Shifting Dynamics in Pastoralist Communities
Perspectives from North Kordofan, Sudan

*Findings from field research undertaken for the Joint Project on Women, Natural Resources, Climate and Peace in 2019**

Introduction

Pastoralist groups and farmers have a rich history of co-existence in Sudan's North Kordofan state. Al Rahad locality, centrally located close to North Kordofan's southern border, includes several migratory routes and grazing areas for pastoralist communities as well land used for agricultural production. In recent decades, however, a convergence of several factors – including the cultivation of grazing areas and narrowing of traditional animal routes, conflict and insecurity in neighboring states, and environmental changes – have resulted in challenges for pastoralist communities who rely on safe passage across the region and the protection of available rangeland to support their livelihoods.

To cope with these challenges, pastoralist communities have adopted new migration patterns which can be characterized into two distinct categories. First, some pastoralists groups no longer migrate long distances to insecure or degraded areas and instead utilize the grazing areas available in and around Al Rahad. Second, other groups of pastoralists continue to migrate between North and South Kordofan states but have adapted to the challenges of insecurity by leaving women, children, and the elderly to remain in North Kordofan. In both scenarios, the changing migration patterns have created increasingly "feminized" spaces among pastoralist communities residing in Al Rahad, leading women to take on new household and societal roles in order to sustain their livelihoods in the absence of men. Initial observations documented in this report suggest that the feminization of space is resulting in social and economic shifts which may have important consequences for gender norms, an area of research that merits further exploration.

This study was commissioned as a contribution to the project "Promoting gender-responsive approaches to natural resource management for peace in North Kordofan, Sudan," an initiative of the Joint Programme on Women, Natural Resources, and Peace.* Against this backdrop, subsequent sections of this report provide a first look at the shifting social, economic, and political dynamics among pastoralist groups in Al Rahad that have resulted from the changes in available natural resources. In particular, the report highlights the gender dimensions of these changes, noting how men and women have adopted coping mechanisms that challenge traditional gender norms, which may both expose women and girls to new economic, political,

* The Joint Programme for Women, Natural Resources, Climate and Peace was established in 2016 as a partnership between UN Environment, UN Women, UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office to promote natural resource-based interventions as a tool for strengthening women's participation in three areas: 1) participation in dialogue, mediation and conflict resolution efforts, 2) participation in governance and decision-making at all levels, and 3) contributions to economic recovery and sustainable development.

and social risks, as well as create new opportunities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

Five distinct sections follow this introduction. The report first outlines the research purpose, before turning to describe the climate change and security context. Then, the report describes how shifting migratory patterns is resulting in the "feminization" certain communities. Findings from field research are then presented under key insights and finally, the report closes with a conclusion section.

Purpose

The objective of this study is to provide insights and observations from pastoralist communities and other key stakeholders, about shifting gender norms, roles and relations, as well as other important adaptations to the changing political, social, and environmental landscape in Al Rahad locality of North Kordofan state. The analysis identifies possible entry points and opportunities to support and empower women and girls from pastoral communities, as well as possible risks associated with the changing landscape.

The study was carried out by a research team who conducted focus group discussions and key informant interviews with pastoralist groups, local administrative units, and other key stakeholders in Al Rahad. This report presents the information, perceptions, and attitudes reflected in these conversations, drawing on local expertise and observation for analysis.

Such insights are particularly valuable given the multitude of challenges associated with accessing pastoralist groups for research purposes. It is important to note, however, that this report is not comprehensive or exhaustive. Rather, it is a first look intended to inform future researchers, programme designers, and policymakers with food for thought for further exploration.

The climate change and security context

Al Rahad is one of eight localities in North Kordofan state, home to a diverse group of inhabitants representing many of Sudan's ethnic groups. Its highly-variable ecosystem, extending from a dry, desert-like climate in the north to fertile, mountainous land in the south, supports a mix of livelihood practices, including both subsistence farming and pastoralism.[1] Nomadic pastoralists groups have traditionally migrated from the south to north, passing through or settling in rangeland in and around Al Rahad locality in the rainy season (July to November), and returning southwards when the season changes to neighboring South Kordofan state. These nomadic groups rely on secure animal routes and available *makhraf* (grazing land) in the region to support their livelihoods.

