



Better lives through livestock

TH3.2: Youth transitions and livestock in Kenya

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Youth!

- Relevance in policy, in CG, and Gender Platform
- Youth research approaches
 - Which age categories should we use?
 - Will an intersectional lens suffice?
 - Does youth differ from women's empowerment? What metrics to use?
 - And so on...



Youth studies approaches
inform CG strategic youth
research *and* guide youth
specific development
intervention

Theoretical contributions
to youth transitions

Youth Studies

- Decades of theoretical and empirical research
- Generational lens facilitates an understanding of social change
- Pathways to adulthood are complex (Gough et al., 2013; Hajdu et al., 2013).
 - *The speed, scale, shape and consequences of youth transitions vary across countries and contexts depending on a combination of structural constraints and opportunities, societal expectations and policy frameworks, as well as individual agency (Global Youth Development Index, 2016).*
- Limited geographies
 - *Informed by experiences in the Global North and there is a need to consider how we might better research and theorize about 'youth', understood as a socially constructed life-phase, and about the empirical realities of young people's lives from different regions and states North (MacDonald et al., 2019; MacDonald & King, 2021).*

Youth studies in Africa: limited

- Few narratives
 - Young Africans are:
 - trapped in **'waithood'** unable "to obtain work and become independent—to build, buy, or rent a house for themselves, support their relatives, get married, establish families and gain social recognition as adults
 - living in a period of suspension between childhood and adulthood...that is gradually replacing conventional adulthood (Honwana, 2014)
- Gender perspectives are limited
 - Young men and women experience waithood in very different ways.
 - For men, waithood entails facing the pressures of finding a steady job; securing the resources to purchase, build or rent a home; and covering the costs of marriage and family formation. Although women are increasingly being educated and have always engaged in productive labour alongside household chores, marriage and motherhood are still the most important markers of adulthood. women's transition to adulthood depends upon men's attainment of adult status in society
- Role of gender and age in youth studies is increasing
 - (Crossouard et al., 2021; Rietveld et al, 2020; Elias et al., 2018; Langevang and Gough, 2012; Langevang, 2012)

Research questions

What does the transition from youth to adulthood look like for Kenyan youth?

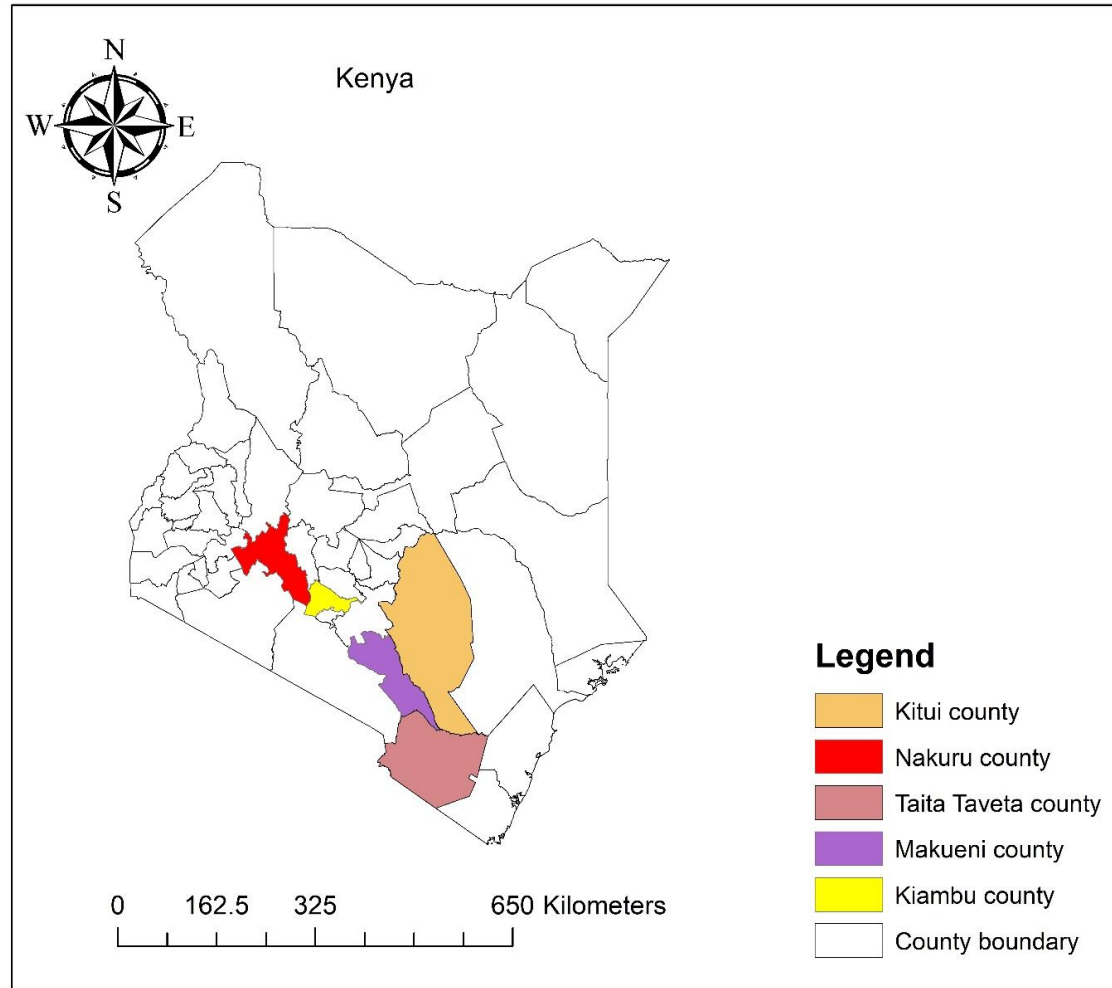
Apply a geographic and gender lens to understand:

