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Pastoral prosperities: Re-thinking African drylands

This book brings together contributions from diverse disciplinary perspectives to explore the intersecting themes shaping the future of mobile pastoralism in Africa’s drylands.

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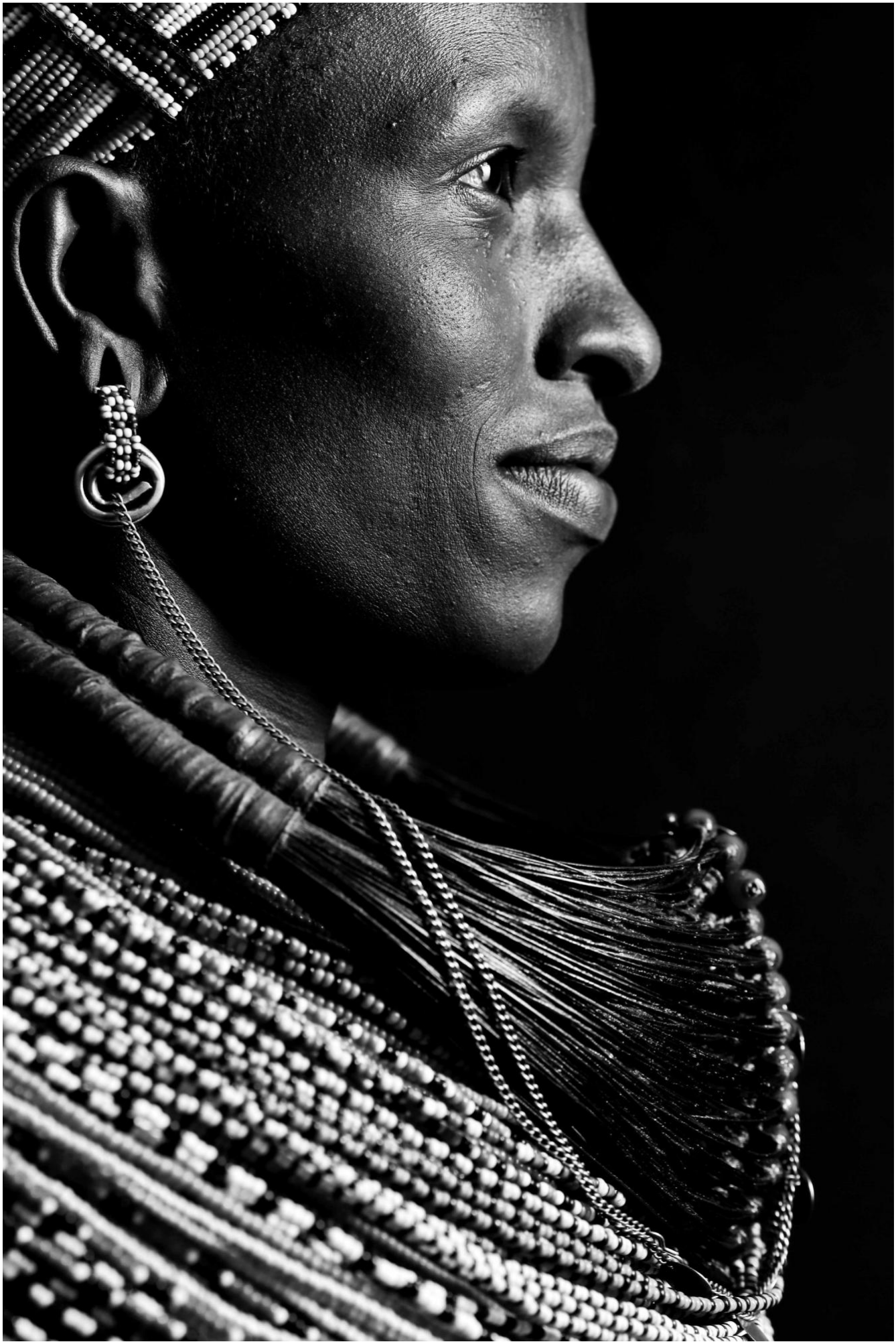
Promoting innovative solutions Reframing aid and resilience Supporting livelihoods and markets Understanding land and conflict Working in a changing climate Gender equality and social inclusion Africa



A young Samburu woman in Kenya - Image by Pedrofp / Shutterstock

'Pastoral Prosperities: Re-Thinking African Drylands' (forthcoming), edited by Samuel F. Derbyshire, Tahira Mohamed and Rahma Hassan, brings together contributions from diverse disciplinary perspectives to explore the intersecting themes shaping the future of mobile pastoralism in Africa's drylands.

Offering rich empirical material, it builds on recent pioneering works that have rethought fundamental assumptions about prosperity and development, questioning visions and rationalities that have hitherto been oriented towards maximising market growth rather than fostering well-being, quality of life and planetary health. The book asks what other ways of imagining social and environmental futures emerge in the drylands, alongside or beyond the narrow frame of Gross Domestic Product-based indicators.

Taking stock of the enduring power of restrictive narratives about pastoralism's past and future, the volume considers the counter-narratives of prosperity that gain traction amidst the heterogeneous and complex drylands of today. It explores the aspirations, practices and struggles that must be understood to make sense of ongoing processes of radical socio-economic, political and environmental change. In doing so, this resource highlights both the shortcomings of implicit assumptions prevalent across various key sectors and the scope for new cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral conversations that might inform more grounded approaches to investment, governance and humanitarian action.

This book is particularly relevant to SPARC, which co-funded the positions of authors and editors Samuel F. Derbyshire and Tahira Mohamed at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) over a two-year period. The volume engages directly with themes of critical importance to SPARC, developing ideas and insights generated during the programme on topics ranging from anticipatory action and early warning to the gendered navigation of markets in pastoralist contexts.

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