

**Narratives of Shifts in Gender Roles;
Diversified Livestock Based Agro- Pastoralism in Drylands**

**A study under the Triple L Initiative:
Land, Livestock and Livelihood Dynamics- Uncovering the Transition towards
Sedentary Livestock Based Agro- Pastoralism in Semi- Arid East Africa**

**By
Vera Karmebäck**

Nairobi, January 2015

Abstract

The socioeconomic, socio-geographic and sociocultural landscape have changed greatly over the past half a decade for the Pokot people of North- Western Kenya, who are traditionally nomadic pastoralists. A number of factors have contributed to a more sedentary lifestyle. This study seeks to analyse the impact these changes have had on the traditional gender roles, and in particular how the evolving lifestyle has impacted the woman's position within society.

The study is performed under the multidisciplinary Triple L Initiative that seeks to study, analyse and understand the driving forces, processes, consequences and livelihood and food security outcomes of the transition from nomadic pastoralism to sedentary, livestock- based agropastoralism occurring in West Pokot County and relate them to other areas with similar livelihood and land use issues.

The findings of the study show that despite men and women still having different spheres of responsibilities within the household as well as within the local economy, the boundaries are becoming less defined. Women are increasingly engaged in responsibilities that have traditionally been male responsibilities, and – to a lesser extent – the opposite is true, too.

This is due to a number of factors, mainly an evolving entrepreneurial scene locally, drastic changes in the household economy as well as the spreading of the formal education system, which has impacted the local economy in various ways. The influence of churches, NGOs and local public meetings has played a role in this, too, spreading knowledge and information and bringing ideas of a different lifestyle to the communities of Chepareria.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Prof. Gert Nyberg from SLU, Prof. Magnus Jirström from Lund University and Prof. Willis Oluoch- Kosura from University of Nairobi for your continuous support.

Furthermore, thank you to the staff at Vi- Agroforestry and on the ground in Chepareria who assisted me in this study. Last but not least I wish to thank all the respondents who took their time to speak to me!

Table of Contents

▪ Abstract	1
▪ Acknowledgements	2
▪ Table of Contents	3
▪ Abbreviations & Acronyms	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1 Arid and Semi- Arid Lands (ASALs)	6
1.2 Triple L Initiative	8
1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study	8
2. Background	9
2.1 Chepareria, West Pokot County	9
2.2 Specific Aims	9
2.3 Research Questions	10
3. Methodology and Data Collection	10
3.1 Data Collection	10
3.2 The Interview Guide	11
3.3 Challenges in Data Collection	12
3.4 Data Analysis	13
4. Traditional Gender Roles in State of Change	14
4.1 Decision- Making, Marketing Activities & Income	14
4.2 Gendered Division of Labour	17
4.3 Drivers of Change	22
4.3.1 External Influences	22
4.3.2 Internal Developments	24
4.3.3 Poultry- Keeping	25
4.4 Challenges	27
4.5 Family Health	28
4.6 Summary of Findings	29
5. Concluding Remarks	31
<i>References</i>	32
<i>List of Figures</i>	32
<i>Appendices</i>	33

Abbreviations & Acronyms

ASALs	Arid and Semi- Arid Lands
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HHI	Household Interview
IGA	Income Generating Activity
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
SHG	Self- Help Group

1. Introduction

The socioeconomic, socio-geographic and sociocultural landscape have changed greatly over the past half a decade for the Pokot people of North- Western Kenya, who are traditionally nomadic pastoralists. A number of factors have contributed to a more sedentary lifestyle (Triple L, 2014; Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 a; Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 b) and so far, within the Triple L Initiative, these factors have been carefully analysed and set into perspective of the larger debate around the future of Arid and Semi- Arid Lands (ASALs). However, no study has so far analysed the impact these changes to lifestyle have had on the traditional gender roles, and in particular how the evolving lifestyle has impacted the woman's position within society.

This study is based on ten Household Interviews (HHIs) and eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) undertaken in Chepareria in West Pokot County in North-Western Kenya in March 2014. The study was carried out simultaneously to another study under the Triple L Initiative by MsC student John Wairore from University of Nairobi, who is studying the management of enclosures. The two studies combined will give a holistic picture of how enclosures are managed on a day- to day basis, how responsibilities are divided and how society has evolved with the sedentary lifestyle the establishment of enclosures have brought with them.

The starting point and inspiration for this study was originally based on findings from a previous study under the Triple L Initiative (Wernersson, 2013), where perceptions and experiences of land-use change in Chepareria were studied. The findings indicated that the land- use change that has taken place in Chepareria has led to a change in gender roles.

Hence, for anyone reading this study, it makes sense to read Wernersson's (2013) study as well as Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck (2014 b) first, as these studies include a broader

description and analysis of the land- use change that has taken place in Chepareria and form the background of this study.

Although the topic of increased formal education, especially that of young girls, among the Pokot is highly interesting and is contributing to societal changes including changes in gender roles, this study focuses more on the married Cheparerian women and men of all ages, on their tasks and responsibilities and how these have developed with the introduction of enclosures and a more sedentary lifestyle. However, the roll-out of the formal education system has had an impact on the gender roles in various ways, as will be made clear over the following pages.

1.1 Arid and Semi- Arid Lands (ASALs)

Dry lands cover over 40% of the world's land area, and support more than a third of the world's population (see Fig.1), most of who live in developing countries (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Over the years relatively little attention has been paid to the development of these areas, with governments often concentrating their investments on high potential areas. But recent developments show an increased attention towards proper management of ASALs, with a focus on the improvement of livelihoods and food security.

