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Educational
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to development*

Vocational Skills for Nomadic Pastoralists

**DARET 2 (Developing Appropriate and
Relevant Education and Training)**

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Acronyms

AET	Africa Educational Trust
DARET	Developing Appropriate and Relevant Education and Training
FABE	Flexible Approach to Basic Education
LNGOs	Local Non Governmental Organisation
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGOs	Non Government Organisations
PL	Puntland
SEIGYM	Somalia Educational Incentives for Girls and Young Men
SL	Somaliland
SCS	South Central Somalia
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund

Introduction

Background

Pastoralist groups constitute 65% of the Somali population¹ and are widely recognised by government and international institutions alike as marginalized groups in terms of health provision, sanitation and education due to their nomadic way of life. Indeed, pastoralists' non sedentary way of life translates to a unique set of development and educational needs as well as vulnerabilities to environmental changes (drought) and conflict. There has been increased desire to address these educational and development needs over the past few years but complications remain.

The difficulties to provide education to nomadic pastoralist communities have been documented over the past few years by scholars, governmental and non governmental agencies alike. The pastoralist nomadic way of life is usually seen as a hindrance for young people wishing to access good quality education and skills training. Indeed, for those that are considered "rootless" due to the communities continual movement, traditional formal schooling is often irrelevant. Permanent school buildings are of little use and fixed full-time lessons interfere with daily domestic and agricultural duties.

Development agencies and governments trying to deliver vocational skills training to nomadic and pastoralist youth have been faced with similar difficulties as many vocational skills training programmes are usually delivered in vocational skills centres which are fully equipped with all the relevant materials and equipments.

Another subject of contention and debate has often been centred on the type of skills which are relevant to these nomadic pastoralist communities. Indeed, some governments tend to provide skills for people wishing to settle as farmers or in town and international agencies (such as UN and NGOs) want to give skills that will help to improve the pastoralist way of life (such as health, sanitation and better livestock management).

But the real question is what do pastoralist communities want? What skills do young men and women living in pastoralist communities want to acquire? Do they want skills which will help them to settle in town or skills that will help improve their lives as pastoralists? What skills do they feel would be most useful for either way of life? Do young pastoralist men and women want the same things as the pastoralist community elders?

1 Survey of primary School Education 2006-2007, UNICEF



This report focuses on research conducted by the Africa Educational Trust between March and April 2010 which aims at addressing these crucial questions in order to give pastoralist individuals the resources and skills necessary to tackle the problems confronting their own lives and communities.

Research Methodology

In March 2010, a 3 day workshop was held in Hargeisa to train 5 local outreach officers (2 from Somaliland, 1 from Puntland and 2 from Central and Southern Somalia) on how to conduct research on nomadic and pastoralist community views on the skills most needed for their communities.

The workshop was conducted by Beatrice Hicks an experienced Kenyan educationalist who had previously worked in education in Somaliland. The purpose of the workshop was to train the participants on how to carry out and record semi-structured interviews with young people, elders and community leaders from a sample of 17 nomadic pastoralist communities. The purpose of the workshop was also to discuss and agree on a standard methodology for conducting the research in the different regions and communities.

At the training workshop, it was agreed that each researcher would conduct interviews in 3 different nomadic pastoralist communities and that in each community this would include one-to-one interviews with three young people, with at least one young man and one young women from each community. They would also interview at least one elder and one community leader from each community. The plan was to conduct eighty five face-to-face semi-structured interviews in seventeen communities across Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland².

Sampling of the communities: we thought it was interesting to sample communities according to their size (which also says a lot about what particular type of pastoralism we were dealing with – larger communities tend to be semi nomadic whilst smaller ones are usually more mobile). To select the communities to be visited we ranked all the communities we were working with by size from the largest to smallest and then we selected 2 from the top, 2 from the middle and 2 from the bottom in order to have a cross section according to size.

