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RESERVE

THE RECRUITMENT OF LABOR AMONG SAMBURU HERDERS

By

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the recruitment of labor among Samburu herders. It shows that herders are far from self-sufficient and need to participate in an employment-based cooperative system rather than the exception. The depth of hired labor within herders is itself remarkable. While Samburu herders engage in wage labor, they are reluctant to recruit their own workers in this manner. Samburu herders lose wages quickly if not properly tended. The herder's network of class-based relations suggests that his own labor force is better maintained through his network of class-based relations.

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THE RECRUITMENT OF LABOR AMONG THE SAMBURU HERDERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the recruitment of labor among Samburu pastoralists. Focusing on herding, it shows that families are far from self-sufficient labor units. Herdowners amass much of their needed work force by borrowing related children and by participating in encampment-based cooperative activity. Joint herding is the norm, rather than the exception.

The dearth of hired labor within encampments is itself remarkable. While Samburu themselves engage in wage labor, they are reluctant to recruit their own workers in this manner. Animals, Sambaru wealth, lose value quickly if not properly tended. The herdowner's need for loyal and reliable workers suggests that his own labor force is better marshalled through his network of closely-tied kin.

Summary

This paper results from fieldwork among a group of semi-nomadic pastoralists, the Samburu of north-central Kenya. The investigations center on labor organization and address two areas of interest:

- 1) organization of work within Samburu encampments and
- 2) non-herding responses of pastoralists to a changing regional economy.

The theme of this particular inquiry is a focused one. Specifically, I describe the recruitment of labor within this pastoral society. Drawing from a case study of four complete encampments, I show that Samburu families are far from self-sufficient labor units. During the dry season analysis, family members were responsible for only one quarter of the household pasturing activity. Another quarter of the animal groups were tended by workers recruited from the outside, in this instance "borrowed" children. And over half of the herding work involved the exchange of services among those sharing an encampment.

The paper then elaborates the herdowner's options in amassing his labor force. His strategies may be three-fold: 1) Family expansion. This involves increasing the number of family workers, i.e. through marriage and reproduction. 2) Addition of outside workers. Here the distinction is made between children "borrowed" from kin and workers hired from relative strangers, and 3) Expansion of cooperative activity. The herdowner selects an encampment specifically to make use of extra-familial workers. In this case, residing with brothers vs. clanmates vs. affines represent very different options. All these mechanisms to adjust one's work force are employed throughout a family's development. The changing needs of herd management demand that the herdowner constantly rearrange both workers and their routines.

In all of the above, the type of work (its seasonality, strength required, skill) only partially determines how recruitment is made. As significant are the social factors pertaining to the laborers themselves. While herdowners have such standard concerns as short-term reimbursement, longer-term costs, length of service, etc., the critical variable in recruiting Samburu labor rests on the worker's loyalty. Animals, the herdowner's wealth, require constant care. If passively tended, they may

lose weight, injure themselves, fall prey to wild animals. If actively abused, they can be overmilked, bled profusely, or consumed. This need for loyalty and reliability in herders thus makes Samburu reluctant to hire labor from the outside.

The dearth of hired workers within encampments contrasts sharply with Samburu involvement in the larger wage labor market. Over a third of the herdowners have been paid employees at some point in their careers, e.g. in the army, the police or on the game reserves. Another tenth have remained in encampments and become small-scale livestock traders. Further, two-fifths of the warrior class is presently engaged in non-traditional activity, either schooling or wage employ. Thus, Samburu participation in the wage labor market is assymetrical. While Samburu men hold salaried positions in Kenya's towns and cities, they continue to recruit their own herding labor through a network of closely-tied kin.

I. Introduction

The development of arid and semi-arid lands remains a "high priority activity" of the Kenyan Government (GOK 1979: 6.14). Most of Kenya's land area (about 80%) falls within these zones, and a sizable portion of its livestock and people, 50% and 20% respectively, inhabit the low rainfall areas. The populations of these arid and semi-arid areas continue to rely on various forms of extensive herding. They are semi-nomadic and nomadic pastoralists who tend combinations of cattle, camels, sheep, goats, and donkeys.