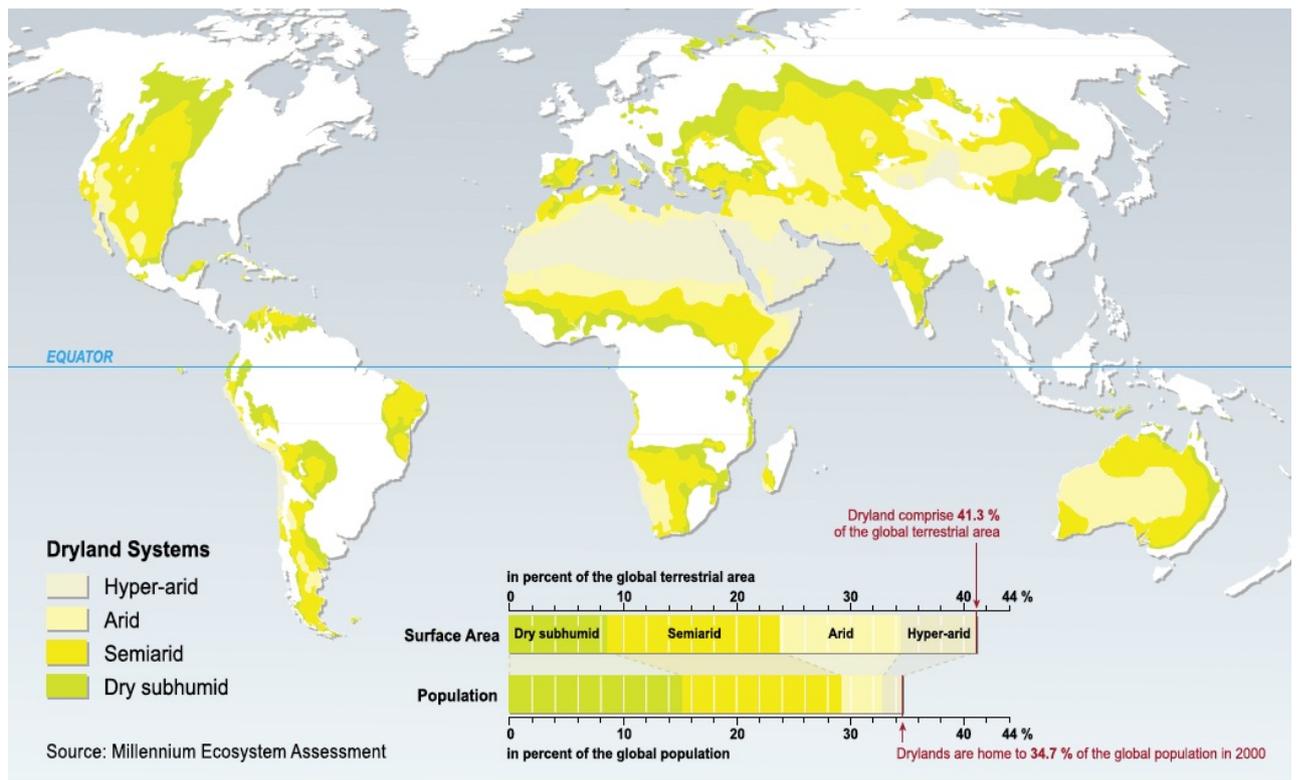


Fig.1.: Dryland Systems

Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005

Although drylands are home to about one third of the human population, they have only 8% of the world's renewable water supply. Given the high temperatures, the low and variable rainfall and the generally low soil organic matter that prevail in dryland areas, in addition to the high costs of delivering services such as electricity and piped water and the limited investment in infrastructure due to the low population density, people living in drylands face many challenges. They tend to have the lowest levels of human well-being, including the lowest per capita GDP and the highest infant mortality rates (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). However, drylands experienced the highest population growth rate in the 1990s of any of the systems examined in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005), pointing towards increased challenges in terms of food security and livelihoods, but also towards potential for development and investments in infrastructure.

1.2 Triple L Initiative

This study is performed under the multidisciplinary Triple L Initiative that seeks to study, analyse and understand the driving forces, processes, consequences and livelihood and food security outcomes of the transition from nomadic pastoralism to sedentary, livestock- based agropastoralism occurring in West Pokot County in North- Western Kenya and relate them to other areas with similar livelihood and land use issues. The debate on sustainable land management in pastoralist dry lands has throughout the past decades been largely polarized between arguments for collective action and privatization. The Triple L Initiative however embraces the complexity of the human- and socio-environmental dynamics of emerging agro-pastoralist systems, and seeks to uncover situation-specific interactions among a large number of factors at different spatial and temporal scales (Triple L, 2014). This study specifically seeks to contribute to the Triple L Initiative by studying how the gender roles have changed with the increasingly sedentary lifestyle and all the societal and economic changes it has brought to the communities of Chepareria in West Pokot County.

1.3 Scope & Limitations

As already mentioned, this study is concentrated on the married Cheparerian men and women of all ages, and although societal changes affecting children and young adolescents are contributing to forming the new gender roles, this is out of scope of this study. Spatially, this study is confined to certain sub- divisions of Chepareria, West Pokot County. It does not claim to come up with generalizable findings that apply to the County as a whole, nor to the neighbouring divisions. The developments that have taken place in West Pokot County are highly local and the different sub- divisions as well as the communities within each division find themselves at different stages of development (see Awino Ochieng & Karneback, 2014 b). Hence, it is important to keep in mind that this is a case study depicting a certain

community in time and space, and does not claim to depict the stories of all the different and diverse communities of West Pokot County.

2. Background

This section will give an introduction to the setting of the study as well as define the specific aims and research questions of the study.

2.1 Chepareria, West Pokot County

Chepareria is a Division of West Pokot County in North- Western Kenya that can be divided into two areas with different climatic conditions affecting what can be grown: an upper area that receives rainfall ranging between 1000 to 1500 mm per year, and a lower area receiving between 750 and 1000 mm rainfall per year (Wernersson, 2013). Average temperatures range from 10 °C to 26 °C depending on altitudes, and the soils of the division vary significantly. Particularly the lower, more semi-arid areas are characterised by fragile and infertile soils (Wernersson, 2013).

