneurship, gain power to negotiate and optimize economies of scale to reach agreements and contracts on the supply of animals and animal products to markets. Immediate areas of action include: strengthening of goat auction, raising Turkana livestock profile during the seasonal or cultural events and facilitating linkages of livestock entrepreneurs with sustainable livestock markets.
a) **Product quality and differentiation**
Providing high product quality that matches the quality of imported products is critical for successful investment in domestic market opportunities. An important element of strategy is to emphasize the originality of the product and promote use of local brands that attract local consumption and tourism. In order to differentiate the livestock products out of the Turkana and other neighbouring regions, a criteria on flavour (taste and aroma), production process, and packaging (presentation of the final product) could be used. For instance, an interactions with meat traders in Lodwar town during the ReSAHMaP project revealed several livestock product innovation. A few women groups are occasionally been selling ‘ready’ meat products especially around Lodwar-Kitale road, mainly targeting the travellers. This notion (Organic product) could also apply to trade in live animals. Turkana county has the advantage of having livestock mostly fed on grass (natural) instead of grains (often processed or stored using some chemical products). This could be a source of product differentiation on taste and other food quality and safety attributes that applies to both live animals and processed products (see Box1). A differentiation in taste and health attributes between, say, dry (beef, lamb or goat) salami from the ASALs and from other parts of Kenya could find a niche market among local consumers and tourists.

**Box 1: Traditional approaches to meat preservation**

Meat preservation is usually done during the dry period when there is scarcity of pasture and water for livestock. The preserved meat is usually not for sale and mainly for domestic consumption. In TC meat is preserved in the form of Ngatosa, where meat is sliced into thin long pieces and dried or as Enyeswhere meat is minced and preserved in fat/oil. These traditional delicacies which are mainly organic could be exploited for commercial purposes to promote local trade, especially for women traders.

b) **Strengthening of producer and market organizations**
The Livestock Marketing associations (LMAs) and County Livestock Marketing Council (CLMC) play an important role in marketing of livestock and livestock products as well as organizing the pastoralists. Thus, critical interventions need to be put in place to streamline the legal frameworks of the two organizations. The producer organizations need to be supported to strengthen their bargaining power, information acquisition and dissemination on markets to producers, capacity development on governance, and technical assistance on improvement of natural and modern pasture and water management for livestock. Other critical areas for capacity development include herd health management. The LMAs act as vital nucleus for outreach during disease control campaigns. They also provide physical meeting points (livestock sales yards) for livestock marketing events. Thus, there is need to rethink the effectiveness of distribution of the existing yards, especially in regard to prevailing market forces. A starting point would be to carry out a comprehensive SWOT analysis and capacity needs assessment of these organizations.

c) **Framework for supporting alternative market products**
Outside the LMAs, there are organised groups, mainly composed of women, who are engaged in marketing of alternative livestock products including hides and skin. The butcher associations are also women-led. Most recently, the emergence of market stand livestock has been witnessed especially around Lokoheremoi trading centre where the women groups occasionally hawk local delicacies including ngatosa. The county government, acting through the CLMC need to deliberate actions to support such groups through hardware support (Purchase of refrigerator, boilers and improved ovens) and software (linking them to the rapidly growing market especially around the Kakuma refugee camps) as well as training on governance and financial management.
Strengthening markets coordination and inter-county dialogues

One of the main challenges to market progression in the larger ASAL region is weak framework for market coordination. This applies both within the county and the larger northern Kenya counties. This situation calls for serious dialogues not only to pool resources for investments but also to address cross-cutting market bottlenecks including market information access, insecurity and disease control. A value chain approach that exploits the potentials and weaknesses of each level/segment of the value chain at each of the partner counties would help maximise the human, social and financial capital in the region. Effective livestock value chain coordination would ensure that primary producers are adequately informed, livestock get to the right market in time, unnecessary bureaucracies are eliminated thus enhancing market efficiencies.

Issues for implementation by the National Government

- Upgrade infrastructure for small-scale meat value addition and stalls, licencing and certification of livestock products.
- Strengthen grassroots livestock producer organizations with specific focus on the Kraal elders and LMA leaders by mapping and carrying out needs assessment of Kraals, livestock market and herd health capacity (viz. livestock off-take, utilization of market and Early Warning Systems (EWS) information) to attract investments.

3. Key policy recommendations

Issues for implementation by the county Government

- Strengthen skills development for traders in local meat processing. This includes training in meat product development, basic hygiene, public health and business skills development.

Bibliography

5. Turkana South and East Sub County dialogue proceedings held on 25th October, 2016 at Kenya Assembly of God (KAG) Church in Lokichar town, Turkana South

Acknowledgements

This Policy Brief is written by Brighton Marienga (Consultant) and Elsie Kangai (CABE)

Further information: This Policy Brief and reports of the study and the stakeholders are available at: www.Cabe-africa.org. CABE acknowledges appreciates the support of the Open Society Initiative of East Africa (OSIEA).