In terms of production, these pastoral complexes embrace three major elements: domestic animals, natural resources (specifically water, forage and minerals) and people. When conceived of as inputs to herding, the above three correspond to "livestock", "range and water" and "labor". It is notable that the first two factors, herds and graze, have figured prominently in the Kenyan Government's strategies to increase productivity in these arid and semi-arid expanses. Labor, however, viewed as a production input, has been rarely highlighted in the development documents for pastoral areas.

This limited view of pastoral production is mirrored in the quantity and quality of current knowledge on herding labor. Despite over fifty years of research among Kenyan herders and thirty years of projects and programs in pastoral regions, there has been little systematic study of labor organization in herding societies. Anthropologists have contributed to elucidatory select areas of pastoral work. Several have described the larger social structure which organizes pastoral labor (Evans-Pritchard 1940, 1951; Spencer 1965, 1973). Others have started to quantify a limited range of herding tasks at a low-level of specificity (Torry 1977; Grandin 1982). This ongoing research in Samburu aims to lessen further this intellectual gap. The overall study describes the complex tasks of herd management, the multiple pursuits associated with pastoralism, and the role of pastoral labor in the regional economy. The production potential of Kenya's rangelands greatly depends on how herders work.^{1,2}

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2. See Sperling 1984 for a summary of research on labor organization in pastoral societies.

II. THE SETTING

The locus of research is Wamba Division, Samburu District, north-central Kenya. The locale is characteristic of much of the country's savanna areas. Lands are arid or semi-arid; and dwarf scrub, bushed and wooded grassland stand as the prominent vegetation. Soils are generally very poor; most are volcanic, ranging from clays to sandy loams. Rainfall is erratic, highly localized, and unpredictable from year to year. Annual precipitation figures (1939-1982) range between 315 mm. and 1717 mm (avg. 694 mm). showing a bimodal distribution with separate peaks in April and November. The only all-year watercourse, the Ewaso Nyiro, lines the southern boundary of the division. The Ministry of Lands and Settlement has classified all land within Wamba Division as having "low potential".

As an administrative entity, the division encompasses 18,764 inhabitants (1979 census), four-fifths of whom are Samburu. Some others, especially Dorobo, pursue beekeeping and hunting. Most of the rest, however, Turkana, Meru, Somali and Kikuyu, cluster around the single trading center of Wamba (pop. 2,256) and are engaged in limited commerce or other self-employment activity. Of the latter, charcoal burning, handicrafts, and liqueur brewing are the predominant enterprises.

For an area as large as Wamba Division (8988 km²) physical infrastructure is extremely limited. There are less than 300 kilometers of classified road (none paved) and only the stretches linking the trading center to major towns (i.e. Maralel and Isiolo) are maintained. There is no public electricity and piped water is available solely in Wamba town. Apart from administration, commerce and utilities, the main focus of modern buildings in Samburu is health, education and religion. Wamba Division has two health centers, fifteen schools (13 primary, 1 secondary, 1 polytechnic) and a scatter of missionary outposts.

The Samburu are a Maa-speaking tribe with a population of approximately 58,000 (one-fourth of whom live within the research area). They tend cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys, and continue to live off the products of their herds. Cash income for purchased commodities is derived by selling live animals or animal products (e.g. hides, skins, milk). Agriculture, fishing and hunting are negligible activities.

The Samburu continue to be semi-aomadic. For most of the year families and animals are split between base encampments and distant grazing areas. The base encampments group and regroup about every nine months-- according to environmental fluctuations, social commitments, political and economic exigencies. Flocks and several milk cattle graze there and are corralled within at night. In the outlying camps, up to 100 km. distant, the bulk of the cattle herd is tended. Warriors and boys who man these temporary enclosures may migrate with the cattle every few days to a month.

Samburu residential arrangements form a series of four concentric rings: hut, household (with members of a multi-hut family), base encampment and locality. While the household marks the unit of stock ownership, the other three variously guide general family and animal production and reproduction. Access to workers is, to a large extent, dependent on residence.