2.2 Specific Aims

The transition from nomadic pastoralism to livestock- based agro- pastoralism has carried and continues to carry socio- economic and cultural changes to society in West Pokot. These issues are being carefully studied from the various perspectives of the multidisciplinary Triple L Initiative, including livestock centered research, soil and agroforestry studies, social and economic scientific research. This study seeks to add to the pool of knowledge gathered under Triple L Initiative by specifically studying how the gender roles have changed with the establishment of enclosures and the increasingly sedentary lifestyle that follows.

2.3 Research Questions

The overarching research question is:

- Have the gender roles in Chepareria, West Pokot, changed with the establishment of enclosures and an increasingly sedentary lifestyle?

Once this has been established, this study seeks to go into a small number of sub- questions:

- *How* have the gender roles changed with the establishment of enclosures?
- What are the drivers that have contributed to this change?

3. Methodology and Data Collection

3.1 Data Collection

The empirical study builds on eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and ten Household Interviews (HHIs) that were undertaken in March 2014 in different parts of Chepareria Division in West Pokot County, North-Western Kenya. The size of the FGDs ranged from between five and seven participants. Four out of the ten respondents for the HHIs were men, and the remaining six were women, and five out of the eight FGDs were with women only, while the remaining three were with only men. The FGDs were separated into male and female groups in order to get the different sexes' perspective on the issues at hand. For both FGDs and HHIs, a slightly larger number of female respondents was aimed for, as it was expected that the role of women had undergone a more drastic change over the past few decades than the men's, and hence it was thought that women could contribute even more to depicting the change that had taken place. All respondents from FGDs and HHIs were however asked the same questions (see Appendix 1 for Interview Guide), no matter the sex, and hence also gave a perspective on the opposite gender and how its role and responsibilities had changed with time.

Respondents were from the sub- divisions of Ywaleteke, Pserum, Morpus, Cheptiangwa and Kipkomo, hence representing areas with different climatic pre- conditions as well as varying distances from the numerous big markets in Chepareria, with the one in Cheparareria town being the largest. The women and men interviewed for this study stem from different socio- economic backgrounds. Some of them were in polygamous marriages, while others in monogamous, which gave interesting perspectives on how the different marital arrangements influence gender roles.

Interviewees were found with the help of Benjamin Lokorwa, an educated social worker from Chepareria and former Vi- Agroforestry extension officer, who is now Triple L's local guide and translator in Chepareria.

3.2 The Interview Guide

For both FGDs and HHIs, a semi- structured interview guide was used to collect data (see Appendix 1). This interview guide was developed to collect qualitative interview data and questions were formulated so as to encourage interviewees to elaborate on the topics they themselves attached importance to. Hence, most questions were asked in an open way and only three selected questions were pre- coded, in order to give an estimation of the general trend of the issue at hand. However, the pre- coded questions were always followed by a discussion on the motivation and underlying reasons, and were hence more of a starting point for a highly qualitative perspective on the topics.

For the FGDs, the section on the Baseline Socio- Economic Data was cut and instead a brief session was initiated where respondents introduced themselves.

The short concluding section on family health at the end of the interview was implemented as a sort of check- question on progress. The trend of health in a certain community is a good

measure of development, as it goes hand in hand with economic development, infrastructure, nutritional status and hence livelihoods at large.

3.3 Challenges in Data Collection

As I have already been extensively involved with Triple L and spent a lot of time in Chepareria as well as in other parts of West Pokot and with Vi Agroforestry in Kitale for previous studies (see Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 a; Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 b), I was able to start the data collection quickly relying on already established contacts. More importantly, I was already familiar with the area under study and the background and context of Triple L, the Pokot people and the land- use change that has taken place, which made the interview situation but also my own preparation for the study easy and effective. However, I reminded myself constantly of not letting my previous understandings and own values influence the data I collected, which becomes important especially when studying comparably sensitive issues like the ones at hand. My main objective was to listen and to guide the interview depending on the answers I got, without posing the questions in a manner that would lead the respondents in a certain direction.

It was of great help that Benjamin Lokorwa, my local guide and translator, has already worked with the Triple L- Initiative for some while as well as with Vi- Agroforestry before that, as this meant he is used to the interview situation and has an understanding for the issues and questions at hand. However, I had to ensure he was not relying on his previous network and bringing me to respondents that had already been repeatedly interviewed for other studies under the Triple L Initiative. Also, I had to continuously remind him – just as I had to remind myself – of not letting his own values or understandings of the issues at hand influence the data or his translations.

This is a qualitative study investigating issues that for many people are perceived as rather delicate. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that this can impact the collected data in terms of respondents talking more about the topics they are comfortable with, and less about those they are not. However, interviews and FGDs on average took up to two hours or more, which contributed to certain levels of trust being created between the researcher and the respondent/s. Interviews took place in or close to the homestead of the respondent/s and the FGDs were composed of neighbours or members of SHGs (self- help groups), meaning that respondents were generally familiar and comfortable with the setting and the people present. Questions were asked in an open manner to encourage the respondent/s to speak freely. All of this is thought to have contributed to a highly instructive and revealing data set, despite the delicate nature of the topic.

3.4 Data Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection, the data was thematically organised. Thanks to the interview guide, the data was already fairly structured, however the qualitative nature of the data required re- structuring into sub- themes and connections between the different themes to be drawn. The next step was to then use this thematic organisation to identify commonalities in the data collected from both male and female respondents in the different sub- divisions, which were many, but also contrasts.