Traditionally, farmers and pastoralists have had a symbiotic relationship in Al Rahad (though not without conflict). However, recent changes in climate, the expansion of mechanized farming, and the outbreak of violence in neighboring states has reduced pastoralist access to grazing land, increased competition over natural resources, and contributed to fueling new tensions in Al Rahad. This section describes three important factors, the convergence of which has exacerbated

resource scarcity and forced pastoralist groups to change their migratory patterns, resulting in social and economic shifts and new threats to security and stability in the region.

1. *The cultivation of grazing land and narrowing of animal routes*

In recent years, Al Rahad's primary grazing areas have been rapidly shrinking. The expansion of rain-fed agriculture and mechanized farming has drastically decreased the amount of land available for grazing and has narrowed, or in some cases entirely blocked, migratory routes. According to the Director General of the Range Department in North Kordofan, 90 per cent of the land allocated for grazing in the State has been cultivated, despite policy efforts to protect pastoralist grazing areas.[2] Tensions over land have fuelled conflicts between pastoralist communities and subsistence farmers, posing new threats to peace and stability in the area.

2. *Conflict in neighboring states*

Violent conflict in South Kordofan (to the south) and Darfur (to the west) has contributed to the strain on resources in Al Rahad locality, and created immense challenges for pastoralists who traditionally migrate between South and North Kordofan states. The conflict in South Kordofan has increased insecurity along migratory routes and in southern grazing areas, and movement throughout the region has become extremely challenging with a high risk of violent attacks. This has led pastoralists groups to adjust their migratory patterns, spending longer periods of time in Al Rahad – or in some cases, leaving women and children to remain in Al Rahad while men move with their herds – in order to maintain their livelihoods as well as their personal security. In addition, Al Rahad has received an influx of tens of thousands of people displaced by conflict from neighboring Darfur and South Kordofan states, further straining the locality's available resources.

3. *Climate change and environmental challenges*

Finally, Al Rahad has experienced the devesting impacts of climate change and environmental challenges, resulting in fluctuations in rainfall, droughts, flooding, and the deterioration of natural resources. Al Rahad is located along the Sahel, named "ground-zero" for climate change.[3] Between 1983 and 1984 western Sudan experienced a severe drought, which resulted in large waves of migration into Al Rahad to cope with famine. Climate change and environmental degradation further limit the availability and reliability of natural resources to support and sustain groups with different livelihood practices.

Shifting migratory patterns and the "feminization" of space

Pastoralist communities utilizing grazing land in Al Rahad have changed their migration patterns in different ways to adapt the convergence of factors described above, resulting in a shift towards sedentarisation and the creation of new spaces that are increasingly occupied by women. New migratory patterns can be described in two categories: the first consists of those who continue to

migrate seasonally between South Kordofan and North Kordofan, and into Al Rahad. The second consists of communities who have stopped migrating to South Kordofan as a result of the ongoing conflict and high levels of insecurity, and instead move between grazing lands in and around Al Rahad locality.

Interviews with groups across the two categories highlighted a common trend: women and girls are increasingly left in villages to manage households while men and boys move with their herds in search of grazing land, changing the social composition in and around Al Rahad and creating increasingly "feminized" spaces. This is particularly stark in the first migratory category but can be observed to some extent in both categories, as described below.

1. *Continued seasonal migration between South Kordafan and North Kordafan*

This report focuses on subsets from two ethnic groups – the Baggara and the Shanabla – who continue seasonal migration between South Kordofan and North Kordofan states, but have adapted their traditional routes to adjust to new challenges.

Baggara: Traditionally, this group has migrated from South Kordofan in June, passing through Abu Kershola locality which has experienced years of protracted conflict, into North Kordofan through Al Rahad locality and eventually settling in Abu Algor grazing area for the rainy season. However, since the outbreak of conflict in South Kordofan, women and children in this group tend to remain in Al Rahad locality with some smaller animals (sheep and goats) and support the family's income through other mean while men continue with the herds towards South Kodofan.