The base encampment is an isolated cluster of huts surrounded by thornbush. It is a temporary association of two to ten families. Each family has its own gateway leading to the huts of a stockowner and his wives. A prominent feature of every camp consists of brush kraals, smaller pens, and the huts--made of wooden frames, branches and a plaster of dung. The Samburu reside within the thornbush perimeter of the camp, and their cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys spend the night there.

The base encampment is a voluntaristic community of individual herdowners. It is the basic unit of sociability and inter-household cooperation. It provides common security against human and animal predators, as well as an opportunity to pool certain kinds of labor. The decision to move camp is always communal; but individuals may hive off in response to their personal aims.

Although each base encampment is an isolable unit, typically, a number of camps are clustered together in an agglomeration known as a locality. The locality plays a significant part in the life of the camp. Its informal council of elders helps regulate access to graze and water, to settle inter-camp disputes, and may even intervene in domestic disputes. Moreover, the locality provides a larger immediate pool of mutual aid, information exchange and livestock sharing.

The foci of this discussion are the household and the family. The first, the household, is the residential entity. It includes the plot of the married man within the encampment as well as his gateway in the outlying grazing areas. Apart from the patriarch, wives and children other kinsmen (e.g. related widows) or dependents may reside there. The family, in contrast, is the jural unit. It delineates all those members who have right to control or inherit part of the patriarch's herd (i.e. his spouse and their offspring). The mobility of huts and herders, often in different directions, ensures that those who have rights in the family herd may not always reside together. Men with several wives may locate their huts in separate areas; family members may be herding for relatives elsewhere; some Samburu hold salaried jobs which remove them from the encampments altogether.

Finally, the hut, within the household, marks the realm of each of a man's wives. It is the elementary unit of family life and provides a framework within which child-rearing takes place. The hut, unlike the household, is the exclusive territory of its mistress. Within the hut, the woman manages all domestic activity---including control of the most vital resource, milk.

The following analysis of labor seeks to describe the means by which the family gathers its labor force. The base encampment and its constituent households are particularly important in ensuring that work gets done. In addition, the herdowner makes use of wide-ranging kinship networks to amass his needed work force. Here, the social channels take precedence over geographical proximity. A child can be "borrowed" from the other side of Samburu District (e.g. 80-120 km. distant), or a worker may even be hired from another tribe all together.

III. ANALYSIS OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS AND THEIR HERDING ARRANGEMENTS.

The description of labor recruitment within Samburu encampments is introduced by referring to a series of case studies. My research on pastoral labor has focused on a lowland community known as Lkisin. The entire sample encompasses some eight encampments and a large ceremonial center (91 huts, 72 households). The labor arrangements described below pertain to the encampment and work configurations of a late dry season period, August 1983.

Lkisin was chosen as a research area for several reasons. It has a reputation as one of the more successful herding communities in the lowland area of Wamba Division. While no herdowner is remarkably wealthy (i.e. the largest cattle herd numbers 150), there are also few who are marginal. Samburu here tend to live off the products of their herds, although they do supplement their diet with maize meal, sugar, and tea purchased in Wamba town. Some of the Samburu in this community hold salaried positions elsewhere--in Nairobi, on the game reserves, in the Army. None, however, sell their labor locally in low prestige occupations, such as making charcoal.

In addition, the community is characterized by camps which are primarily clan-based. The same families have migrated within the area for over seventy years. The encampments of Lkisin are thus typical or even "traditional" in their social patterns of settlement (see Spencer 1965: 15-16). Concomitantly, Lkisin is renowned as an innovative, progressive neighborhood. The community completed a primary school on an harambee basis (1977); women, in the encampments, are active in maendeleo ya wanawake, government-sponsored women's cooperative groups. People here are using their strong social ties to continue investing in herds and simultaneously take advantage of wider opportunities.