1. What are key **milestones** or what moments shape youth transitions to adulthood?
 - Social constructions of youth transitions
 - Education, employment, employment, starting a family
 - What is valued, why?
 - In what *order* do milestones occur? What does a pathway to adulthood look like?
2. **Who** is achieving what milestones and when, or at what age?
3. Where and how does **livestock** feature in supporting youth transitions, if at all?

Geographies: Arid and semi arid lands (ASAL) and non-ASALs



Study sites: 5 counties



Mixed methods

Quantitative

- Livestock value chain surveys (710)
 - Traders & brokers in markets, butcheries, slaughterhouses, etc.
 - 326 with youth (age 18-35)
- Type of information collected:
 - Values attributed to certain events, ideal age, actual age of achievement/occurrence, role of livestock in supporting the milestone
 - livestock activities, entry into and within livestock value chains

*Vespa, J. (2017). *The changing economics and demographics of young adulthood: 1975-2016*: US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, United States Census.

Qualitative

- Focus group discussions (30)
 - 24 with youth
- Key informant interviews (20)
- Type of information collected:
 - Youth transitions, engagement in livestock value chains, influential relationships

Value of the milestone in transitions

In both ASALs and non-ASALs **men's values of moving out of parents household and getting married are significantly higher** than women.

In non ASALs the **value men attribute to having children is significantly higher** than women.

Milestones	Importance of milestone : Extremely important (%)							
	ASAL (n=176)				Non ASAL(n=156)			
	Men(106)	Women(70)	Total=176	p-value	Men(93)	Women(63)	Total(156)	p-value
Completing form four	79	83	81	0.55	68	78	72	0.19
Employed full time/ salary	68	70	69	0.82	60	57	59	0.78
Earning income	88	86	87	0.72	77	76	77	0.89
Able to support a family	93	86	90	0.15	92	76	93	0.65
Financially independent from parents	88	86	87	0.72	86	76	88	0.28
No longer living in parents' household	89	76	84	0.09	83	67	76	0.05
Get married	90	73	83	0.01	75	43	62	0.00
Having children	92	97	94	0.18	80	62	72	0.04

Achievement and/or occurrence of milestone

Young women and men's experiences differ in ASALs and non- ASALs.

In ASALs, young men earn income more often than women; while young women have children at higher rates when compared to young men.

In non-ASALs, women complete education (Form 4) at higher rates than men; and are also having children more frequently than young men.

In non ASALS, young men are moving out of their parents households at higher rates than young women.

Milestones	Reached milestone(%)							
	ASAL (n=176)				Non ASAL(n=156)			
	Men(106)	Women(70)	Total(176)	p-value	Men(93)	Women(63)	Total(156)	p-value
Completing form four	66	61	64	0.54	58	73	64	0.06
Employed full time/ salary	38	46	41	0.29	45	57	50	0.14
Earning income	96	90	94	0.10	90	97	93	0.12
Able to support a family	83	79	81	0.46	83	81	82	0.77
Financially independent from parents	79	81	80	0.72	84	84	84	0.97
No longer living in parents' household	80	74	78	0.36	87	71	81	0.01
Get married	64	71	67	0.32	53	59	55	0.46
Having children	62	86	72	0.00	55	71	62	0.04

Role of livestock in supporting the milestone

Livestock supports young men's achievements, or experiences of milestones in **nearly ALL cases in both ASALs and non-ASALs**, including financial independence, starting a family, getting married and having children.