2 Please see Annex 1 for the detailed lists of questions asked to interviewees and locations visited across all three regions of Somalia as well as a more detailed description of the research methodology

Problems encountered during the research

We encountered delays in the collection of data in the southern and central region. This was due to the volatile political situation which made it unsafe for our researchers to travel to designated areas. However once the security situation allowed, the researchers were able to travel and collect the necessary information.

Research Results

(If I put a big picture here it will make an extra page which is not feasible)



Opinions of young pastoralist men and women

During the interviews conducted by the trained researchers across all three regions, young men and women from nomadic pastoralist communities have identified a series of skills which would be useful for young people wishing to remain in their nomadic community. The most commonly identified skills were:

Most common skills selected for people wishing to remain pastoralist

- Basic health and midwife skills
- Training in conservation of the environment
- Veterinary
- Farming skills
- Bee keeping skills³

Girls tended to be more interested by basic health and bee keeping skills whilst boys expressed preference for veterinary, farming and training in conservation of the environment skills

Similarly, the following list of skills was identified by young men and women from all three regions as useful for people wishing to move to town:

- 3 Other skills (such as accountancy, engine driver, teacher, typing and computer skills) were also identified but these 5 skills are the ones which have been mentioned by more than 5 people in each community.**

Most common skills selected for people wishing to move to towns

- Tailoring skills
- Handy craft skills
- Carpentry skills
- Electrician skills
- Mechanic skills

Girls from nomadic communities were interested in gaining tailoring and handy craft skills whilst men identified carpentry and electrician as the most valuable skills for men wishing to move into town.

Interestingly, many young people also expressed the wish to pursue learning literacy and numeracy at a more advanced level in order to become teachers within their community.

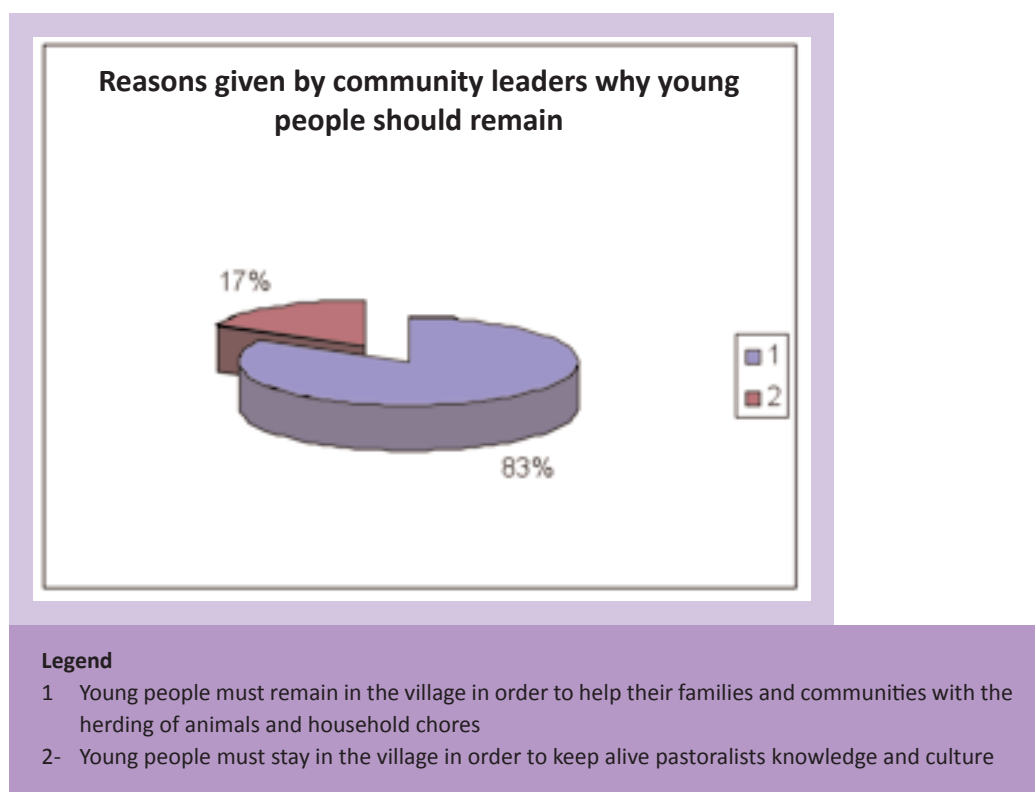
Skills selected and divided by genders and urban/rural aspirations

