

This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-
NoDerivs 3.0 Licence.

To view a copy of the licence please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

RESERVE (832)

08E 9W'30I

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON GROUP
RANCHING IN NAROK DISTRICT

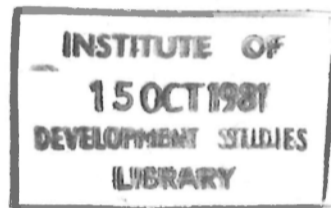
A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON GROUP
RANCHING IN NAROK DISTRICT

By

Deborah Ann Doherty

Deborah Ann Doherty

WORKING PAPER NO. 350



(b)

ABSTRACT

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. Box 30197
NAIROBI, KENYA

This initial report consists of a background data on the technical and administrative measures involved during the implementation of group ranching in Narok District of Kenya.

As part of this report, I have outlined many of the social, political, and economic constraints impeding on ranch development and briefly examined some of the ways in which the costs and benefits of group ranch development are affecting the interests of various segments of Narok Masai.

Masai stockowners are, of necessity, making certain adjustments in herd management practices, although these adjustments are not always consistent with the aims of ranch development. These adjustments necessarily show that, rather than facilitating economic development without displacing large numbers of people, group ranching, together with the introduction of what

February 1979

This report was made possible through the financial support of the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada. The views expressed in this report are those of the author and should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of the International Development Research Centre, the Institute for Development Studies, or the University of Nairobi.

This paper is not for quotation without permission of the author, as specified in the Copyright Act, Cap. 130 of the Laws of Kenya.

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON GROUP
RANCHING IN NAROK DISTRICT

by

Deborah Ann Doherty



ABSTRACT

This initial report constitutes an effort to provide background data on the technical and administrative measures involved during the implementation of group ranching in Narok District of Kenya Maasailand.

As part of this report, I have outlined many of the social, political, and economic constraints impinging on ranch development and briefly examined some of the ways in which the costs and benefits of group ranch development are affecting the interests of various segments of Narok Maasai.

Maasai stockowners are, of necessity, making certain adjustments in herd management practices, although these adjustments are not always consistent with the aims of ranch development planners; nor are these adjustments necessarily in the best interests of the Narok Maasai in general. Preliminary investigation shows that, rather than facilitating economic development without disenfranchising large numbers of people, group ranching, together with the introduction of wheat cropping, is stimulating feelings of insecurity among many Maasai herders that they will be eventually forced out of the pastoral economy. This report attempts to delve into the reasons underlying this insecurity by offering ethnographic data concerning inter- and intra-group ranch rivalries; inter-generational conflict; land use controversies; and points out problem areas which I intend to investigate more fully during my period of research tenure in Narok District.

This paper is not for publication without permission of the author or publisher.

Introduction:

The purpose of this paper is to provide a background to group ranching in Narok District of Kenya Maasailand and to outline some of the social, political, and economic factors impinging on this ranching development scheme.

Historically, attention was first given to problems in the pastoral regions of Kenya as early as the 1930's when the British Colonial government became concerned over what was regarded as rapidly deteriorating rangeland. Unfortunately, the British viewed this deterioration only as a consequence of overstocking and not as the effects of an increasing maladjustment of traditional pastoral systems struggling for survival in the face of ever-increasing agricultural encroachment. As a result, not only did such colonial development schemes as cull, branding and grazing/quota programs exacerbate the already injurious effects on the environment by placing an increased burden on rangeland not covered by their schemes, but these schemes also met with much hostility from the pastoralists (Jacobs 1975).

During the more recent post-colonial period, it has been Kenya's national policy to establish freehold title to land with the most desirable format for pastoral regional development being some pattern of individual and group ranches. It is hoped that individual and group titles will provide people with the incentive to practice range conservation - a practice which was considered inadequate under traditional communal ownership. Furthermore, establishing freehold title to land seems to be justified since it appears that commercial banks and other lending institutions will not make loans or extend credit for development without the security of registered land titles. In fact, the World Bank insisted early on that "registration is a prerequisite of the range development programme . . . without the certainty of ownership and the clear right of the group to exclude outsiders, which is provided by registration, no agency would be prepared to lend money for range development" (Lawrance Report 1966: 131).