Shanabla: This group has traditionally migrated from South Kordofan through Umm Ruwaba and Al Rahad localities into Abu Algor grazing areas where women and children remained while men continued northwards to Sodari grazing areas with the larger animals. In recent years, however, this group has experienced two important changes. First, the men have stopped traveling to Sodari, instead remaining in Abu Algor, noting the strong deterioration of grazing lands. Second, like the Baggara group described above, women and children from this group no longer travel to South Kordofan and instead remain in Umm Ruwaba locality while men move south with the herds.

2. *Groups remaining in and around Al Rahad locality*

This report focuses on subsets of three ethnic groups – the Baggara, the Shanabla, and the Kababish – who have become increasingly settled in and around Al Rahad locality.

Baggara: This group relocated to Al Rahad in the 1980s, when civil war brought high levels of insecurity to South Kordofan. They no longer travel long distances to Abu Algor or South Kordofan, and instead move between grazing lands available in Al Rahad and Umm Ruwaba localities. Some members of this group lease agricultural land, which they use for grazing and cultivation, and purchase feed for their livestock from local farmers during the harvest season.

Shanabla: Like the Baggara, this group has settled on the outskirts of Al Rahad locality, and moves with their herds to grazing areas between Al Rahad and Umm Ruwaba. Recently, this

group has also started to rent agricultural land from the local population to use both for cultivation and grazing areas to feed their herds.

Kababish: This is the most settled pastoralist group in Al Rahad, having migrated in the early 1980s from the far north, and has now established the village of Hillat Kababish where families remain permanently. However, some men and boys continue to migrate north with their herds during the rainy season, returning in time for harvest in the dry season.

Key Insights

This section explores how changing migration patterns and the feminization of space in and around Al Rahad is impacting pastoralist communities. Pastoralist experiences are dynamic and complex, and are often informed by multiple identities, including gender, ethnicity, economic or social status, migratory patterns, and culture, among others. While this analysis does not capture the full spectrum of multidimensional identities, it does point to experiences conveyed according to gender, ethnic or tribal affiliation, and/or migration patterns.

Based on conversations with women and men from different pastoralist groups, as well as field observations and interviews with key stakeholders, insights on shifting social, economic, and political dynamics and changes to gender norms are presented across seven domains: access to resources and livelihoods, roles and responsibilities, education, health and nutrition, marriage, technology, and governance and conflict mediation.

1. *Access to resources and livelihoods*

Grazing areas and animal routes available to pastoralist communities are rapidly reducing. Across groups, discussants – particularly men – attributed the deterioration of their grazing land and the narrowing of animal routes to the rapid expansion of mechanized agriculture. Established grazing areas in and around Al Rahad locality, they noted, are being cultivated, placing considerable strain on the now limited rangeland that still available to pastoralists. For example, men from the Shanabla group that continues to migrate seasonally noted that in the past, the Shanabla tribe used to pass through Al Rahad and continue with their larger animals, such as camels, northwards into Sodari locality. Nowadays, however, the furthest north they travel is to the Abu Algor grazing area, located in the northern part of Al Rahad, noting that grazing lands in Sodari have been almost entirely cultivated. At the same time, several groups pointed to the reduction of available grazing land in Abu Algor, the result of expanded cultivation and increased demand.

Animal routes, which once provided safe passage for migration across the region and were sufficiently wide to maintain enough space between the passing animal herds and local farms, have been narrowed, or in some cases entirely blocked by the expansion of cultivated land. One group also noted that “rest and relief areas” – spaces where pastoralists communities would spend a night or two during migration – are also increasingly cultivated. The destruction of migratory routes has forced pastoralists to select new routes, or in some cases, has entirely prevented them from reaching particular grazing areas.

