

Abstract

Land fragmentation and privatization in pastoral systems in Africa has limited the application of traditional adaptive livelihood strategies, particularly pastoral livestock mobility. This has increased vulnerability of livestock dependent livelihoods due to climate variability and change in the African dry lands. Reduced vulnerability to climate variability and change will depend on enhancing adaptive strategies and mechanisms at local level. Secondary land rights have been used to enhance mobility and flexibility in agro/pastoral systems and thus the adaptive capacity of the systems. This study aimed at characterizing the nature and extent of use of secondary land rights to access grazing resources and the factors affecting their application in the Kamba agropastoral system of south eastern Kenya. Direct interviews of 50 households distributed in 9 randomly selected sub-locations of Kibwezi District were conducted using questionnaires and analyzed using econometric techniques. Seventy percent of the households used secondary rights to secure pasture for their animals, particularly short term land leases (64%) and exchange of bulls for ploughing (38%). Use of secondary land rights was positively and significantly influenced by increasing livestock per adult, smallstock to cow ratio, and small farm size per household. The amount of crop residue available and increasing grazing area per adult had a negative effect. Secondary rights gave households flexibility in dealing with pasture shortages during dry spells. In such agropastoral systems, grazing management strategies that are augmented by flexible secondary land rights could be central to sustainable livestock production.