As might be expected, this policy of establishing freehold title to land gave rise to attempts by several Maasai sections to re-establish their traditional boundaries and localities. In Kajiado District, for example, all of the Kaputiei section's land was divided into individual and group ranches by the mid-1960's and range development was being financed by the Livestock Development Project, Phase I (1969-1974). Nevertheless, research recently

conducted in Kajiado District indicates that, except for the Poka Ranch (which must be considered atypical due to its highly favourable ecological conditions), the ecological viability of most of these ranches is dubious. In fact, during the last drought, herders moved their livestock to areas of known grazing and the new group ranch boundaries presented no obstacle to these movements (Halderman 1972: 7). In effect then, semi-nomadism continues to be practiced on the Kaputiei ranches and, probably due to the slowness of infrastructural improvements, the ability to promote a sedentary life-style on these ranches only becomes possible during exceptionally wet years.

One of the major effects of group and individual ranching in this region has been increased fractionalism, mainly because the ranches were not established on the basis of any traditional, or familiar, sociological unit - a unit which could provide a basis for common action. Indeed, "the lack of short-term benefits resulted in the creation of factions and difficulties in cooperation" (Hedlund 1971: 9). Furthermore, it has been noted that individual ranchers stand apart as a class of educated political and economic leaders and that the support they muster among group ranch members further leads to hostilities and the polarization of groups. Traditional age-set leaders are losing their positions of leadership and group ranch representatives are being chosen from among the ranks of young, educated men. Here, Davis (1971:28) has noted the rise of a young, entrepreneurial class which is in competition with older, more traditional stockowners.

A further ramification of land registration in Kajiado District is that, rather than making the pastoral Maasai position more secure, this policy has made the former "section" lands more disposable and has increased the possibility of these lands being transferred to people from outside the section, either directly through private sales or indirectly by section members defaulting on development loans. More specifically, reference can be made to the misunderstanding of the implications and responsibilities stemming from individual land tenure in the "Ngong area where a registration of land to individual Maasai has resulted in the immediate sale to Kikuyu farmers and consequent loss of the land to the Maasai tribe, probably forever" (Lawrance Report 1966: 25).

Certainly there are similarities and differences in the ways that ranching has impacted, and continues to impact, on stockowners in Kajiado and Narok Districts and these remain to be more fully investigated. However, I hope this paper will shed some preliminary light on the subject and, by focusing attention solely on ranching in Narok District, point out some of the dangers inherent in making both cross-cultural generalizations and intra-cultural generalizations.

Group Ranching in Narok District:

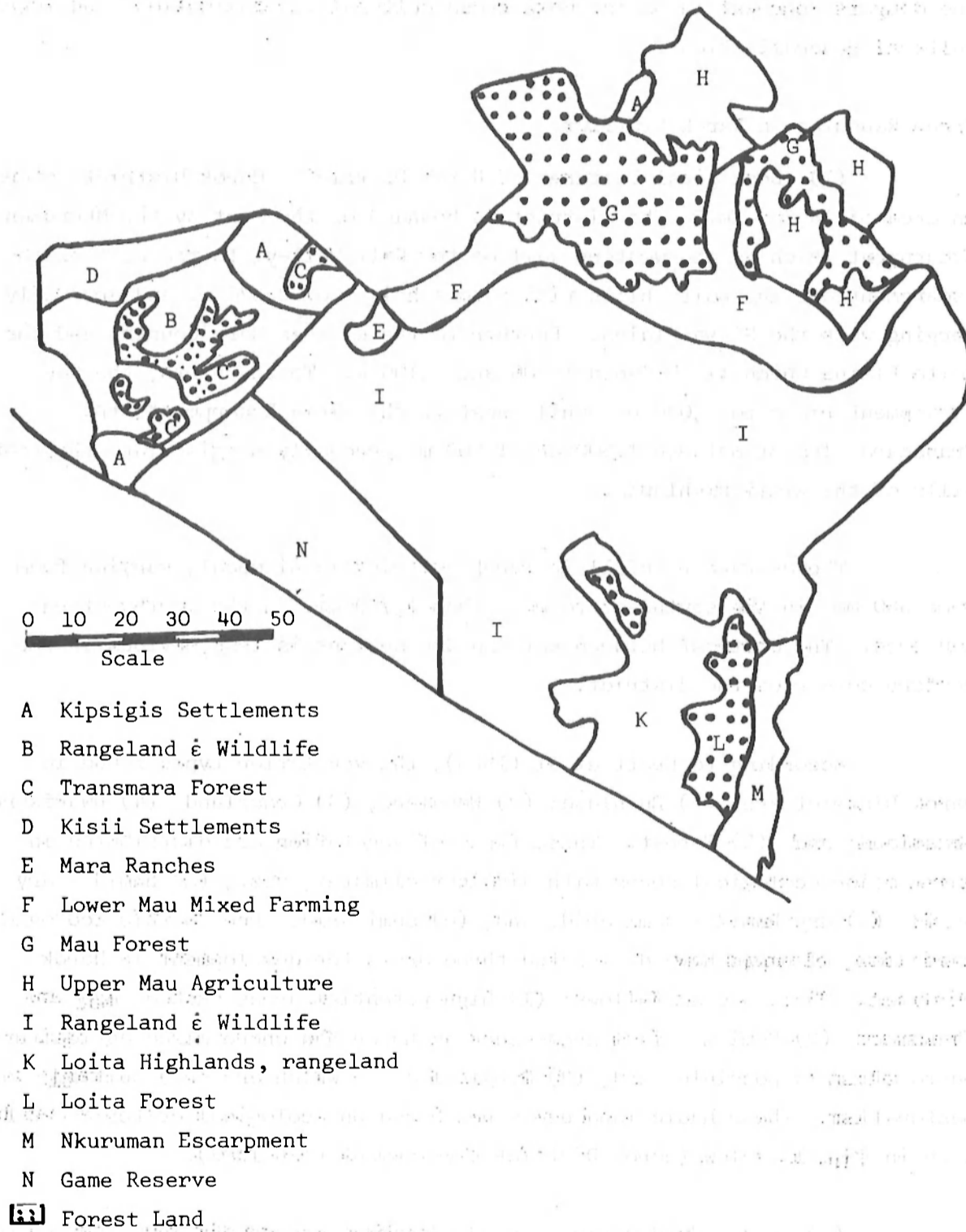
(1) Ecological Features of Narok District. Narok District covers an area of 18,500 Km.² The district is bounded on the east by the Nkuruman Escarpment which is the western wall of the Rift Valley; to the west of the escarpment are the Loita Hills rising to a height of 2,670 m. and gradually merging with the Siana Plains. Further to the west is Mara country and the Loita Plains which lie between 1,500 and 2,100 m. To the north, the Mau Escarpment rises to 3,030 m., while west of the Siria Escarpment, the Transmara lies at between 1,500 and 1,800 m. gradually merging into the foothills of the Kisii Highlands.

