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**Pastoralism, Social Protection and Vision 2030 in Kenya:
Possibilities and Prospects**

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When Vision 2030 was unveiled in 2009, many stakeholders received the news with a great deal of excitement, except the pastoralists in Kenya. The pastoralists were left out due to many reasons. First, the focus in Vision 2030 seems to be on agriculture, industry and infrastructure development in major cities, which are all located outside the pastoralist regions. Second, the creation of the Ministry of Northern Kenya meant that pastoralists were no longer regarded as part and parcel of the rest of Kenya. Third, the lack of clear government policy on livestock and development compared to agriculture has undermined the pastoralist economy, and exposed herders to exploitative middlemen from southern Kenya who often buy cattle during periods when pastoralists are most vulnerable. Fourth, the perennial drought, famine, livestock diseases and insecurity problems in northern Kenya have not been addressed in Vision 2030. Fifth, many NGOs have been pushing for irrigation schemes, many of which have been undermined by lack of government support and wildlife menace. The lack of clear policies on social protection for pastoralists has implications for development in Kenya. Many pastoralists do not have access to clean water, good roads, schools and health services compared to their counterparts in the south. This paper is based on research which investigated social protection structures and institutions among pastoralists in northern Kenya. It faults Vision 2030 and suggests mechanisms and ways in which pastoralists can be incorporated in Kenya's development more meaningfully. I argue in this paper that Vision 2030 has not addressed the plight of pastoralists in political, economic and social realms, in ways that would integrate them advantageously in national, regional and global market place. How do pastoralists engage new global realities? The paper shows that with ICT and introduction of cell phones in rural areas, pastoralists are part of the global market place. They follow and watch auctions on livestock at the stock exchange and market as well as carcasses for export and domestic production. I will show that pastoralists are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of selling and offloading herds at an advantage, before drought sets in. Pastoralists in Kenya seem ready to deal with the challenges of the 21st Century.