The role of livestock transfer relationships in risk management among pastoralists in Karamoja, Uganda

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Overview

Risk management: an adaptive problem
Risks in Pastoralism
Livestock Transfers and Risk Management

• Stock friendships in East Africa

• Theoretical considerations
  • Reciprocity – problematic because of likelihood of currently wealthy/able stock friend to become destitute in the future
What is the role of livestock transfer relationships in risk management?
Research Area

Karamoja Region, Uganda
Field Site 1

Field Site 2

\[ N = 45 \text{ men} \]
Stock Friendships (*akoneo*) in Karamoja

• Can be contracted at any age

• Small gifts → Livestock

• Stock friends as fictive kin
Characteristics of Stock Friend Networks

• Stock friendship network size
  Site 1 avg. = 9
  Site 2 avg. = 6

• Composition
  Kin - 30% [Site 1]; 38% [Site 2]
  Affines > Agnatic

• Geographic dispersal
  34% same village; 51% same sub-county [Site 1]
  27% same village; 54% same sub-county [Site 2]
Properties of Stock Friend Networks

• Reciprocity vs. need

• Demand sharing & Need based transfers

• Ties of obligation
Are livestock transfer relationships beneficial during disaster?
Predictors of Help Received & Help Given

- **Help given**
  - Site 1 – Livestock Traders
    - Brewers
    - Food Aid Recipients

- **Help received**
  - Predictors: Age, Wealth, Household size, Size of stock friend networks
  - Results: Size of stock friend network predicts help received ($p<0.01$)
Frequencies of help received during drought in both field sites

Only 8% of friends in drought helping data are ‘stock friends’
Who are these other ‘friends’ from whom help was received during a drought?
Propositions

Weak ties vs. Strong, obligatory relationships (Stock friendships)

RA & Key Informants walking to the kraals
Stochastic Environments & Need-Based Transfers

“In a time of need, you don’t know who is going to help you”
Participant, Field Site 1
Future Work

• Village level networks

• Homophily

• Tracking of stock friends’ role over multiple years
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