- *Skills which were sought exclusively by boys* were carpentry skills, electrician skills and mechanics skills
- *Skills which were sought exclusively by girls* were basic health and midwifery, tailoring and handy craft
- *Skills which were sought by both girls and boys* were: training in conservation of the environment, farming, veterinary and bee keeping skills
- *Skills exclusively identified as relevant for those wishing to move to towns:* Carpentry, mechanic and electrician (tailoring and handy craft being identified as useful in both rural and urban context)
- *Skills exclusively identified as relevant for those wishing to remain in the nomadic community:* Training in basic health and midwifery, training in conservation of the environment, veterinary skills, farming skills, bee keeping skills
- *Skills identified as being relevant to both contexts (urban and rural):* Tailoring, handy craft skills

Opinions expressed by community elders:

Generally, elders agreed with the young peoples' selections of the various skills, although in all three regions, the elders and community leaders tended to put the emphasis on, and express their preference for skills which would enable young people to improve their lives as pastoralists rather than encourage them to move to town. This might be due to the crucial importance of the work done by young people within the community.

Our research revealed that the work of young people (which includes, amongst other things, rearing animals and helping with household chores) is essential for the very survival of their families and for the community in general. Indeed, an overwhelming 83% of parents and community leaders interviewed told us this was the reason why young people should stay in their nomadic communities. The remaining 17% gave the main reason why young people should stay in their village as the need to keep pastoralist culture alive by passing down pastoralist related knowledge to future generations.



During the focus group discussions, it was revealed that, according to parents and elders, the various factors which might contribute to pushing young people into moving to towns were limited or non-existent education opportunities in the villages, limited and /or non existent employment opportunities in the communities as well as the non availability of health services in the villages. A combination of the above factors was usually mentioned when discussing reasons which persuaded young people to move in towns.

In Somaliland, whilst most parents and elders stated their preferences for keeping their children in the nomadic pastoralist communities, it was also mentioned that one factor which might justify a young person moving into town would be if he/she was able to gain employment in town and send some money back home for the community.

Differences between regions:

Interviews revealed that young people from nomadic communities in Somaliland were more inclined to select skills which would facilitate their transfer to town than young people from other regions.

Indeed, a sample search by a UK project manager in Somaliland in July 2010 confirmed this trend. During the interviews the majority of the girls expressed the wish to gain tailoring and handy craft skills and stated that those skills would help them to move to town. Out of 15 girls interviewed during the July visit, 10 of them expressed the desire to leave the nomadic way of life to settle into towns. The remaining 5 preferred to stay in the nomadic community

Boys from SL communities were also inclined to select skills that would help them move to town such as electrician and carpentry but expressed the desire to move to town temporarily. Indeed, out of the 15 boys interviewed, only 3 expressed the desire to move to town permanently, 5 expressed the desire to gain skills which would help them in town but stated they would like to return to the nomadic communities and use the skills acquired in town to help their community. The remaining 7 clearly stated that they wanted to acquire skills that would improve their life as a nomad (veterinary, farming skills, environment management skills) and expressed no interest for an urban lifestyle.

In PL, 21 young people were interviewed by the trained researchers. 14 of them were girls and 7 of them were boys. 12 out of 14 girls expressed preference for skills that would improve their life as a nomad and have stated their desire to be trained in basic health and midwifery skills, handy craft skills and bee keeping skills. They told us that those skills would significantly improve their life as a nomad. Indeed acquiring basic health and midwifery skills would enable them to diagnose and cure simple illnesses in themselves and their family, handy craft skills would help them to produce household utensils and equipment which could either be used locally or sold on the market. Bee keeping was seen as an income generating activity, allowing nomadic people to sell the honey on the local markets as well as using the honey locally. The remaining two girls have emphasised that they wanted to acquire tailoring skills in order to be able some day to open a shop in town.