Livestock is particularly important for young men's employment and income in non-ASALs.

Milestones	Livestock contributed to achievement of milestone(%)							
	ASAL (176)				Non ASAL(156)			
	Men(106)	Women(70)	Total (176)	p-value	Men(93)	Women(63)	Total(156)	p-value
Completing form four	94	86	91	0.14	78	65	72	0.17
Employed full time/ salary	43	31	38	0.33	67	33	51	0.00
Earning income	81	75	79	0.30	74	61	68	0.09
Able to support a family	91	78	86	0.04	82	67	76	0.05
Financially independent from parents	88	74	82	0.03	74	58	68	0.06
No longer living in parents' household	76	63	72	0.10	69	49	62	0.02
Get married	87	44	69	0.00	76	38	59	0.00
Having children	83	62	72	0.01	78	67	73	0.01

Qualitative: Social constructions of youth

- Cultural rites & values

- e.g., Kiama, circumcision

- Gendered values, e.g., marriage

“And even most of those who get married do not stay in those marriages, they get out. I think women we like supporting ourselves so we skip marriage, get children and support ourselves”
(non-ASAL, Kiambu, Githunguri women)

- Pathways are diverse

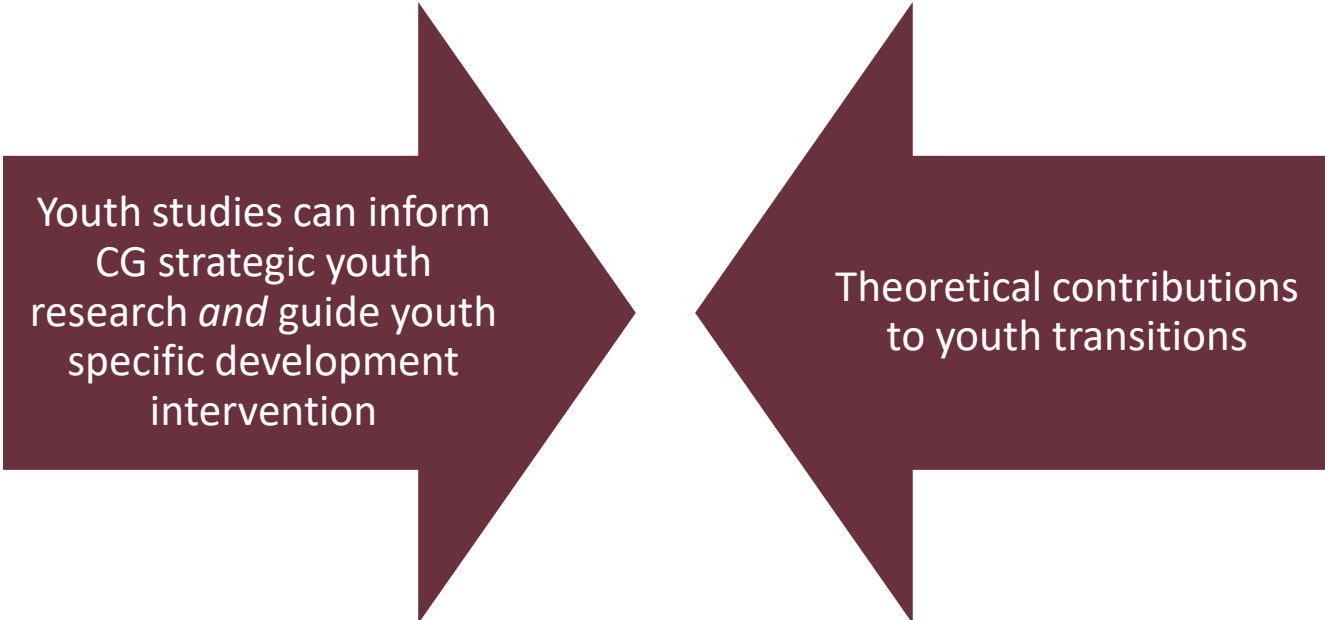
“We all live through different circumstances that even siblings from the same house may take different routes. There is no script; just that we transition based on the hand life serves us. Some of these challenges are gender specific but mostly we adapt to life as it comes.” (ASAL, Kitui, Men’s group)

- Emerging themes

- Masculinities and men’s sense of disempowerment

Final thoughts

- Of course gender and geography matter!
- Who is a youth? it depends on who you ask.
- Age categories! Capturing too much or not enough?
 - Mid 20s are a time of tumult: uncertainty, activity, social change



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