A. Household vs. Family

1. Family Size

This analysis of herding arrangements draws from a sub-sample of four complete encampments.³ Within these encampments, twenty-five families are represented with an average family size of 5.6 persons. This number seems lower than the Samburu average in general and this smaller

3. I am currently extending the quantitative analysis to the entire sample.

family size may be partially attributable to the relative youth of many of the Lkisin household heads. Thirteen come from the youngest married age set, and seven from that directly preceding. Thus, only five families (20%) have reached the stage at which they might be expected to have their own warrior children.⁴ Similarly, the youth of the herdowners is reflected in the low incidence of polygamy (cf. Spencer 1965: 15, 319). Out of the twenty-five herdowners only 7 (28%) have two wives, and none have more. Polygamy as a means to increase labor force and thereby lessen work load has been only partially effective in these seven cases. Two of the women are barren; two other sets of co-wives have a poor relationship and are separated by eighty-odd kilometers; their herds, as a consequence, are also divided.

2. Household Size and Structure

These four encampments also serve as a base for twenty-five households. Within this sample, household size is markedly higher than that of family and has been calculated at 6.6 (vs. 5.6).⁵ This research population encompasses those at both base encampments and outlying grazing camps (in this case 10-80 km. distant). Several features of these households are important for this discussion of labor.

The population of the four base encampments comprises 134 persons. Of these, 94 are 6 years and over, and 5 are beyond 70 years. Further, of these 94, 14 are school children who are actively involved in herding only on weekends and holidays. This encampment demography is not atypical. It is characterized by a relatively high proportion of dependents. The elderly, the young children and the disabled reside in the base encampments year-round. The demography of these base encampments is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Population of Four Samburu Base Encampments

Encampment:	<6 years	W O R K E R S				>70 years	Total
		boys	girls	men	women		
1	13	3	4	6	7	-	33
2	12	6	5	6	7	2	38
3	10	9	5	6	7	2	39
4	5	4	4	5	5	1	24
	40 (30%)	22	+ 18 (30%)	23	+ 26 (37%)	5 (4%)	134

4. A 1959 Tax Book Census and Spencer's own Clan Census (both in Spencer 1965:320) similarly assessed the youngest married age-set to comprise over 20% of the total male population. Thus, I am not convinced that my own sample is skewed.

5. This number represents the number of persons immediately dependent and working for the household. The figure is somewhat misleading, however, as warriors and older boys in outlying camps may be tending the herds of several households and not just those in the present analysis.

Much of the household work force does not reside in the base encampments during the dry season periods. The bulk of the cattle herds are removed to distant grazing camps where pastures are relatively less used and forage more abundant. The more active workers, usually warriors and older boys (i.e. uncircumcized), man these outlying camps. Table 2 indicates the number and social age of those workers in outlying areas who tend cattle sent out from the twenty-five Lkisin households. In contrast to the base encampments, there is no dependent population.

Table 2. Workers in Outlying Grazing Camps

For Encampment:	Warriors	Older Boys
1	5	2
2	4	1
3	8	3
4	6	2
	23 (74%)	8 (26%) Total 31

It is notable that, during this dry season, about one-quarter (25.8%) of the active work force was not residing in the base encampment. Further, if one excludes the husband and wife directors from the labor count, only 39 of the 70 prime workers (56%) were in the base encampments.

Finally, in Table 3, the base encampment population is tallied with the workers at dry season grazing camps; the demography of the household is thus presented in its entirety.

Table 3. Population of Twenty-Five Samburu Households

For Encampment:	Workers (base + grazing camps)	Dependents (those 6 years + 70 years)
1	27	13
2	29	14
3	38	12
4	26	6
	120 (73%)	45 (27%) Total=165

3. Addition of Workers to Family Labor Force: Borrowing

The discrepancy between family size and household size is largely the result of an arrangement known as the "borrowing" of children. While workers can be brought in under a variety of labor agreements, "borrowing" implies that 1) the future worker is closely related to the herdowner and 2) it is the borrowing family who seeks assistance. A comprehensive description of this labor phenomenon appears in section IV. B. Here, the quantitative parameters of the Lkisin case study are summarized.

In terms of the four base encampments, 14 of the 89 (16%) workers represented borrowed children. The proportion of borrowed workers at outlying grazing camps was even greater; 18 out of 31 (58%) were brought in from outside the family and encampment. Thus, if one adds the herding labor at the outlying grazing areas to that of the base encampments, 32 of the 120 workers (27%) were borrowed primarily to alleviate labor shortages.