The average rainfall in Narok District is bi-modal, varying from some 380 mm. in the southeast to more than 1,780 mm. in the northwestern Mau area. The contrast between wet and dry seasons is less obvious in the western corner of the district.

According to Pratt et al (1966), the vegetation types found in Narok District are: (1) Bushland; (2) Woodland; (3) Grassland; (4) Dwarfshrub Grassland; and, (5) Forest. These types of vegetation are distributed in three major ecological zones with distinct climates, viz., (a) humid - dry humid; (b) dry humid - semi-arid; and, (c) semi-arid. Due to this ecological variation, planners have designated three areas for development in Narok District. These are as follows: (1) High potential areas such as Mau and Transmara; (2) Semi-marginal areas such as Lower Mau where mixed agriculture/pastoralism is possible; and, (3) Marginal areas which are only suitable for pastoralism. These basic land use zones based on ecological criteria can be seen in Fig. 1. below (Narok District Development Plan 1972).

(2) Land Adjudication. Land adjudication and the introduction of group ranching is being carried out in Narok District within the framework of the Livestock Development Project, Phase II (1974-1979). As was the case

Fig. 1 Land Use Zones of Narok



in Kajiado District, the land adjudication process establishes the boundaries for each group ranch and enables the male members within each ranch to be registered as owners and incorporated under the Land (Group Representatives) Act. This process involves electing a number of group representatives who function as the legal trustees for the corporation and are authorized to receive loans, acquire debts, etc. on behalf of the ranch corporation. A second level of authority on each ranch is the elected group ranch committee. This committee is composed of a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and seven members-at-large which represent the ranch managerial group.

The aims of the group ranching scheme in Narok District, as expressed by officials from the local Ranch Planning Office are: (1) to prevent over-grazing through an on-ranch system of rational rotational grazing; (2) to prevent the spread of contagious cattle diseases through the systematic use of dips, vaccination, and quarantine; (3) to guarantee a regular offtake of beef cattle and an increase in milk production through the introduction of grade stock; (4) to establish herds whose numbers are in direct proportion to the carrying capacity of the rangeland and market demands; and, (5) to deliver and administer development loans to interested stockowners.

Group ranches in Narok District (hereafter known as the district) are able to finance the development of a ranching infrastructure in four (4) ways:

- (1) request an Agriculture Finance Corporation (A.F.C.) loan;
- (2) through monies gained from leasing land to wheat/barley growers;
- (3) through monies gained from leasing land for tented tourist camps;
- (4) through monies gained from livestock offtake.