Similarly out of the 7 boys interviewed, 5 of them expressed interest in receiving training in conservation of the environment, veterinary and bee keeping skills and only two expressed the ambition of moving to town. Those who wanted to move to town identified carpentry as their preference.

In SCS, out of the 6 young people interviewed (2 girls and 4 boys) none of them expressed the desire to move to town and all of them chose skills which they thought would improve their life in the nomadic community. Accordingly, they have requested the following training: basic health and midwifery, training in conservation of the environment, farming skills and bee keeping skills. Girls also expressed interest in handy craft and tailoring skills which they said would help them build better houses and produce clothes for themselves and their family⁴.

AET Activities Informed by this Research

Vocational Skills available

Since October 2008, AET has been working in collaboration with fifteen local NGOs across all three regions of Somalia to implement the DARET (Developing Appropriate and Relevant Education and Training) project which focuses on delivering 9 months of literacy courses followed by 8-12 months of provision of vocational skills training.

Following this research, we identified the final list of vocational skills from which DARET beneficiaries can choose from as follows:

- Basic health and midwife skills
- Training in conservation of the environment
- Tailoring
- Veterinary
- Carpenter skills
- Farming skills
- Handy craft skills
- Bee keeping skills

Practical implementation of vocational skills courses

We initially thought of implementing vocational skills training over a period of 8-12 months following the SEIGYM voucher style in which students are given vouchers which they can use to obtain the training that they want. However, this system which AET has used for the delivery of vocational skills training in other programmes could not be applied to the DARET project. The main reason was that the SEIGYM/voucher system usually implies that students go to a centre/school where trainers are based, in order to receive the training. However, given the nature of the communities that DARET aims to reach, it was practically impossible to have vocational skills students to travel to centres based in towns in order to receive training. Indeed, logistically, it would have been very hard to ensure regular attendance from students living in scattered communities usually situated very far away from towns as well as difficult for us to cover the financial costs of bringing 750 students to vocational skills centres on a regular basis. Instead, following consultancy and discussions with local partners and community representatives it was observed that having the trainers travel to the communities and deliver the training on site was preferable.

As the situation on the ground has revealed that it was more appropriate and practical for the trainers (rather than the students) to travel. Each community has chosen two skills (one for women and one for men) and the trainers have been visiting the communities on a rotation system: each trainer spent 2 to 4 days a month with a given community before moving onto the next one.

Interestingly, as the vocational courses have now been carried out for the past 4 months, most of the trainees have asked for some sort of examination to take place at the end of the course. Each examination would be a test of the practical skills acquired. For tailoring skills, for example, the teacher would tear apart a piece of clothing and ask the student to mend it within a pre-determined amount of time. Alternatively, the sewing machine could be dismantled and the students tested would be asked to reassemble it within a limited amount of time.



It is nonetheless important to note here that certain vocational skills are easier to test than others.

However, students have put the emphasis on the need for an examination at the end of the course with certificates being awarded (and certified by the regional MOE). This, they argued, would help them get jobs in town should they choose to do so.

Initial challenges faced and lessons learnt:

One of the challenges we faced was related to the duration of the vocational skills course. Some learnt LNGOs as well as community elders have expressed preference for the vocational skills to be delivered more intensively over a period of 4 months rather than over a period of 8-12 months.

We have thus tried to incorporate LNGOs and elders' demands when and where possible. Hence in SL (where most of the LNGOs and elders have expressed preference for a 4 month course) as well in some parts of PL the vocational skills course will be delivered over a period of 4 months. In SCS however, all the beneficiaries and LNGOs have decided to have the courses delivered over a period of 8 months.

As stipulated above another challenge was linked to the "system of delivery" of vocational skills classes. The solution found, whereby it is the trainers who travel to the community rather than the students travelling to vocational skills training centres is more adapted and suited to people living in remote, rural areas.