Furthermore, the qualitative interview data from the FGDs and HHIs was also matched with other studies undertaken under the Triple L Initiative, as well as complimented by selected secondary literature.

In the following, I have avoided using quotations and rather retold the interviews, as only three of the interviews were conducted in English.

4. Traditional Gender Roles in State of Change

This section presents the results from the qualitative data analysis. It is structured into different sub- topics which were identified as the main areas where changes in the roles and responsibilities of men and women have taken place. At the end of this section, the different topics will then be tied together in a summary.

4.1 Decision- Making, Marketing Activities & Income

When asked “Who manages the enclosure(s)- who is in charge of decisions?”, the answer varied, with around a third of respondents saying that it is the husband only, and others stating that in contrast to just a decade or two ago, when only the husband was in charge of decisions, nowadays the husband and the wife decide together on the big decisions concerning the family, the household and the finances. Others again distinguished between the different fields of responsibility, with the husband being in charge of decisions connected to land rehabilitation initiatives, fencing, selling maize and buying and selling livestock and land, and the wife being in charge of the kitchen garden, the household chores and the selling of millet, vegetables, sorghum, milk, eggs and poultry. With the income generated from these activities, the wife enjoys a high degree of independence, and does not have to report to the husband. It creates a pool of petty cash which was reportedly mainly used towards small daily expenses, especially for buying household and cooking items such as sugar, cooking oil, soap or salt, as well as the expenses connected to their primary school- going children. Also, these small entrepreneurial activities are breaking down the traditional boundary of the woman’s place being in the home, as oftentimes excess produce is being sold off in the market. Interesting to note here is also that female respondents pointed out that institutions like secondary schools have created a market locally, as there are outside people employed as teachers there. These are people who come from other parts of Kenya and live off a salary,

and normally don't own their own cattle or land to farm. Hence, the people are in need of buying food, firewood and all other daily items. Female respondents pointed out that this creation of a market locally had really increased their entrepreneurial activities, as they now have a reliable sell-off point.

In line with Wernersson's (2013) findings, it is evident that cattle - the livestock that produces the largest monetary income - is still mainly a male space, even though many male as well as female respondents noted that they shared information and decisions on cattle sales between husband and wife. The women's responsibilities remain with the smaller income generating activities (IGAs).

The same is true for when it comes to spending. Whenever a bigger payment needs to be undertaken, such as for school fees or for purchasing livestock, it is the husband that takes care of these. While the woman enjoys a fairly high degree of independence when it comes to spending smaller amounts, as soon as it comes to a bigger amount husband and wife have to decide together.

In one female FGD a very interesting point was discussed, which is that of polygamous marriages – According to the respondents of the FGD, that was undertaken in the sub-location of Morpus and where all respondents had one or several co-wives, the level of decision-making power the woman enjoys is influenced by whether the marriage she is in is polygamous or not. If the husband only has one wife, then he will to the largest part be in charge of the decisions, but if he has several wives, then the woman's independent decision-making power is high, as the man divides his time between several households. Although certain responsibilities are shared with the husband even in polygamous marriages, such as the selling of cattle, women have overall become increasingly entrepreneurial and are contributing towards household expenses in both mono – and polygamous marriages, in

particular the paying of school expenditures for primary schools. The women in this FGD were saying that they had put their kids through nursery and primary school through their own income, and it was only the secondary schooling where the man had to contribute. In Kenya, primarily schooling is free since 2005, while comparably high fees arise in connection with secondary schooling. However, even during primary school, several expenses arise for the school- going children, such as for uniforms, books, pens and other materials. Several female respondents saw the increase in primary schooling as a contributing factor for why women have become increasingly involved in the monetary economy. They are the ones their young children turn to when it comes to small monetary needs, as they are the ones present at home when the children come home for their lunch break and after school. All of this has in their opinion furthermore led to the woman now being increasingly entitled to criticize her husband if money is not well spent, and can even go as far as taking the issue to the local chief if no solution is found within the household. As was brought up in one FGD, a household did previously not have many monetary expenses so the husband could use the money that was generated from e.g. selling cattle for what he wanted. But since the formal education was rolled out and became more accessible to the Pokot children, the connected school fees and other monetary requirements have changed the household economy a lot. There is more money moving, and expenses have to be met, which is why the woman is increasingly also seen as a crucial income earner, too.

According to the female respondents in Morpus the future would bring even more decision-making power for women. A similar idea about the future trend came out in another FGD, too, where the men weren't in polygamous marriages. They described that normally, decisions are taken together but with the man having the final say. However, whenever the man is absent from the homestead, the woman is comparably independent in taking decisions. Just as in the other FGDs, they were of the opinion that this has greatly changed with time,

and that formerly the husband was in sole charge of decisions with no regards to the wife, whereas now - although he is still the main decision maker in most cases - the wife is being increasingly heard and included in the decision- making process in monogamous marriages and that she might even acts as the head of household in polygamous marriages. When asked what had caused or influenced this change, the women replied that churches, NGOs, schools and local public meetings had played a large role in the development, bringing new ideas and lifestyles to the community, which was then also repeatedly brought up in other FGDs and HHIs.

4.2 Gendered Division of Labour

Responsibilities in looking after the cattle have changed drastically in the Cheparerian community. Traditionally, the men have been in charge of herding the cattle, however, with recent developments it is now increasingly the responsibility of women.

This goes hand in hand with the introduction of enclosures, which has made migrating with the cattle more uncommon in the dry season, as many people now plan and have pasture available all year around. When the land was still open, it was the men and sometimes the children who took the cattle for grazing and were out all day during wet season, and gone for months during the dry season. In these times, the women remained at home and looked after the goats and the children. The establishment of enclosures has however meant that the cattle remain by the homestead for most of the year, which has rendered them the woman's responsibility for most of the time, as she is the one spending most of the time by the homestead. The establishment of enclosures is however not the only reason for why it has become less common to migrate with the cattle. Another reason brought forward by respondents is the decreased number of cattle per household caused by the smaller land sizes

as well as by the fact that it has become more common to sell off cattle to cater for school fees (see also Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 b).