While it is still too early to say whether the objectives of commercial ranching will be achieved in the district, it is obvious that the impact of land registration is considerable and that this has stimulated various responses from the local Maasai. In order to examine this relationship more closely, I want to give some attention to the four ways ranch development can be financed and what these mean to different segments of Maasai society.

The Cost of Development or Who Takes an A.F.C. Loan?

Under this option, ranchers are given financial support through a ten-year loan which is repayable at 11% interest per annum. These loans are repaid according to the number of cattle each member of the ranch own, i.e., wealthy stockowners pay a comparatively higher rate than poor stockowners. It is hoped

that the obligation to repay such loans will lead to an increased cattle offtake on each ranch.

Although more than sixty (60) group ranches, plus numerous individual ranches, have been registered in the district, fewer than fifteen have been fully incorporated and then gone on to request or take out development loans. At the time this paper was written, the group ranches which have applied for and/or accepted A.F.C. loans are as follows:

<u>Ranch Name</u>	<u>Area (ha.)</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Nkairamiram	4,375	78
Keiyan	891	44
Olkeri	998	18
Moryo Narok	1,574	18
Ilmashariani	4,993	75
Olomisimis	9,640	180
Olaimutiai	3,726	18
Lemek	62,897	n.a.
Koyiaki	87,728	290
Olkinyei	78,725	195

The ranches mentioned above are particularly interesting because they illustrate many of the problems and conflicts which ranchers who opt for development face when it comes to measuring the costs involved against the benefits to be gained. For example, Maasai have a keen sense for recognizing if they are being taken advantage of and many ranch members have reported that they are being charged higher prices than usual when they purchase building materials, medicine for cattle, and so on. Because of this, they worry that any development funds would be quickly spent without much to show for it and then they would be forced to sell livestock to repay their loan. In fact, some Maasai worry that they might become destitute if they have to sell too many of their stock. Consequently, rather than regarding infrastructural development as a means of increasing ranch security, many Maasai describe it as a "plot" to place them heavily into debt with the result that their land will be sold to "outsiders". Besides this particular fear, other factors enter into the decision whether or not to take out a development loan. This can be illustrated by the following example.

Nkairamiram Group Ranch recently voted 13 - 5 in favour of accepting a loan to provide for water development, breeding bulls, and dip construction. The loan was approved with the condition that the five opposing members would be exempt from repayment. These five members were not representative of either the wealthy or the poor stockowners, but rather, can best be described as average. These men argued that they were rejecting the loan because they did not want to finance any improvements for poor herders who would contribute little to the repayment of the loan. Nor did they want to support wealthy herders who, they felt, would benefit most from graded breeding bulls. Interestingly enough, however, these five individuals are all members of other group ranches and some of them have private holdings in Mau. At the other extreme, the neighbouring ranch, Oldonyo Rasha, has even refused to incorporate and members of the ranch committee also have individual holdings in Mau.

Certainly this kind of decision-making requires considerable further investigation. One cannot simply extrapolate an immediate and causal correlation between permanent ranch members and those with interests elsewhere and the kinds of decisions each makes with regards to development loans. This becomes readily apparent when looking at Ilmashariani Group Ranch where men elected to the group ranch committee also keep wheat shambas in Mau. However, unlike the opposing five members at Nkairamiram, these individuals are considered to be the driving force towards obtaining a loan for their group ranch. Furthermore, these individuals are not the wealthiest stockowners on their ranch since they have sold numerous cattle in order to develop their wheat shambas. In contrast to this last case, another ranch, Morijo Narok, voted out their chairman because he opposed taking out a development loan and was known to be developing his interests in Kajiado District. In this situation an election placed new individuals on the ranch committee and a loan was soon accepted to build dip facilities on the ranch.

Another variable which is readily apparent in the district is that certain ranches have a high penetration of non-Maasai acceptees with whom they often intermarry. The Purko Maasai, especially in Mau Narok, are heavily intermarried with Kikuyu, while Maasai in western Narok District (i.e., the Uasin Gishu and Moitanik) are intermarried with Luyia, Nandi, and other Kalenjin peoples (cf. King 1971). Due to the insecurities stemming from land registration, many of these aliens firmly deny that they have no right to be members of a group ranch and, in fact, to sidestep this issue many of them have taken steps to be adopted into a Maasai family. The issue of these people's "Maasainess"

aside, it is important to recognize that they do have considerable influence, not only in building up individual shambas, opting for education, etc., but also, in those cases where they have been successful in being registered on a group ranch, they do influence decisions on whether to accept development loans. In fact, some Maasai informants suggest that loans officers sometimes favour ranchers who can establish kin ties with them and that some ranches with development loans have many non-Maasai registered members. In case, like this, the Maasai often refer to the holdings as "Kikuyu ranches". These few facts aside, however, the question remains for further investigation: To what extent do acceptees actually influence decision-making on Maasai group ranches?.