The reduction of available grazing land and narrowing of animal routes has fuelled new tensions between pastoralist and farming communities. Several participants described their adaptations to maintain a "safe" distance from farming communities, pushing them increasingly into the margins. Members of the Shanabla group that continues to migrate, for example, noted that that traditional animal routes connecting North Kordofan state and Khartoum, have been recently cultivated by farmers. Pastoralists have adapted by using the road for transportation instead of migrating by foot, which would force them to pass through farmers' land. The Shanabla group remaining in Al Rahad noted that they have started to stay within urban centres to maintain a safe distance from farms.[4]

In one concerning discussion with a group of male elders, participants voiced their frustration with the continued infringement onto their grazing land and the lack of protection by authorities, despite numerous complaints. They noted that should the situation persist, they will be they will have no choice but to resort to violence to ensure access to grazing resources. In a similar light, another group of men described their reality as choosing between selling their herds and changing their lifestyles or staying in the limited grazing areas and confronting farmers who "invade" these areas for cultivation.[5]

Pastoralist groups in Al Rahad have started to engage in land cultivation and trade to cope with resource scarcity. Within the category of those who remain in Al Rahad, discussants noted that groups have adopted to changing conditions by reducing their herds, finding new ways to utilize available land, moving to more urban areas to avoid confrontations with farmers, and in some cases, adopting other forms of local work. For example, men from the Kababish tribe reported that they started to settle in Al Rahad in 2004, purchasing their own agricultural land which is used for establishing their family homes and for cultivation.[6] Members of the Baggara and Shanabla tribes reported leasing agricultural land, both for grazing and for cultivation, selling off animals for extra cash, and supplementing the loss in grazing land by purchasing feed from local farmers after harvest season.

Groups that continue seasonal migration to South Kordofan have also started to engage in other local forms of work. The discussants from the Baggara tribe noted that men are looking for farming land to cultivate themselves, and supplement animal feed. They have also started to engage in trade in local markets. New adaptations have proven to be challenging as this group lacks cultivation and trading skills.

In a discussion with a group of male elders from the Shanabla tribe that continue seasonal migration, participants cited two options that they see to be feasible, should the situation continue as it is, both involving high levels of risk. The first is to remain in South Kordofan to access the grazing land necessary for sustaining the well-being of their herds, risking high levels of insecurity, violence, and the spread of disease. The second is to sell their livestock and settle in urban areas in North Kordofan.

The income derived from the sale of dairy products – traditionally a women's domain – has decreased as a result of new shifts in migratory patterns and the reduction of grazing land. Women across groups noted that in the past, family livelihoods were dependent on milk and its derivatives. The sale of milk in neighbouring markets was the responsibility of women who generally had control over revenue generated and the power to spend according to their needs

without interference from men. However, the income earned from the sale of milk has decreased for several reasons.

First, the production of milk has decreased. For example, Shanabla women who continue seasonal migration to South Kordofan reported that in the past, women produced and sold milk during their long migratory journeys, for which they once relied on camels as a means of movement. However, the group now relies on cars to for migration. As a result, women do not have time to extract and sell milk during the journey. In other cases, women reported that as men settle in grazing areas further away, women do not have access to milk-producing herds. Second, some women noted that even when income is earned from milk products, it is increasingly used to buy supplementary feed for livestock who are no longer supported by sufficient grazing land.

Women who remain in Al Rahad locality when men migrate south during the dry season have adopted new sources of livelihoods, in the absence of men. In the Baggara tribe, for example, women discussants noted that they earn income from nearby farms through work as day labourers, as well as through the production and sale of charcoal and firewood in local markets.

2. *Roles and responsibilities*

Across groups, women discussants noted distinct roles associated with gender: men choose grazing areas and tend to the herds and women are responsible for household chores. In general, men also look after the herds, manage disputes that arise with farming communities, and in some cases, cultivate rented or purchased land. Women are responsible for activities closer to home, including caring for the children, fetching water, collecting firewood, building houses, producing and selling dairy products, and tending to smaller animals, such as sheep. In some cases, women also engage in handicraft work, such as in the Shanabla tribe, where women have traditionally been responsible for making leather handicrafts and spinning wool. These handicrafts are produced for use in the home. If there is a surplus, women can sell their products and earn an income.

