

**SPARC**Supporting Pastoralism
and Agriculture in Recurrent
and Protracted Crises**CAUSAL
DESIGN****AFRISCOUT**A  Global
Communities **social enterprise**

SUMMARY

SHEPHERD'S EYE IN THE SKY: THE POTENTIAL FOR AFRISCOUT DIGITAL GRAZING MAPS TO IMPROVE PASTORALISTS' GRAZING AND MIGRATION DECISIONS

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Motivation

Pastoralism is a critical livelihood and economic activity in East Africa's arid and semi-arid areas. Climate change-induced protracted droughts and floods, livestock diseases, armed conflicts and an increasing population are key risk factors that reduce the ability of pastoralists to make pastoralism viable.

Purpose

This technical brief introduces [AfriScout](#), an application that shows great potential for mitigating some of the challenges pastoralists face by providing them with information critical to enhancing their ability to make better and informed decisions.

The brief also provides some key findings from a baseline survey, the results of which illustrate how AfriScout could improve decision-making around activities that are crucial to successful pastoralism, including herd management, rangeland conditions and strategic migration.

Approach and methods

Before fully implementing AfriScout, Causal Design and AfriScout conducted a baseline survey of a sample of households located in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya. The data from the survey provide insights on the scope of key risk factors facing pastoralists in these areas. They include herd size and condition, migration patterns, conflict, and access to information sources leveraged to inform decisions.

AfriScout was already available for use by pastoralists in some areas in which the sample for the baseline was selected. Thus, data on users' perceptions of AfriScout as a tool to enhance decision-making for pastoralists were obtained from approximately 10% of the total sample size.

Findings on key risk factors

The results of the baseline survey provide information on key risk factors. These include herd size and condition, the status of successful herd migration, the role of conflict in pastoralism, and the sources of information currently used to inform decision-making.

Early perceptions of AfriScout

The section on early perceptions of AfriScout presents data from a small sub-set of the sample on how the use of the application might mitigate some of the challenges facing pastoralists, as illustrated in the baseline survey. The baseline survey also included information on the facility and ease of use of the app, from the perspective of current users.

Conclusions

It is too early to draw concrete conclusions about AfriScout's effectiveness. But baseline data from a sub-sample of pastoralists who have already used AfriScout suggests its potential to create positive outcomes and improve decision-making for greater success.

The results of the survey also illustrate that the app has been positively received and is considered reliable and easy to access. Other findings also indicate the potential utility and relevance of AfriScout as a timely source of reliable, climate-based information to better inform migration and rangeland management decisions.

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