It is also worth mentioning that on some ranches in the district, young educated Maasai have gained influential positions on ranching committees, similar to what has already occurred in Kajiado District. Alternatively, other ranches still elect traditional leaders to their ranching committees, but appoint an educated man to the secretary's position. This is purely a token gesture, however, since the educated man will be directed by a traditional leader. In light of this, the extent to which educated men make their influence and knowledge felt on group ranches in general is debatable. For example, following a recent hoof and mouth inoculation campaign, a young educated Maasai complained that, while he had vigorously tried to explain the benefits of inoculation, he could not convince the other ranch members of this and even the ranch committee chairman hid many of his cattle in the bush to avoid inoculation. This is certainly not in keeping with Davis' (1971: 25) forecast for Kajiado District that committee members "may represent a progressive spirit as embodied in one or two progressive members".

The reasons behind these apparent conflicts between young and old, educated and traditional, rich and poor, etc., and the impact these conflicts have on the development of group ranching are precisely what I intend to investigate further during my period of research tenure in Narok District. In fact, I would suggest that a thorough study of the impact group ranching is having on the Maasai must take into account how the costs and benefits of development are affecting the social, political, and economic interests of various segments of Maasai society.

Wheat Growing and What's in it for the Maasai.

Approximately 15% of the land in Narok District is presently given over to wheat and barley, in a 30% to 70% proportion. Much of this cropping is carried on in high-potential areas above the Narok - Nairobi highway. In Upper Mau, where land has been registered as group farms, families have subdivided the holdings and any Maasai interested in grazing his cattle there has been forced out. At the moment, 90% of this land is being leased to Kikuyu farmers on a 3 - 5 year basis. In addition, some individual title deeds were given to civil servants, a few of whom are Maasai. Whatever the case, many of these people with large shambas have clearly made huge profits and some of them (i.e., local chiefs, sub-chiefs, and county councillors) are commonly referred to as the new "Wheat Elite". Moreover, these same individuals are usually members of one or more group ranches in the district and some even have individual ranches where they raise graded stock bought with their wheat profits. In sum, however, and regardless of the monetary value in wheat, those Maasai who traditionally used the Mau as a grazing reserve during periods of drought are now remarking that agriculture is quickly reducing the long-term prospects for herding in that area while most of the benefits are seen to accrue to "outsiders".

While I do not intend to carry on any long-term research in Upper Mau, I want to emphasize that I will conduct intensive research into the nature and extent of wheat growing on such group ranches as Masikonde, Olechoi, and Olekotikash, and the impact this is having on group ranch development. It is already known that land on these three ranches is being leased for wheat and barley cropping and that any profits are being equally shared by all members. Even with this, however, many elders want to subdivide their ranches so that, rather than sharing the profits, each man will be able to make an individual, and perhaps higher, gain from leasing.

Many younger men (i.e., the warrior age-grade) are opposed to sub-division because they regard the profits from wheat as a short-term means of acquiring more cattle and eventually using the entire group ranch acreage for herding. On the Masikonde Group Ranch where there is a registered membership of 70, there are also more than 30 senior warriors who insist on their right to membership under the ranch constitution. Up to now, the elders on the ranch have been successful in denying these warriors membership. However, these young men have taken their case to the district commissioner arguing that because they are of age they should have the right to

decide the ranch's future. In fact, the young men fear that with sub-division nobody on the ranch will have enough land to raise cattle and, furthermore, that the elders would immediately sell or lease their land in order to obtain money for drinking. For these warriors, there is a real possibility that Lower Mau will become another Ngong where large-scale herding is impossible. Part of their suspicion derives from the fact that wealthy ranch members are beginning to build permanent houses and might use this to eventually claim individual title to some of the best land.