In some cases, discussants reported significant changes in women's roles and responsibilities, a result of the increasing feminization of space in Al Rahad. For example, women from the Baggara community that continue seasonal migration noted that during the dry season (November to July) men migrate to South Kordofan with their herds and women remain in Al Rahad locality. In one particular focus group, women discussants noted that in the absence of men, they have adopted new roles associated with female-headed households. These include carving out new avenues for earning income, as described above, and engaging in conflict resolution, a responsibility that was previously designated for men, or in some specific cases, elder women. Discussants noted that this shift has increased the burden on women, who maintain their previous responsibilities at the household level. At the same time, it has created possible shifts in power dynamics, as women take on roles traditionally associated with men.

3. *Education*

Across groups, available educational opportunities are limited, particularly for girls. In discussions with pastoralists from groups who continue to engage in seasonal migration, participants noted that the conflict in South Kordofan has had a detrimental impact on education outcomes. Previously, both groups noted that education was available for boys and girls to some degree. Girls, however, unlike boys, were not permitted to attend boarding schools far from their homes, severely limiting their opportunities to advance in the system. The situation for girls, and possibly for boys, was made worse by the shift in migratory patterns following the outbreak of conflict in South Kordofan as the school calendar in North Kordofan is not in line with migratory movements. In some cases, boys are permitted to stay in urban centres to attend school but girls, it seems, are not.

Among groups who are more settled in Al Rahad, educational outcomes are mixed. One group, for example, noted that education is encouraged more now compared to the past, but the focus remains on education for boys. Girls who do attend school rarely exceed basic levels, in some cases drop out to marry or because schools are far from their homes.

4. *Health and nutrition*

Shifts in migratory patterns and livelihoods have led to changes in diet among pastoralist communities. Dairy products and millet have traditionally been staples of the pastoralist diet, however recent shortages in milk and increasingly settled communities have led pastoralists to adopt local products, such as dried okra and sorghum. Some participants perceived these foods to be of lower nutritional value. In a focus group with Kababish women, the most settled of the groups, participants said their diet has indeed shifted to align with that of urban communities, but milk remains an essential element.

More settled lifestyles may have increased access to and awareness of health services. Many of the study participants cited access to healthcare as a positive externality from changes in migratory patterns. Proximity to health centres and highways and a more settled lifestyle has made receiving care more accessible to pastoralist communities. Groups previously reliant on mobile immunization campaigns can now access vaccination centres directly, while less movement among pastoralist groups has made it easier for mobile health teams to reach these communities. In several women's focus groups, participants also noted positive reproductive health outcomes, citing that women are interacting with trained midwives from nearby towns, and visiting healthcare centres during and after pregnancy more than before.

Frequent movement resulting from more limited access to land, including rest and relief areas, has led some women and girls to experience high levels of physical exhaustion. As women are traditionally responsible for building houses, including collecting and assembling materials, more frequent assembling and disassembling of physical structures has resulted in overexertion and greater than usual levels of physical exhaustion, as reported by discussants in a focus group with Baggara women and girls who continue to migrate.

5. *Marriage*

Exposure to the culture of settled communities may be having a positive impact on marriage practices among pastoralist communities, but feedback from study participants varies. Among the groups who continue to migrate to South Kordofan, discussants noted that girls are consulted, and their opinions are considered more than before, but early marriage is still taking place. Members of the groups who remain in Al Rahad locality similarly cited improvements in marriage practices, noting that girls are married at an appropriate age of maturity. It is not clear from discussions what constitutes an "appropriate age."

6. *Technology*

New uses of technology – namely cell phones and cars – contribute to migratory adaptation strategies among groups and have important consequences for women and girls. Based on observations of the Baggara group that continues seasonal migration, it appears that women, particularly older women, have cell phones that they use frequently to socialize and exchange information. In recent years, cell phones have become particularly important because they allow women to stay connected to their husbands and sons when they are away in South Kordofan for several months.