Herdowners and their borrowed children tend to share the closest of kin ties. Table 4 summarizes these borrowed children relations for the Lkisin research population. Here, forty-four per cent of the children were borrowed directly through brothers or father's brothers. The rest were borrowed through wives, the matrilineal line, or from more diffuse ties, i.e. those of the sub-clan. It is significant that 18 of the 25

Table 4. Relationship of Workers to Households for Which they Work

	from family	B O R R O W E D		Total
		through brothers	through other kin	
Base Camp Workers	75	3	11	89
Grazing Camp Herders	13	11	7	31
	88 (73%)	14	18	120
		32 (27%)		

families (72%) recruit some borrowed labor. Borrowing labor seems to be the norm, rather than the exception by Samburu families at all stages of growth. This predominance of borrowing contrasts sharply with the absence of another form of extra-familial labor, i.e. hired workers. Many herdowners noted that they or their fathers had hired Turkana or Rendille workers at some point in their management careers. Presently, however,

herd sizes are relatively small and wages incomparably high for many elders to consider hiring. Thus, there was not a single hired laborer tallied in this study.⁶

4. Intra-Encampment Ties

Finally, the close social ties of these twenty-five families should be mentioned. The four encampments represent part of a local clan cluster. Of the twenty-five household heads, 22 (88%) are of the same clan (Lewogoso), and 16 (64%) share the same sub-clan (Sirayon). Two of the other families (8%) are related through marriage. The last is a pauper, and isolated socially and economically. In terms of closer kin, one encampment (n=6) is composed entirely of brothers, and in two other encampments, brothers or sons number 3 (out of 6) and 3 (out of 7) families respectively. Thus, 12 out of 25 (48%) share direct sibling ties.

B. Herding Arrangements

The labor arrangements described below represent work of the long dry season. Milking cows, small stock (i.e. sheep and goats) and donkeys were at the base encampments; the bulk of the cattle herd was at dry season grazing reserves. The arrangements are discussed from two points of view :a) how the herds were grouped and b) who managed these various specialized units.

1. Animal groups

In August 1983, the Samburu at Lkisin were potentially managing 113 separate animal groups. The number takes into account the holdings of each herdowner which are divided into 5 different units: milking cows, small stock, calves, kids/lambs and cattle at dry season reserves. Donkeys were excluded from the analysis as they were all herded in a haphazard manner; either they were left to roam or followed the routine

6. In November 1983, after the completion of this particular analysis, a single Rendille was hired to work in these Samburu encampments. His reimbursement terms were negotiated. The older boy, 17, wanted 150 sh/month (\$US 11.) His employer preferred to pay him in animals. The herdowner's desire prevailed; the boy is waiting for his goat kid when the rains arrive.

of calves. The number 113 represents the 25 herdowners with 5 animal groups (total 125) minus those who lack specific units (e.g. those without milking cows or small stock-- 12 separate examples).

In terms of herd management, during this dry period the Samburu opted for the segregation of different animal types, i.e. cows separate from small stock. What impressed the researcher, however, was the degree to which herdowners combined "like" livestock, i.e. cows with cows. The 113 potential herding groups were reduced to only 40 management units. Of these 40, only 4 were multi-species herds, i.e. small stock combined with calves. The rest represented single species herds of different owners. In the case of milking cows, such amalgamation of all encampment animals is not surprising; the total encampment milk herd numbers 15-25 animals. In some cases, however, substantial small stock holdings of different owners were combined and a single management unit number well over 300. In only 8 out of the possible 113 cases (7%) was a herdowner managing a single species herd comprised exclusively of his own stock.⁷ Thus, amalgamation, rather than individuation, was the herd management rule.

2. Workers

The high degree of labor sharing is also illustrated by matching the herd units with those who tend them. Here, the direct importance of both borrowed labor and encampment-based work sharing is evident. The categories of workers have been set as follows:

self- herd unit tended by one's offspring, unmarried brothers, wife or by self (family head).

other - herd tended by someone else in the encampment, usually the result of joint herding. Labor shared under the idiom of "I help you, you help me".

communal- every household in the encampment provides labor part of the time in the care of the herd. This arrangement applies mainly to the herding of the youngest stock, calves, kids and lambs, which roam around the encampment perimeter.