Annex 1: questions asked and locations visited

Questions asked to young men and women:

- How long have you lived as a Nomad in this community?
- Would you prefer to remain in your nomadic life or go and live in a town?
- For how long would you want to go to town? 6 months, 12 months? For ever?
- What would you miss the most if you did that?
- Whose permission would you need if you were to leave the community for a short time?
- Have you ever left the community to live in town?
- If yes, how long for?
- Who do you see as the most valuable man or woman living in your community?
- What does he/she do?
- What work does he or she do in the community?
- Do people in your community admire her or his work?
- Did s/he train in the work he does?
- If so where did s/he train?
- What would you like to be as a result of your studies?
- If you were to stay in the community after training, which skills would you like to develop?
- Which skills would be most useful to your community?

Questions asked to elders and community leaders:

- How many boys between the ages of 16 and 25 live in your community?
- How many girls of the same age group live in your community?
- How many youths have left to go and live in the towns for a year?
- About how many of these were: a) Boys-----b) Girls -----
- Would you prefer the youth to stay within the nomadic life or go and work in towns and why?
- What might persuade young people to stay within your community?
- How could they benefit your community if they stayed?
- How could they benefit your community if they moved to a town?
- How important is it for the youth to learn to read and write?
- How important is it for the youth to learn Numeracy?
- What are the most useful tasks that the youth can perform for the community when they can read and write?
- What are the most useful tasks that the youth can perform when they are numerate?
- Once some young men or women have learnt to read, write and can do basic mathematics do you think it would be useful for the community if they continue to study?
- Which skills would be most useful for the youth to study?
- What skills would be beneficial to your community?
- How would the youth in your community acquire these skills?

List of communities visited during the research

Communities visited in SL:

Kabadhere(Togdher region)
Sanyare (Togdher region)
Ceeldheer (Togdher region)
Dhaymoole (Sahil region)
Go'daweyn(Sahil region)

Communities visited in PL

Kubo
Tulo ooman
Birta Dheer
Beyra
Dhahan
Cagaaran

Communities visited in Southern and Central Somalia

Dhuray
Waab Dooro
Buulo Yuusuf
Buulo Aylo
Hoobishoole
Lafa

Detailed research methodology

Interviews

The interviews were conducted in Somali and the responses recorded on tape and in note form by the researchers. Each researcher then wrote a detailed report on each interview in Somali and submitted the reports to the Project Coordinator in each region.

The reports were then translated into English by the Project Co-ordinator under the supervision of the Regional Managers and submitted to AET UK where the results were analysed and entered onto a database.

Following receipt of results in June 2010, and following an initial analysis, the Project Manager from London also conducted interviews with 30 additional young people (15 young men, 15 young women) during her visit to the field in July 2010. Indeed, the Project Manager travelled to three different communities in SL and held interviews with five young men and five young women, who were direct DARET beneficiaries, in each of these communities