Several groups also referred to increases in the use of cars, both for migratory purposes and locally. This has had mixed effects, especially for women and girls. For example, women from the Shanabla group that continues seasonal migration reported that in the past, the group relied on camels as a means of movement and migration but recently have become dependent on cars for travel. This change in transportation has prevented women from producing and selling their dairy products, which they used to do during the long journey, depriving them of access to important income sources. At the same time, the use of cars has been helpful in providing transportation to local health centres, for example, to provide reproductive health care during and after pregnancy.

7. *Governance and conflict resolution*

Disputes between farmers and pastoralists, once resolved using customary law and traditional approaches to mediation, now often involve multiple branches of government. One discussion group stressed that this shift has made resolving such conflicts more expensive and cumbersome, requiring several trips to local administrative units. For example, in the past, local disputes were often resolved directly between pastoralists and farmers – sometimes involving the village Sheikh – by paying a fine to compensate for damage incurred to farmland by pastoralists' herds. Now, however, local disputes may involve the village popular committee (a local body of government) and the police, and sometimes end up in court.

Box 1. A Conversation with the Native Administration: Historical trends and new risks for conflict

In a focus group discussion with representatives from the local Native Administration, participants described the role of customary law in reinforcing and protecting the once symbiotic relationship between pastoralist and sedentary communities. The pastoralist groups used to send word to the farmers when they began their journeys towards North Kordofan. The Native Administration facilitated this communication so the farmers could anticipate the arrival of the pastoralist groups. The Administration was responsible for overseeing the protection of migratory routes leading into North Kordofan. During the rainy season (July to November), it was not uncommon for farmers and pastoralist groups to trade among themselves or even participate in one another's traditional ceremonies as a sign of mutual respect.

In recent years, however, tensions between farmers and pastoralists have escalated over access to vital resources, such as land. In the last two years alone, 24 cases of conflict between farmers and pastoralists have resulted in murder.* At the same time, the Native Administration's authority to address conflicts between farmers and pastoralist communities has been deteriorating. The state policy to delegate dispute mediation to village popular committees, police, and local courts undermines customary law and creates a lengthy, expensive process for local communities.

***These numbers are based on local police and hospital records, reinforced by discussants in the Native Administration focus group.**

Overall, pastoralists groups voiced frustration with the significant expansion of land cultivation and the failure by government to protect grazing land and animal routes. Several groups noted that they had filed formal complaints to enforce local protection laws, but to no avail. At the same time, discussions revealed a call for state intervention to provide stricter protections of pastoralist resources.

Conclusion: advancing and sustaining peace

The convergence of several factors – the expansion of mechanized agriculture, violent conflict and political insecurity, and climate change and environmental degradation – have threatened the traditional livelihoods of pastoralist communities in Sudan. In Al Rahad locality, long home to both sedentary and nomadic groups, pastoralist communities have coped with the changing environment by altering their migratory patterns. This has led groups to adopt a more settled lifestyle, resulting in some (mostly women and children) or all families members remaining in and around Al Rahad locality.

New adaptation mechanisms of pastoralist communities in Al Rahad have important economic, social, cultural, and political implications, a phenomenon not unique to Sudan. Across sub-Saharan Africa, increased sedentarisation of pastoral groups poses new risks, as well as opportunities for development, food security, and stability. In the Western Highlands of Cameroon, the transformation for pastoral communities from a nomadic to a more sedentary lifestyle has both generated competition over land and created new conflicts with farmers, while

improving agro-pastoral production and development at the community level.[7] In northern Ethiopia, Afar pastoralists have responded to climate change, extreme weather variability, and the reoccurrence of drought by adapting different livelihood practices, including engaging in local trade, the formal workforce, and other production systems.[8]

As revealed throughout this report, such adaptation strategies and coping mechanisms are often associated with shifts in traditional gender norms. On one hand, women face a "double bind," a phenomenon also documented in analyses of pastoralist communities across East and the Horn of Africa, referring to their marginalization both within their own communities as women and, within the broader context, as pastoralists.[9]