7. The eight cases were as follows: Five medium-sized goat herds
two groups of milking cows
one herd of milking and other cows.

borrowed-general child borrowed from outside the family and outside the encampment (e.g. through sub-clan).

borrowed-brothers this category is separated from the above to indicate the special importance of married brothers and their offspring in providing labor. Included in this category are father's brothers and their offspring.

Table 5 matches each animal unit with its specific category of herder. For example, in Encampment 4, 1 herd of milking cows, 2 herds of goats and 1 herd of calves were pastured by labor directly provided by the family. Table 6 then summarizes these relationships of worker to live-stock charges.

Table 5. Herding Labor of Four Lkisin Encampments Dry Season Pasturing - August 1983

HERDING UNITS	WORKER CATEGORY ⁺				
	self	other	communal	borrowed general	borrowed brothers
Encampment 1					
milking cows				6	
small stock				6	
calves			6		
kids/lambs			6		
other cattle	6				
Encampment 2					
milking cows	2	2			
small stock	2	2		1	
calves ++	1	2		1	
kids/lambs			5		
other cattle	1				2
Encampment 3					
milking cows	2+++	2			2
small stock	2			3	2
calves	1	6			
kids/lambs			7		
other cattle	3	1			3
Encampment 4					
milking cows	1	5			
small stock	2	1		1	2
calves	1	5			
kids/lambs			6		
other cows		2			2
	24	28	30	18	13 = 113

31

Notes + In outlying grazing camps, several people may be involved in the direct herding of cattle. To simplify the above table, the worker category was determined by the relationship of the lead warrior to the family head.

++ Most calves were combined with goats in this encampment.

+++ In one of these instances, the elder pastured his milking cows in a private grazing tract-(lokere).

Table 6. Dry Season Pasturing - August 1983

<u>WORK ARRANGEMENT</u>	<u>No. Herding Units</u>	<u>% Herding Units</u>
1. Labor performed by family members for family	24	21.2
2. Labor performed by others in the encampment for family	28	24.8
	{ 58	} 51.3
3. Communal activity	30	26.5
4. Borrowed labor imported to aid family		
general	18	15.9
brothers	13	11.5
	{ 31	} 27.4
TOTAL	113	99.9

In the above study, only one-fifth (21.2%) of the herding units were tended by family members working for their household. Borrowed labor proved to be at least as important for managing animals. Even more significant were the services provided by others residing in the encampment. Over half of the herding units (51.3%) were tended by those communally sharing work (26.5%) and by those exchanging specific encampment services (24.8%).

This specific description of labor arrangements indicates both the mechanisms and extent to which Samburu harness a labor force beyond their immediate family. Herds of different owners are jointly tended to reduce overall workers needed, or vice-versa, to share the skills of a single herder. Further, children are borrowed from outside encampment to alleviate labor shortages. It is the rare herdowner who cares exclusively for his own stock and who uses only his own workers.

This analysis focused only on herding; this task is the most time-consuming and one of the more labor-sharing of Samburu activities. Further, it describes the dry season routines, when the spread of livestock, and hence, cooperative arrangements are usually most extensive.

IV. THE RECRUITMENT OF THE FAMILY LABOR FORCE

One worker is not as good as another. Skills, commitment, short and long-term costs all vary herder by herder. In this section, the diverse means by which the household head can acquire labor are examined. Most Samburu confront problems at some point in their lives; many households never exclusively supply all of their workers. The herdowner's prowess in gathering a sufficient number of qualified workers greatly affects the health of both his herds and his family.

Achieving labor self-sufficiency is not a Samburu goal; the idea of valuing isolation is a foreign one. Rather, what Samburu herdowners stress is the ability to work cooperatively. Commonly-cited proverbs reflect this view. "One finger cannot press a louse." (That is, one man may need help even with the smallest problem). "A dog cannot watch two homes." (That is, one man cannot look after all his interests alone.) In addition, men blessed with many children may still seek help in tending herds. Animals need be pastured over extensive expanses; other people's children may be more skilled in select tasks. Further, those wealthy in children do share encampments with others less endowed. And belonging to a camp obliges one to participate in communal chores.