However, the fact that the cattle now spend most their time grazing in proximity of the homestead have made them the responsibility of women on the days when the husband is not around, which according to most women, is about 5 days a week. The stories told by men and women are slightly divergent on this topic. According to one of the male FGDs, the husband is gone for only two to three days a week, and these are the only times when the woman is in charge of the cattle. On the other hand, many women reported that they were out of the homestead one to two days a week in order to sell excess produce at the market, during which the husband would take over traditionally female chores such as fetching water. This is a good example of a chore that was previously solely a female task, and it was unheard of that a man would help in fetching water. However, cooking would still remain the woman's responsibility even on the days she doesn't spend in the homestead. On these days she would cook early in the morning making sure there is enough food for the family throughout the day, as well as late at night when she is back home. However, if the woman has to go on a longer journey, or when she is very sick or heavily pregnant, it has become more common for the husband to help out with all the female chores, including cooking and cleaning. This is attributed to the fact that the children who would otherwise help out with these things in times when the woman can't do it, are now in school. Female respondents explicitly stated that they feel they get more help from their husbands these days, either through him directly taking over or helping out with the household chores, or through employing someone from the outside to do it. However, this is still confined to the cases stated above, namely the woman being sick, pregnant or travelling, and does not necessarily apply to the everyday life. However, women stated that this is nevertheless a still change compared to before.

What all respondents seem to agree on is the fact that it is something completely new that women are looking after cattle. While previously the woman would only take the cattle to drink water once a day when she was going to fetch water for the household, nowadays she is the one with the main responsibility in looking after the cattle. This is a drastic change to only a few decades ago, when cattle was solely a man's responsibility.

This goes hand in hand with men increasingly engaging in shop-keeping or trading, which leads them to spending a lot of their time in the marketplaces. Casual labour has also become more common, so in addition to their traditional responsibility of buying and selling livestock, men now have a lot of things pulling them away from the homestead. Previously, Pokot people didn't engage in entrepreneurial activities to the same extent, but since subdivision this has become more common, which can be attributed to the fact that each household is confined to a comparably small piece of land. On this they have to try to be as productive as possible, but still need to look for other means of income in order to meet household needs.

Other tasks, such as bringing the manure from the livestock to the field and fencing the pasture, have also mainly been the man's responsibility, however, now it has become more common for women to take over these tasks, too, on the days when the husband is out. Hence, women now have more responsibilities than ever before, as they are increasingly taking over tasks that used to be the men's duties, in addition to all the everyday household chores that remain the woman's responsibilities. One task that was mentioned as having shifted from being the woman's responsibility to being the man's is that of building houses. This might have to do with the fact that houses in Chepareria now increasingly are of semi-permanent character and oftentimes have iron sheet roofs, which first of all is a large monetary expense and therefore handled by the man, but also because the physical work itself is more suited to a man.

In one of the female FGDs, the women responded that the work burden has become less for both men and women since the enclosures – as the animals can now be left in the enclosed area and the woman can take care of other chores while the animals are grazing. Being able to leave the animals in the enclosures also enables them to engage in groups, and the men, who don't have to migrate with the livestock anymore, are now able to engage in business activities. It was brought forward that the workload could become so much less if the fences were constructed with barbed wire instead of with the natural materials that are used now, the maintenance of which are very time- consuming. A permanent fence not requiring a lot of maintenance would enable both men and women to use their time more effectively and render the management of cattle a lot more efficient, according to respondents of both sexes.

This leads us to another question in the interview guide, namely “Generally speaking, has the overall workload increased, decreased or remained the same with the introduction of enclosures?” (see Appendix 1). Eight out of ten Household Interviewees replied that it had increased, and in four of the eight FGDs the respondents also agreed on that it had increased. Some motivations brought forward were that previously, families only had one big meal in a day, while nowadays most families have two to three meals daily. Women were previously busy during the wet season, but during the dry season when the men were away with the cattle there were only few household chores that needed to be done each day and hence there was plenty of time to relax. Even men previously had plenty of time to relax while watching the cattle graze. Nowadays, maintaining the fence and ensuring the availability of pasture all year around is very time- consuming. Differences in workload during the different seasons were still brought forward, with the dry season still being less busy than the wet season. This is especially true because people are more relaxed about trespassing of animals during the dry season when not much is growing, apart from in spaces specifically enclosed for dry season-

pasture or for kitchen gardens, which reduces the work of maintaining the fence and making sure animals do not step on the neighbours' land.

On the other side, the remaining respondents who said the overall workload had decreased since the introduction of enclosures motivated this answer by saying that there is now no longer a need to migrate with the livestock as pasture is available locally. The fact that the pasture management is more planned now than before contributes to an eased lifestyle, according to these respondents who were both male and female. An emphasis was hereby put on the management and the quality of the fencing- As long as the fencing is well- maintained, the person looking after the animals can just leave the livestock in the enclosed area and spend the time doing other things, and only has to take the livestock to drink water once a day. Previously, there was no other way than to migrate with the cattle, because even if you wanted to enclose an area for pasture you weren't entitled to it, as the land belonged to everyone. Another reason mentioned for why the workload has decreased was that machines for grinding maize had become more common, which reduces the workload especially for women, who were previously grinding the maize manually.

In one FGD, the members had been extensively involved with Vi- Agroforestry, and they spoke about that the group formation introduced by Vi- Agroforestry had decreased the workload, as things are done in team work.