> The perception that pastoralism is unsustainable, as well as rapid commercialization, climate change and ongoing conflicts are forcing pastoralists into sedentarization. Women shoulder increasingly heavy burdens to provide for their families, which also impacts on girls' education and constrains their participation in public life. Pastoralist women work longer and harder than men, fulfilling 'female' roles in the household, as well as making money from tasks traditionally deemed to be 'women's work,' including collecting firewood, and making and selling handicrafts. This labour is in such demand that girls are often removed from school in order to work. Women do not attend many of the social occasions at which men make decisions that affect the whole community.[10]

The above quote, drawn from a report reviewing pastoralist women's representation, or lack thereof, in governance structures in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, illustrates that the feminization of space resulting from forced changes in migratory patterns is not unique to Al Rahad. The increased burden on women during times of crisis, and within the context of climate change, is well documented. However, the opportunities for positive engagement that harness changing social structures to advance gender equality and improve peacebuilding strategies are still poorly understood.

This report reveals several important implications for peacebuilding and development practitioners, policymakers, and the research community, including potential entry points and opportunities to support and empower women and girls within pastoral communities in livelihoods and conflict prevention capacities, as well as possible risks and vulnerabilities.

Risks and vulnerabilities

1. **Women face increasing burdens, forced to fulfill their traditional responsibilities and as well new demands,** such as providing for the household (financially). At the same time, many pastoral women have lost access to income once derived from dairy products during the migration period. New stress factors could contribute to negative educational outcomes for girls, protection risks (such as if women have to walk long distances in search of firewood), physical exhaustion, and other challenges to physical and mental well-being.

2. **Several participants indicated fears of increasing conflict between pastoralist groups and farming communities over access to land or other natural resources,** voicing frustration with land governance priorities and current dispute resolution mechanisms.

Conflicts can result in increased movements of pastoralist groups, placing additional burdens on women who are responsible for building and disassembling houses.

3. **Men and boys who continue to migrate in search of available grazing land risk face insecurity** associated with conflict in neighboring South Kordofan or fueling new tensions with local farmers. However, fully adopting alternative forms of income would mean selling livestock, learning new skills, and securing land to settle on. Neither option is a positive solution.

Entry points and opportunities to support and empower women and girls

4. **Empower women economically by supporting them to learn and implement new livelihood techniques.** An increasingly settled lifestyle has opened new opportunities for alternative livelihoods, such as through agricultural production or petty trade. In the absence of men, women are forced to adopt coping strategies in order to support the well-being of their families. Supporting women to become leaders in new sectors can lead to economic and social empowerment and help to develop environmentally sustainable development practices.
5. **Capitalize on the mixing of women from pastoralist and farming communities,** such as in local markets, health centers, and through local livelihood streams, to promote women-led peacebuilding initiatives, and address the need for alternative dispute mechanisms and new approaches to land governance.
6. **Use available technology, such as cellphones, to improve direct communication that could empower women to become more active decision-makers.** It is not clear from this study if technology is being utilized to advance gender equality, such as by opening avenues to communication, improving cash-flow, or creating new access to markets. However, initial observations of the prevalence of cellphones and cars suggest that new uses of technology may provide an alternative entry point to women's economic, social, and political empowerment.
7. **With the full inclusion of women, work with local policymakers to support good governance practices,** in line with customary law, legal commitments, and a tradition of co-existence between nomadic and sedentary communities. Review specifications and protections for access to and use of land specific to a) pastoralist communities, and b) women, and the implementation of such protections. Identify gaps in the legal protection of pastoralist women, in particular.

As illustrated throughout this report, different pastoralists communities have different and varied experiences, in part dependent on new adaptations to the changing landscape. A "cookie cutter approach" to policy and practice will therefore inevitably fail to address the needs of all groups. Rather, any attempt intended to minimize risk and maximize opportunity must take a nuanced approach, catering interventions to specific needs of its intended beneficiaries.

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