In light of the above, it is questionable whether wheat growing will ever promote ranch development. Very little money from wheat is channelled into ranching improvements and many Maasai say that because they did not sell any animals to realize the cash that, "it is like finding money on the roadside and it can be spent on anything". Maasai on group ranches in wheat growing areas are anxious to increase their acreage. However, it seems unlikely that they see the overall capacity of their ranch being proportionately reduced. Few of the ranches which presently grow wheat have taken out development loans and, while some planners suspect this is because they have access to their own private funds, it is important not to overlook the fact that these same Maasai ranchers have not been using their profits from wheat for ranch development:

In essence then, one of the major effects of growing wheat on group ranches in parts of the district has been the increased conflict between those committed to pastoralism and those who favour agriculture; between group and individual interests; and between young and old Maasai living on the group ranches. Moreover, many young Maasai even regard this conflict and the possibility of sub-division as a distinct threat to their cultural identity. They feel that in order to survive on small plots of land many Maasai will take Kikuyu wives who, unlike Maasai women, will be willing to maintain a shamba. Once this pattern is established, there is the additional fear that these (or other) non-Maasai will recruit additional outsiders and that this will cause Maasai customs to diminish. The full extent of the impact wheat growing has on group ranches will be closely examined during the course of my fieldwork, as will the basis for land use conflicts, the strategies used to cope with these conflicts, and some of the possible solutions for avoiding such conflict.

Making Money the Easy Way - Capitalizing On Wildlife

A third source of funding for group ranches comes from tented camps. Those ranches with a substantial wildlife population lease sections of their ranches to businessmen who, on the basis of a 12-month lease agreement, establish tourist camps. These ranches, Lemek and Koyiaki are good examples, receive some Kshs. 150,000 per year from this source, plus additional revenue from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife as compensation for wild animals coming onto their ranches from the Maasai Mara game reserve.

Because of such a lucrative source of funds, these ranches have not yet had to apply for a development loan. This worries the Ranch Planning Office in the district because officials there feel that, without a loan to repay, there will be no significant offtake of cattle, but rather, ranch finances will be used to purchase more cattle thereby leading to a chronic overstocking problem. Again such a situation begs further investigation but, it is worthwhile mentioning here that Koyiaki Group Ranch has already invested its profits from tented camps in dip construction and the purchase of 150 graded steers, against the advice of district ranch planners!

Self-Financed Development of a Different Kind

Some ranches, e.g., Suswa Kitet, have applied for a development loan but were rejected on the basis that its ranch members have too much personal cattle wealth and that their ranch is overstocked. Suffice to say that Suswa Kitet ranch members are not willing to reduce their herds simply to become eligible for a development loan: Stated differently, the Suswa Kitet ranchers are implicitly rejecting the values and principles of ranch development which planners are attempting to impose, viz., a sustained offtake of cattle, rangeland conservation, and a commercial cash economy.

Preliminary investigation shows that, for ranch planners, the introduction of improved technology is the means for providing a substantial measure of risk pooling on commercial ranches. For Maasai ranchers, however, dips, crushes, and bore holes are only innovations to be accepted in order to further enhance the health of their cattle and stimulate growth in their indigenous economy. Consequently, the technological determinism which is so often the basis of development models (and macro theory in general) is not always forthcoming! Of course, there are numerous other reasons why

development does not occur. For example, despite technological innovations, it often happens that development is stifled when a population is increasing faster than people's ability to accumulate capital. This may well be true for those group ranches which must support future generations.

Hoben (1967) makes the interesting observation that whenever the available pasture per livestock unit decreases (as could well be the case at Suswa Kitet), and herd quality follows suit, families living near the subsistence level are forced to increase the size of their herds simply to maintain the same level of production. Also, the constraints on development must be recognized in that process of herd growth whereby each stockowner is involved in numerous sets of cattle relations corresponding to a wide variety of social ties and that the circulation of cattle among and within production units in many ways parallels the process of social reproduction (Spencer 1978). Consequently, although planners vow they do not want to "change" the Maasai, it is easy to argue that a shift from subsistence pastoralism to commercial beef production is not merely an extension of traditional practices, but rather, is a transformation to a completely new mode of production - one which may well involve organizational changes which, in turn, could have drastic effects on the Maasai social system.

Some General Problem to be Investigated

Keeping the preceding remarks in mind, I should stress that I also intend to investigate cattle offtake, especially the rate and structure of livestock sales and purchases. Schneider (1978) has already examined the relationship between annual offtake rates and herd management practices. He disagrees with Dahl and Hjort's (1976) contention that Maasai manage cattle solely for milk production and Baxter's (1975) claim that Maasai herd structure is due to their need for bridewealth, as well as an ecological adaptation. Instead, he argues that, because livestock numbers increase rapidly, Maasai manage their cattle for profit. He goes on to say that, because of this, the Maasai make decisions about herd management as investments. This being the case, a minimal offtake of cattle is decidedly the best strategy within a subsistence economy, while it clearly would not be if one were involved in commercial beef and milk production. Schneider concludes that Maasai manage their herds for capital growth and that diffuse stock relationships create conditions "in which the amount of wealth that can be accumulated is practically endless" (Schneider 1978: 24).