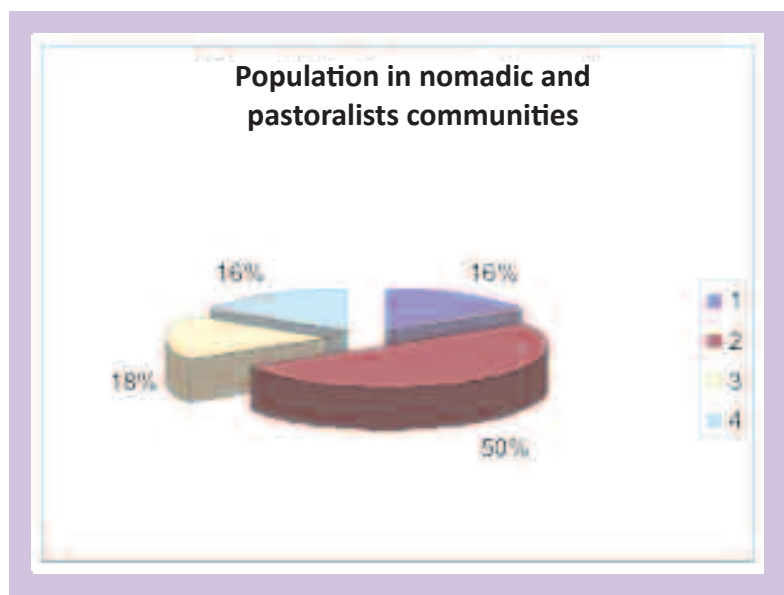


As planned the initial interviews were conducted by the 5 researchers using the agreed standard methodology. We have received the reports of the one-to-one interviews with 57 young people from 17 communities. Of those interviewed 25 were young men and 32 were young women. All of the young people interviewed had completed the literacy course. Additionally, 28 interviews were also conducted with elders and community leaders of each village. We have thus received detailed reports of 78 individual interviews.

Annex 2 – Results from Somaliland

SL Communities profiles

Population



Legend:

- 1- between 100 and 200 people
- 2- between 200 and 500 people
- 3- between 500 and 1000 people
- 4- more than a 1000 people

The majority of the nomadic pastoralist communities visited during this research had a population which ranged between 200 and 500 people.

Type of communities

As the research revealed, 66% of the communities visited identified themselves as nomadic pastoralists, moving every 9 to 12 months depending on the rainy season, whilst 34% of the people interviewed reported being from an agro-pastoralist community.

Interviews with elders and focus groups

In order to better understand what type of skills are relevant to nomadic and pastoralist young people, we thought it would be interesting to see how many young people in the nomadic communities had previously left their village for a significant period of time (at least a year) to go and live in town.

The research revealed that in Somaliland, only a relatively small number of young people had already left their village to live in town.

Following these results we have asked community leaders and elders, as well as parents if they thought it better for young people to move to town or if they thought it would be better if young people remained in their nomadic and pastoralist community.

Interestingly 100% of the people interviewed replied that it was better for young people to stay in their nomadic and pastoralist communities.

We thus consequently asked about the reason behind this choice and were presented with the following results:

Our research revealed that the work / man power of young people (which includes, amongst other things, rearing animals and helping with household chores) is essential for the very survival of their families and for the community in general. Indeed, an overwhelming 83% of parents and community leaders interviewed told us this was the reason why young people should stay in their nomadic communities. The remaining 17% told us that young people should remain in the village in order to keep alive pastoralist knowledge and culture.

During the focus group discussions, it was revealed that, according to parents and elders, the various factors which might contribute to pushing young people into moving to towns were limited or non-existent education opportunities in the villages, limited and /or non-existent employment opportunities in the communities as well as the non-availability of health services in the villages. A combination of the above factors was usually mentioned when discussing reasons which persuaded young people to move into towns.

In Somaliland, whilst most parents and elders stated their preferences for keeping their children in the nomadic pastoralist communities, it was also mentioned that one factor which might justify a young person moving into town would be if he/she was able to gain employment into town and send some money back home for the community.

Following our focus group discussions with parents and elders, we have also collected one to one interviews with young men and women from the pastoralist communities.

Interviews with young men and women from pastoralist communities

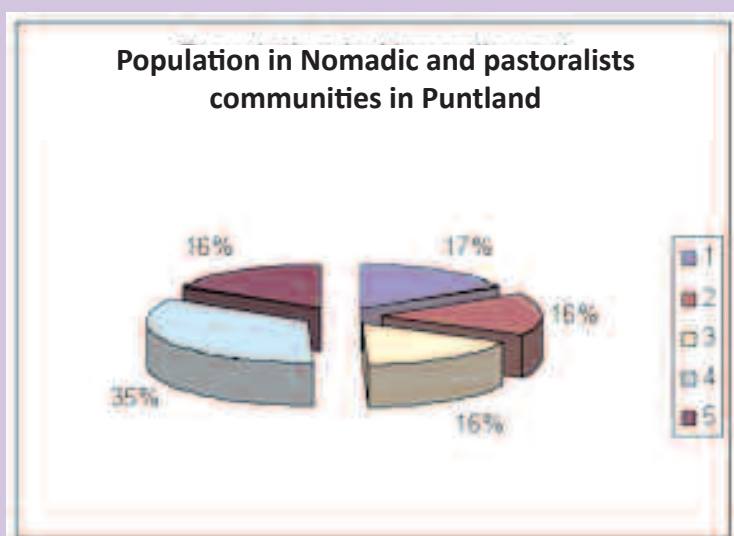
To establish what type of vocational training skills would be beneficial to young people living in nomadic pastoralist communities we asked young people whether they would prefer remaining in pastoralist communities for their whole life or whether they would be interested in moving into towns in the future.