Overall, it can however be said that life in Chepareria is nowadays increasingly structured and organized in such a way that there is work to do all year around. People generally have a positive attitude towards the comparably higher work burden- Much of their land used to be unproductive, whereas now income is generated from it in various ways. Overall, even the respondents that thought of the workload as having increased since the introduction of enclosures brought forward that despite them having a lot of work, life on the whole feels

easier, specifically because the pasture availability is very well prepared and hence life overall is more planned and predictable than before.

4.3 Drivers of Change

So, after having described all these changes, the question remains: What were the driving forces that contributed towards these changes in gender roles?

In the following section, the results from the analysis of what have been internal and external driving forces for the change in gender roles will be presented. Although these are sometimes hard to separate, as external developments influence the internal ones, this structure gives valuable insights into how developments on the national and in some cases even the global level influence communities on the ground in places as remote as West Pokot.

4.3.1 External Influences

In line with Wernersson's (2013) and Owino Achieng & Karneback's (2014 b) findings, the expansion of formal education system has impacted communities in West Pokot largely. As it in many places happened simultaneously to the subdivision and subsequent enclosing of land, respondents oftentimes describe societal and economic changes as having been caused by the combination of these two developments.

Schools act as community centres where people learn and interact, and where ideas and information about changes on the national level are spread. In addition to that and as described earlier in this paper, they have created a market by bringing in outside people on a government salary, who commonly don't own their own land or cattle and are hence dependent on purchasing vegetables, milk and other food items. Furthermore, children are not around at home to help out with daily household chores and looking after the cattle, which has contributed to the redistribution of tasks between men and women as well as to it being

more common to casually employ people to help out. But the largest way the expansion of the formal education system might have impacted society is through creating monetary needs for smaller expenses in primary school, and larger expenses in secondary schools, including the school fees. The monetary need for expenses connected to school fees has led to an increase in IGAs on the local level, with women increasingly contributing to the household economy through engaging in small- scale IGAs.

Respondents of both genders also pointed out that all children are being educated now, both girls and boys, which will contribute to a stronger position of women in the future, as they from an early age learn the same skills as boys and have more equal opportunities than before, when the focus was on educating sons. By law, it is now illegal in Kenya to not send your school- aged kids of both genders to school, and this law is followed up on even in remote areas, with various cases in the past years where one or both of the parents were sent to jail or fined heavily due to not complying with this law.

The idea of planning for the family and the need for both genders to engage in IGAs to pay for the household's expenses is something that has been actively promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and in public meetings organized by the local chief's office, according to respondents. Various respondents of both genders described that 20 years ago, women were never taking part in public meetings, but that it has become more and more common in the past decade. Women themselves feel that they learn a lot through public meetings. One example that was brought forward in one of the female FGDs is that women learn about government laws in these public gatherings. For instance, they had learned that woman can own property. Whether this will have any direct impact on life in Chepareria in the coming few years is still to be seen, but that information is trickling down from the government level is a starting point for future developments and will continue impacting communities and with them the gender roles in Chepareria and other parts of West Pokot.

Churches also need to be mentioned in this context. Just like the primary and secondary schools, the amount of churches present in Chepareria as in other divisions of West Pokot has risen in numbers. Just like schools, they act as community centres where knowledge is shared and ideas are exchanged, and respondents repeatedly pointed towards the positive impact they have had on society. Churches have also created employment locally- many female respondents mentioned that their husbands work as priests, in addition to all other employment opportunities arising with the establishment of institutions like schools and churches.

Furthermore, the formation of women groups and the connected spread of knowledge is something that was brought in from the “outside” by Vi- Agroforestry and other NGOs active in the area, and that – according to female respondents themselves – has contributed to their elevated position in society. Women from Chepareria were taken on field trips to more developed areas where they exchanged ideas on lifestyles and farming techniques. Female respondents who were members of groups mentioned that they feel like they have a knowledge that is worth sharing and that other people will listen to. They voiced that this has made them feel more empowered, and it has contributed to there being less suppression *from*, and instead more dialogue *with* the husband.

4.3.2 Internal Developments

Adding to the external influences described above that have contributed towards women engaging more in IGAs, another explanation was brought forward by respondents that reflects more of an internal contributor. Due to the small and defined plots of land, as well as the monetary need for school fees, people in Chepareria nowadays own fewer cattle than before. Healthy cattle are expensive and can fetch prices ranging above 100.000 KES in the local markets. Hence, with the decreased number of cattle, wealth is no longer readily

available in the form of cattle, as it has been in previous decades. This has contributed to the recognition that both genders need to contribute in all ways possible to the household economy.

Another driver that has contributed towards changing gender roles brought forward by respondents is that of the increase in casual labour. It has become more common to employ someone to help out at home with tasks such as fencing, digging or to help with cleaning and cooking. This is caused by the fact that the children are not around anymore to help during the daytime like before, as most of them are in school. Many of the interviewed men were oftentimes helping out on other farms. They stated that this casual labour opportunity only came about since enclosures were introduced, as all the tasks they are employed for, such as improving the fence around the enclosure, weren't around before the subdivision of land. In line with this, both male and female respondents brought forward that it has become more common to employ outside help when a woman is pregnant. While previously, a pregnant woman would have to do comparably heavy work such as milking the cows and fetching water until the day they delivered, nowadays the households often plan for employing someone to help out with these chores for the time when the woman is heavily pregnant. In one female FGD, the women mentioned that in future there will be an increased need for maids in Chepareria as in other parts of West Pokot, as women will increasingly be engaging in business and hence won't have enough time for all the household chores. In essence, this means there is an increased opportunity even for women with no or little education to earn a steady income.

4.3.3 Poultry- Keeping

A section that deserves special attention in this context is that of poultry- keeping.