I find Schneider's speculations particularly intriguing given my interest in exploring the relationship between Maasai social forms and their production strategies. In fact, I would strongly suggest that collecting and analyzing this particular type of data is essential to gaining a thorough understanding of the process of transformation which Maasai undergo as they shift from semi-nomadic herding to commercial ranching. As an illustration of this I want to briefly mention that previously widespread stockfriend relationships on many Kajiado group ranches have declined following the introduction of group ranching and that this also seems to be happening in Narok. Now, if these same relationships were, in fact, the basis for capital accumulation in Maasai society, one has to wonder whether herd structure and herd management practices are being similarly altered.

It may well be that the relationships between social forms and production strategies are not causal. Nevertheless, it is still important to determine how significant correlations and statistical variations based on this kind of data actually reflect transformation of specific structural properties inherent to the Maasai social system.

After drawing attention to Schneider's argument, I want to emphasize that I do not subscribe to his notion that the Maasai do not sell their cattle or realize the value of money. Indeed, if one were to depend on official livestock marketing statistics compiled for Narok District, he would certainly be misled. In 1978, for example, the Narok County Council recorded 5,250 official sales of livestock from the district. However, livestock marketing officials estimate that over 50,000 head of cattle left the district unofficially (and illegally!). On the basis of this unofficial export of stock, it appears that 1.5 - 2 cattle per Maasai family are sold each year, although this in no way represents the absolute offtake of cattle in Narok District. This is especially true since Maasai traders often travel to Mulo, purchase Kipsigis and Kisii cattle, by-pass the quarantine facilities at Kiboko, and sell these cattle in Ngong for a healthy profit. Once this is accomplished, the same traders travel to Tanzania where they purchase bulls for sale to slaughter houses in and around Nairobi, again at a substantial profit. With these earnings in hand, traders return to Mulo and purchase heifers and bull-calves which are added to their own herds. In addition, Maasai often emphasize that even slaughter stock is only sold to K.M.C. when a higher price cannot be gained elsewhere!

This particular circulation of cattle, of which there are many variations, is most frequently used by young Maasai men who cannot build up herds for marriage purposes through traditional stock theft. In effect then, stock trading provides these young men with the means to join the mainstream of Maasai social, political, and economic life. In more general terms, the circulation of cattle into and out of Narok Maasailand can be interpreted as one of several manifestations of intergenerational conflict peculiar to contemporary Maasai society, as well as representing the inability of poor Maasai to fully participate in the pastoral economy.

Another general problem, which is also characteristic of Kajiado District, is that Narok Maasai regard group ranches as artificial creations which bear no relation to traditional sociological units such as elatia, enkuto'o, etc. In fact, Frans Mol (pers. communication) notes that many Maasai refer to their group ranch as "olokeri" - a traditional term which refers specifically to the small grassy area near a Maasai boma where sick animals are kept. The significance of this and other terms which Maasai use to describe a group ranch is still to be determined, however, they will undoubtedly say much about Maasai perceptions of ranch development.

I should mention here that many of the small ranches in the district are family ranches, while larger ones are composed of people from the same Maasai section, but are also representative of several Maasai sub-sections. In the latter case, and whenever one sub-section is dominant, it appears that serious conflicts are developing over ranch management. In a few cases, e.g., Olomisimis, ranches have members from three separate Maasai sections, viz., Moitanik, Siria, Uasingishu. This ranch is beset with interpersonal antagonisms and the ranch committee has asked that the ranch be sub-divided along section lines. At Lemek Group Ranch, many ranch members, including members of the ranch committee, have already assumed ownership of individual plots of land on a ridge near the river - a move which could eventually lead to disputes over access rights to water. By contrast, two group ranches in the Loita Hills area have asked to be combined into one single, large ranch.

Preliminary investigation in the district reveals that most individual ranches have closed off their land to others and are concentrating on raising graded stock. Many of these individual ranches belong to outsiders, often from Nairobi, while others belong to local Maasai who are members, and sometimes leaders, on several of the group

ranches in the district. One question which remains to be answered here is: How are non-resident members of group ranches able to influence decision-making on those ranches?