Out of 30 interviews conducted with both young men and young women, 18 have revealed a hope to move closer to towns in the future whilst 12 of them expressed the desire to maintain a nomadic lifestyle

Annex 3 – Results from PL

PL communities profiles

Population



Legend

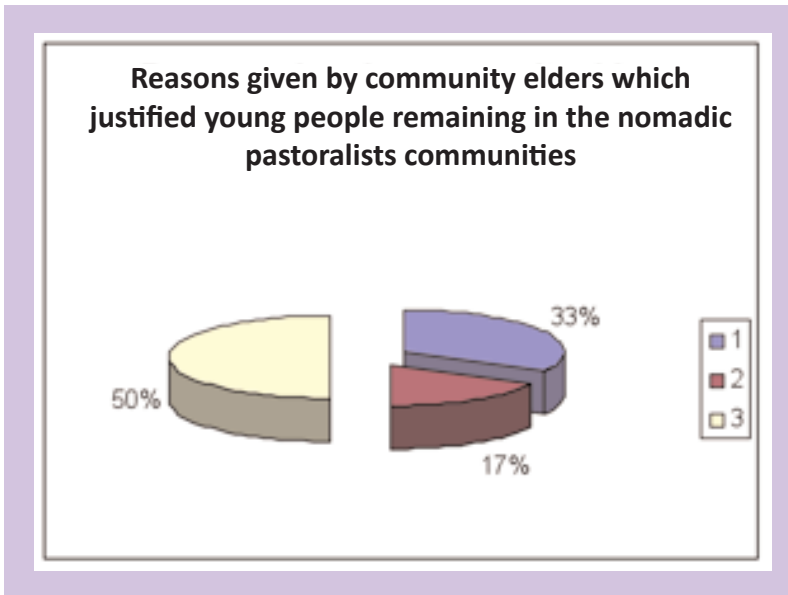
1. between 1 and 50 people
2. between 51 and 100 people
3. between 101 and 200 people
4. between 201 and 500 people
5. between 501 and 1000 people

Interviews with elders and focus group

As we did for the SL communities, we asked during focus groups interviews with parents and elders how many young people had previously left the village to go and live in town. In Puntland only a very small number of young people had already left their village to live in town.

Following these results we asked the community elders and leaders, as well as parents if they thought it would be better if young people remained in their nomadic pastoralist communities. As in SL, 100% of the people interviewed replied they would rather young people from the village stayed in the nomadic and pastoralist community rather than go and live in town

Faced with such an overwhelming result we thus asked parents and elders about the reasons behind this choice and we were presented with the following answers

**Legend**

1. young people must stay in the village to help their families and communities with the herding of animals and household chores
2. young people must stay in the village in order to transmit their knowledge onto others in the village
3. If young people stay, marry and have children within the community, it will increase the size of the community

Interestingly, parents and elders in Puntland have also argued, as in SL, for the importance of young people to stay in the village in order to pass on their knowledge and help their families with their daily tasks. However 50% of the people interviewed said one of the main reasons why young people should stay is to increase the size of their community.

Interviews with young men and women from pastoralist communities

To establish what type of vocational training skills would be beneficial to young people living in nomadic pastoralist communities we have asked young people whether they would prefer remaining in pastoralist communities for their whole life or whether they would be interested in moving into towns in the future.