The means of compensating for a dearth of workers are multi-stranded. This discussion focuses on recruiting laborers from outside the family. Not all arrangements, however, involve readjustments in the social organization of the work force. Two other possibilities are intensification of the work load of individual household members and/or technical modifications of the activity itself. Both strategies are briefly discussed below.

The decision to intensify the individual's work load is particularly associated with the newly married couple. Both spouses are young and strong; they have few or no offspring. When the couple decides to work by themselves, the activity load is enormous. Tasks secondary to herding are left by the wayside; craft production in particular--making housemats, milk containers, or skin dress--may be greatly reduced. Under such conditions, the herding scenario can have one of several variants. Such a routine is difficult to maintain for long periods of time.

1. The husband herds the small stock and cows together. The wife watches the young stock--calves, kids and lambs-- as she does work around the house. When the wife fetches water and firewood, she usually leaves this young stock untended.
2. The husband herds the cows, the wife herds the small stock. Young stock are left to roam. Under these arrangements, the woman's work is particularly intensive. While herding, she simultaneously collects water and firewood and perhaps carves calabashes. Housework and most craft production are scheduled for the early mornings and late evenings.

Further, intensification may be manifest at all stages of the family's development. There may be no rotating of family herding labor, i.e. no rest days for those out in the gruelling sun. And "unlike" activities may be combined; a woman may herd with a child strapped to her back and, simultaneously, weave a mat.

There are very few technical modifications in the Samburu work repertoire. To some extent, grouping the various livestock into fewer specialized herds is such a modification; the animal husbandry is transformed and watering and salt lick schedules may be modified to accommodate all types of stock tended together. Labor-saving devices per se, however, are few. By using a donkey to fetch food or water, one can either a) carry more at one load or b) send someone else. In addition, Samburu purchase select manufactured items which substitute for home-produced crafts and/or — reduce maintenance needs. Such items include the lightweight plastic jerry cans used as containers and the sheets of plastic which sometimes cover and protect their dung rooves. The majority of such innovations, however, are restricted to activities in the domestic sphere.

What follows is a discussion focused on laborers themselves. The methods used to alleviate worker shortages vary by the type of problem, its magnitude, temporal and spatial parameters. Obviously, the herdowner with no offspring and many animals faces different constraints from the elder who seeks additional help at watering time. That is, one needs access to an entire labor unit; the other may simply opt to share a well with other herdowners. The themes presented fall into three general categories: a) Family Expansion: The family work force can be increased through marriage and reproduction. b) Addition of outside workers to family labor force through borrowing and hiring of workers, and c) Expansion of

where the workers are abundant, hard-working and willing to pool responsibilities.

A. Family Expansion

The move to expand one's family, through marriage and reproduction, can only partially contribute to alleviating labor shortages. Bearing and raising children is a slow process; and children do not significantly carry their share of the work load until at least 7 years of age. Further, as shown below, continuity of work force largely depends on birth order of sexes. With luck, it may be some fifteen years into their conjugal life before a Samburu couple are using solely their own offspring for family chores; and then, they may reap full benefits for only another ten years.

In order to hasten the growth of his family, the younger herd-owner of thirty-five may decide to take on a second wife shortly after marrying his first (maybe five years later). While the benefits of such a union are not all labor-related, the rationale for such a marriage may stem partially from work concerns.

Marrying a second wife gives a man immediate access to another skilled, responsible, loyal worker. Wives can take turns fencing, herding, cleaning pens, and cutting branches for household stock. And the essential errand of buying food in town will never be delayed. Two wives further means two huts, and the possibility for establishing households in areas where both small stock and cows uniquely prosper.

It is, however, the broader realms of labor potential which may spur a man to marry so precipitously. A second wife gives him access to a new extensive labor pool---his affines. More important, the longer-term potential to create his own labor force can be realized more rapidly when two child-bearers are reproducing simultaneously.