Traditionally, the pastoralist Pokot people don't eat poultry nor eggs. Since poultry keeping

was introduced by the MoA a few decades ago, it has been the woman's responsibility and also the woman's income. Early on, it did not pick up as an income opportunity, as there was no market for it locally. Female respondents recounted that they used to take a whole day to travel to Makutano which is closer to Kitale and where many non- Pokot people lived, in order to sell their eggs. This became costly and time- consuming, and hence initially didn't have the effect intended by the MoA, namely to create an IGA and another contributor to food security. However, suddenly, the price for eggs increased in places outside Chepareria, which made people keep more poultry. With time, this led to it becoming more normal to eat eggs and poultry, and nowadays it is a part of most Pokot's diet. Many of the interviewed female respondents are members of women's groups that engage in poultry- keeping on a large- scale level, and a number of them also do so as individual farmers. West Pokot County now has 90,000 poultry producing households and about 80 % of the poultry produced is sold outside of West Pokot County by brokers and middle- men (ASDSP West Pokot CCU, 2013).

There are initiatives on part of the government to scale and enhance the productivity of the production and marketing of poultry locally in West Pokot (see ASDSP West Pokot CCU, 2013). The chicken production enterprise is viewed as one which can be practiced even by the poor and vulnerable in the community, owing to its low start-up costs and its short payback period. Poultry- keeping has since the beginning mainly been a female entrepreneurial activity, and despite more and more men having gotten involved mainly as middle- men as the business started fetching high prices, increasing productivity in the local poultry value chain could largely contribute to further elevate even marginalized women's economic power.

4.4 Challenges

Although women feel more empowered, have received more decision- making power and economic responsibility and are more connected to the community, this doesn't mean that they are not facing certain challenges. Cases of physical violence still occur, and oftentimes women don't agree with how money is being spent or they don't get involved in the spending. Other disagreements that female respondents brought up were those connected to the husband consuming too much alcohol, or to him marrying a second wife without proper financial planning and without consulting their first wife. Other situations were disputes in the household often occur were describes as during times of drought and tough hunger, or when there is a local outbreak of disease in animals or humans.

However, these days it is more accessible for a woman to go to the extended family or the community elders and/or the local chief in cases of violence, disagreements or if the husband in her opinion spends money irresponsibly. According to respondents, this is something fairly new- before the women couldn't speak up in this way. Respondents also pointed out previously, there were so many animals and no school fees to be paid, so situations like these didn't arise in the same way.

When asked whether they would be hesitant to speak up against their husbands, the women answered that they wouldn't, as a system has been established on the local level with the village elders as problem solvers. Village elders get involved in both intra- household related issues, but also for issues in the neighbourhood. Previously, these were sold by the neighbours themselves, but these days oftentimes there is money involved, which has led to disagreements having become more complex.

Women were however also relating household problems back to themselves. They felt that they were sometimes responsible for when things go wrong, because they oftentimes wait too

long with reporting and only do so when the money has already been spent, and not at the point when they start feeling that something is not being managed as it should. In their own words; A Pokot woman has honour and respect for her husband, and they generally don't want to cause attention or bring their disagreements to the extended family or the local village elders until it is absolutely necessary.

4.5 Family Health

As already described above, the pre-coded question “Has the health of family members improved, worsened or remained the same during the past two decades or so?” at the end of the questionnaire was used as a cross-check question to match findings on societal changes with a relatively easy-to-determine measure of development and progress.

All respondents of FGDs and HHIs agreed on that the family health had improved. Reasons that were given for this were that the dispensaries and health facilities have grown in number and thereby come into closer proximity and easier access for most people in Chepareria. With this, knowledge about diseases has spread and people are aware of preventive care such as vaccines, boiling water before drinking and maternal care. According to respondents themselves, child mortality has decreased, and the average life expectancy has increased. The improved health was also attributed to an increased number of meals per day as well as a higher nutritional variety, which is in line with findings from previous studies under the Triple L Initiative (Awino Ochieng & Karmebäck, 2014 a), as well as to better access to clean water. Furthermore, sanitation has improved, and latrines have become more widespread.

However, during one FGD it was also brought up that despite better access to health care and a more educated population, diseases have increased, which respondents attributed to the fact that the types of food they used to cook previously was very natural, without chemicals and

also largely without fat, while now on the whole, food is more processed, includes more fat and also more chemicals. Hence, respondents were saying that there is quantitatively more food and higher nutritional variety, but the quality of the food has not necessarily improved. Furthermore, respondents were also pointing out the prevalence of HIV- AIDS as a rather recent development in the area.

Although many of these improvements can be attributed to external influences, such as the growth in number of medical facilities and the spread of knowledge about diseases, the fact that unequivocally, respondents agreed on that overall, family health has improved, is pointing towards that the recent changes in society and the connected change in gender roles have had a positive influence on overall well-being. This is supported by the fact that nutritional variety as well as the number of meals has increased, all of which is in line with findings from previous studies under the Triple L Initiative (see for example Awino Ochieng & Karneback, 2014 b).

4.6 Summary of Findings

The traditional gender roles in Chepareria in West Pokot County are indeed in a state of change. Women have gained increased decision- making as well as economic power, and is increasingly engaging in IGAs. The larger monetary income, such as the selling of land and livestock, is still predominantly a male space. The same is true when it comes to expenditure. Previously, the husband was in charge of all cash, and now, a man will always be involved when it comes to large expenditures like school fees and buying land and livestock, but women enjoy great freedom when it comes to smaller spending and are increasingly earning their own money to cater for these. The increase in number of primary schools contributed towards the creation of this “female economy”, as women were suddenly faced with various small expenses during the day. It can be added at this point though that women’s expenses

are often geared towards the household or the children, and rarely towards themselves or their own pleasure. Women in polygamous marriages pointed out that they enjoy a high degree of decision- making power due to the fact that the husband divides his time between several households, in practice making them the head of their own households.