It is also important to mention that, in the semi-arid areas of the district, ranch boundaries are usually open. Here, ranchers say that, while they cannot expel intruding graziers, they do report them to ranch planning officers. Thirty such illegal graziers were reported to be herding cattle on Nkairamiram Group Ranch while their own land was under wheat. Olokeri Group Ranch reported over 300 such intruders, but decided not to try to expel them. Similarly, Olomisimis Group Ranch has numerous illegal graziers from Nandi, Kipsigis, Kisii, and from as far away as Tanzania, but because of inter-marriage with all these groups, find it extremely difficult to remove them. Again, since these incidents can constitute a constraint on ranch development, they must be more thoroughly investigated.

Conclusion:

It is important to stress that changes in cattle usage, resource management, and pastoral movement within the framework of group ranch development cannot be fully understood without considering their impact on Maasai kinship relations, bridewealth, marriage, and inheritance practices, as well as women's roles, especially in those areas where group ranch committees are contemplating commercial milk production. Furthermore, if capital accumulation is being replaced by deflation in the traditional Maasai economy, the possibility exists for numerous Maasai to become disenfranchised, particularly where sub-division of group ranches occurs since this could provide the necessary conditions for an intense, but different, system of social, political, and economic stratification.

It also remains to be seen whether infrastructural development in the district will proceed quickly enough to off-set any dry-season limitations or periodic drought and demonstrate the long-term ecological viability of group ranches. This is important since the Purko Maasai traditionally utilized selected areas of higher rainfall in the district, viz., the entire Transmara Division, the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, and the forested zones of Mau and the Loita Hills, as dry-season graze. However, because of agricultural development, etc., many of these areas are no longer available for grazing and some Maasai are beginning to wonder what will happen to their cattle if Narok has a severe drought.

Finally, I want to point out that research already completed indicates that there are several sets of sometimes conflicting responses to ranching development in the district, rather than a single set of responses. At one extreme, group ranches have been described by Maasai as nothing more than "holding grounds for K.M.C." while, at the other extreme, some Maasai praise group ranches for preserving Maasai brotherhood and cultural identity. Such contrasting opinions cannot simply be viewed as random and unrelated responses to group ranching. I hope to demonstrate that, not only do different ecological, social, political, and economic variables have a varying impact on different Maasai groups, but also, that one can only extrapolate an overall picture of group ranching development in Narok District when responses in one area are correlated with different responses elsewhere in the district. The Kenyan group ranching development model has generated much interest in other countries with pastoral populations. It is for this reason that my research findings should have a wider applicability, especially in connection with pastoral responses to commercial ranching incentives, the general impact of economic development, and the returns which are presently being realized within the Kenyan experience.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baxter, P.T.W.

1975 "Some Consequences of Sedentatization for Social Relationships", in Pastoralism in Tropical Africa. T. Monod (ed.), London, Oxford University Press.

Dahl, G. and Hjort, A.

1976 Having Herds. Stockholm Studies in Social Anthropology 2, University of Stockholm.

Davis, R.K.

1971 "Some Issues in the Evolution, Organization and Operation of Group Ranches in Kenya", in East African Journal of Rural Development 4(1) : 22-33.

Halderman, J.M.

1972 "An Analysis of Continued Semi-Nomadism on the Kaputiei Group Ranches : Sociological and Ecological Factors", I.D.S. Working Paper no. 28.

Hedlund, H.G.B.

1971 "The impact of group ranches on a pastoral society", I.D.S. Paper no. 100.

Hoben, A.

1976 "Social Soundness of the Maasai Livestock and Range Management Project", Paper prepared for the USAID Mission in Tanzania.

Jacobs, A.

1975 "Maasai pastoralism in historical perspective", in Pastoralism in Tropical Africa. T. Monod (ed.), London: Oxford University Press.

King, K.

1971 "Education and Ethnicity in the Rift Valley: Maasai, Kipsigis, and Kikuyu in the School System", I.D.S. Staff Paper no. 113.

Lawrence Report

1966 Report of the Mission on Land Consolidation and Registration in Kenya, 1965-66. Nairobi: Government Printer.

Narok District Development Plan, 1972.

Pratt, E., et al

1966 "A Classification of East African rangeland with an appendix on terminology", in Journal of Applied Ecology 3: 369-82.

Schneider, H.

1978 "Development and the Pastoralists of East Africa", unpublished manuscript.

Spencer, P.

1978 "Pastoralists and the Ghost of Capitalism ", unpublished Manuscript.