Out of the 21 young people interviewed, 17 have reported a preference for the nomadic pastoralist lifestyle whilst 4 of them revealed a hope to move to towns in the future

Annex 4 – Results from Southern and Central Somalia

SCS communities profiles

Population

During this research, 100% of the communities visited had between 101 and 200 people

Type of communities

Similarly, 100% of the people interviewed have identified their community as being a fully nomadic community which moves every 9 to 12 months depending on the rainy season

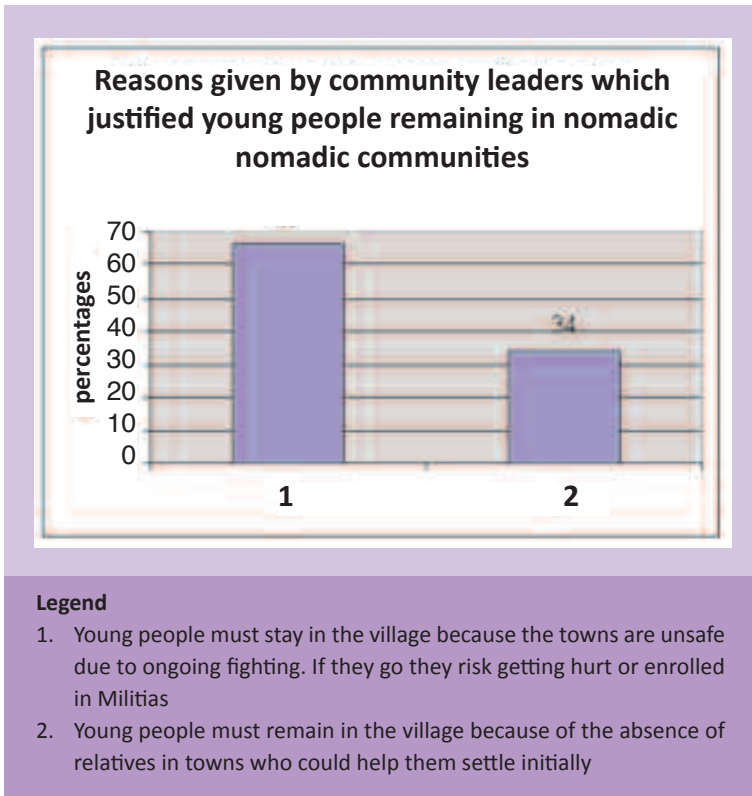
Interviews with elders and focus groups

In order to better understand what type of skills are relevant to nomadic and pastoralist young people, we thought it would be interesting to see how many young people in the nomadic communities we have visited had previously left their village for a significant period of time (at least a year) to go and live in town.

According to the interviews held with parents and elders in SCS nomadic settlements 50% reported having between 1 and 20 young people in their community who had moved to town and the remaining 50% reported between 21 and 50 young people moving to town for at least a year.

Following these results we asked parents and elders if they thought it better for young people to move to town or if they would rather the young nomadic pastoralists would stay in the community. Here again, 50% answered they would rather young people stayed in the community whilst the remaining 50% said they would encourage young people to move into urban areas.

As we did for the other two regions, we then asked parents and community leaders about the reasons behind their choice.



Of the people who have expressed their preference for young people staying in the village, 34% stated the absence of relatives in towns as a reason why young people should stay in the village. The remaining 66% indicated that towns were unsafe due to ongoing conflicts and fighting. They expressed concerns that young people could get harmed or enrolled in militias.

Regarding people who expressed their desire to send young people to live in towns, 100% of them stated the lack of basic needs (such as lack of education and health facilities, lack of income generations possibilities) in the villages as the main reason justifying their choice.

Interviews with young men and women from pastoralist communities

To establish what type of vocational training skills would be beneficial to young people living in nomadic pastoralist communities we asked young people whether they would prefer remaining in pastoralist communities for their whole life or whether they would be interested in moving into towns in the future

Out of the 6 interviews conducted with young pastoralist people in the southern and central region, all of them have expressed the desire to stay in the nomadic pastoralist community rather than move to the town and adopt an urban lifestyle.



Acknowledgments:

The report was written by Alessandra Tranquilli, Project Manager,
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Contributors to the research:

Five researchers have carried out the research in the field:

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