In large, both men and women are increasingly seeing the contemporary family unit as a team, that needs to work together on meeting the household's needs. Various respondents of both sexes brought up that there is an increased communication between men and women when it comes to decisions within the household and how money will be spent.

Women are generally more engaged in meetings and in the public life, not the least through being members of groups. Information is thereby spread quicker and more evenly throughout most parts of Chepareria.

The different genders tasks and responsibilities have also developed with time. Men are increasingly engaging in trading and shop- keeping and therefore spend more time out of the homestead, which has led to women having received increased responsibility in looking after the household's cattle. Overall, the Cheparerian woman's workload has hence increased, as she has received a lot of additional tasks on top of all the traditional female tasks, such as household chores and taking care of the children. However, a change can also be seen in that men are increasingly helping out with these traditional female responsibilities, and although this is still mainly confined to times when the woman is ill or heavily pregnant, it still points towards an important change in lifestyle and a breaking down of the traditional gender roles.

5. Concluding Remarks

Despite men and women still having different spheres of responsibilities and positions within the household economy as well as with regards to public life, the boundaries are becoming less defined. This is closely linked to the fact that the local economy has evolved greatly in the past few decades- Both men and women are now increasingly involved in entrepreneurial activities. Traditionally, men would migrate with the cattle and women would be idler in dry season, however, since the establishment of enclosures there is work for both men and women all year around. The smaller and more defined land sizes have on the whole led to a more productive use of the land, and in connection to that, the nutritional variety as well as the number of meals has increased with time. The spread of the formal education system has largely impacted the local economy in West Pokot through increasing the household's monetary needs, as well as through creating an output market for basic food items such as milk and eggs locally. With the overall increased productivity and higher entrepreneurial activities locally, casual employment has become more common, opening up for income generation on various levels.

Overall, women are now increasingly seen as crucial income earners and their position in society is on the whole elevated, with them enjoying a higher degree of financial independence, more decision- making power and a louder voice than before in household and public matters. The traditional gender roles are in a constant state of change, and will continue to evolve and develop. With the various economic and social developments taking place in the communities of Chepareria that have been described throughout this paper, the boundaries of male and female spheres and responsibilities are expected to become less and less defined with time, which in turn will bring with it further challenges, changes but above all opportunities to the people of West Pokot.

References

ASDSP West Pokot CCU (2013). *Local Chicken Value Chain Analysis*. Government of Kenya Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme (ASDSP), West Pokot County. Team Leader: V.M. Namboka, VCDO. October 2013

Awino Ochieng, J.I. & Karmebäck, V. (2014) a. *Linking Vi- Agroforestry Data with the Triple L Initiative*. Working Report, Jan. 2014

Awino Ochieng, J.I. & Karmebäck, V. (2014) b. *Understanding Change in West Pokot County and Explaining its Drivers*. A study under the Triple L Initiative: Land, Livestock and Livelihood Dynamics- Uncovering the Transition towards Sedentary Livestock Based Agro-Pastoralism in Semi- Arid East Africa

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005). *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis*. Island Press, Washington, DC.

Triple L Initiative (2014). *Land-, Livestock- and Livelihood Dynamics: Uncovering the Transition Towards Sedentary Livestock Based Agro- Pastoralism in Semi- Arid East Africa*. Formas Application 2014 for Research and Development Project Grants

Wernersson, Julia E. V. (2013). *Towards a Critical Social Theory of Landscape-Perceptions and Experiences of Land-use Change in Chepareria, Kenya*. Master Thesis in Master Programme in Global Studies, University of Gothenburg

List of Figures

Fig.1.: Dryland Systems, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005), Appendix 5

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Semi- Structured Interview Guide

Semi- Structured Interview Guide

Gendered Management of Enclosures in Chepareria, West Pokot

Vera Karmebäck, Triple L Initiative, March 2014

Baseline Socio- Economic Data

Name of Hh head (enclosure owner) _____

Location _____

Sub- Location _____

Village _____

Name of Respondent _____

Relationship to Hh head Hh head wife (1st 2nd 3rd) grown up child

relative other, specify:

Age of Respondent _____ Sex of Respondent m f

Year of Settlement _____ Level of Education (Hh head) (Resp.)

No. of Household Members _____ none

Are you a member of a group? yes no primary

If yes, what is the name of the group and what does it engage in? secondary

_____ tertiary

Is any household member employed outside the farm? If yes, where? university

Enclosure Management [*Enclosure= fenced plot of land (for homestead, grazing, cultivation)*]

Year of enclosure establishment _____

No. and use of enclosure(s) _____

Total land owned _____

- How do you manage/ use your enclosure(s)?

Frequency and duration of grazing:

Size of herd:

Cultivation:

IGAs:

- Which products do you get from your enclosure(s)?
- How did you learn about the establishment of enclosures?
- Who manages the enclosure(s)- who is in charge of decisions?
- Who does what on the enclosure(s)?

Manager:

Women:

Men:

Young children:

- Generally speaking, has the overall workload increased, decreased or remained the same with the introduction of enclosures?
 - Increased Decreased Remained the same
- If increased or decreased, what are the reasons for this?
- In your perception, how has the work burden of men and women respectively changed over time?
- Is this connected to enclosures?
- If yes, in which way?
 - What are the benefits of enclosures?
 - What are the disadvantages of enclosures?
 - Which marketing activities are carried out by men and which by women?
- How has this changed over time?
 - Who controls the income?
 - Are there any challenges connected to the management of enclosures, especially those connected to the roles of men and women?

Family health

Has the health of family members improved, worsened or remained the same during the past two decades or so?

- Improved Worsened Remained the same

→ If improved or worsened, what are the reasons for this?