How effective is reproduction as a means to expand the labor force? The following hypothetical examples demonstrate how prolonged and tenuous a process it is. While the rare women may be able to give birth

to a child every other year, the health, skills, and even future employ of that child are variable. Further, the continuity of laborers will depend on the birthing order. Girls, marrying between 13 and 20 years, may spend only eight years as productive workers in their father's home. Boys, in contrast, usually render service 25 to 30 years, or until the elder's death.

To suggest the inherent limits in relying only on one's children for workers, here, two plausible reproductive patterns are considered. In each hypothetical case, a woman gives birth to five children. The birth orders are contrasted to show their importance. In both examples, the following, optimistic, assumptions are made:

- a) birth-spacing intervals are of a short two years
- b) workers are initiated into the work force at seven years
- c) all children are healthy and capable workers
- d) girls marry at fifteen years
- e) boys marry at thirty years onwards

In the first case, the birth of three girls precedes that of two boys. Column I represents birth year, column II year of initiation into the work force and column III year of marriage.

	I birth date	II work initiation	III marriage
Girl	1984	1991	1999
Girl	1986	1993	2001
Girl	1988	1995	2003
Boy	1990	1997	----
Boy	1992	1999	----

In this case, a herdowner's work force may begin to dissemble before it even reaches its bloom. His first worker marries at the same time that his last begins to take up his chores (i.e. 1999). It is seven years before he gets any help at all, and only five or six during which his labor pool has some four members.

In a second hypothetical case, the birth of three boys precedes that of two girls. Here, the herdowner reaps greater labor benefits from his own

brood. The herdowner would have a good thirteen years of all children

	I birth date	II work initiation	III marriage
Boy	1984	1991	----
Boy	1986	1993	----
Boy	1988	1995	----
Girl	1990	1997	2012
Girl	1992	1999 ←	2014

working (1999-2012, from the time of work initiation of his last child to the time of marriage of his first daughter). While the initial work delay is the same, i.e. seven years before the first worker matures, the core of his labor force, the three boys, will render him service for some 25 years.

The above cases suggest some of the limits of counting exclusively on one's children to care for herds and home. To adequately demonstrate the effectiveness of reproduction in providing workers, a range of biological and cultural variables need be considered. Relevant concerns might include actual birth-spacing, child mortality, health and nutrition, preference for schooling and need of wage work. But the point of these sketches, and indeed of the analysis of Lkisin herding arrangements (see section III), is that herdowners rarely equate familial labor with their total labor pool. Two wives reproducing simultaneously may create a steady work force--- but the results aren't guaranteed. Recruiting from one's family offers the least flexibility in a variety of options.

B. Borrowing and Hiring of Workers

This section examines the single category of taking on additional workers. Samburu commonly "borrow" children (implying aid from a relative). They much less frequently hire children and adults (non-relatives) to help herd their animals and participate in encampment chores. Unlike family members, these borrowed/hired individuals work with the expectation of receiving something in return--- something other than a future inheritance in part of the herd.

Contractual arrangements --fixed hours, fixed task assignment, fixed payment--are very rare in lowland Samburu. Such specific terms may exist only between town-based Samburu (e.g. politicians, teachers) and those still ensconced in traditional encampments.⁸ Within the Samburu encampments, where extra familial recruitment of workers is so important, the relationship between host and worker can only be precisely described through considering the following variables:

- a. identity: is the worker "one of us" or is he a foreigner.
- b. duration: is the work on a daily, hand-to-mouth basis, matter of 2-5 years, or even longer-term.
- c. means of reimbursement: is the worker paid in food, in animals (differentiating smallstock vs. cow payments), in goods such as cloth, shoes, ochre, in shillings, or in any combination of the above.
- d. rationale for working: does the worker seek employment because he is in need of assistance, or is it the herdowner who has a problem of labor shortage and asks to borrow a child.
- e. degree of incorporation: does the worker become a member of the family. If he is an outsider, is he adopted, circumcised and given a wife. Is the sense of obligation long-term. e.g. When this boy/girl marries, will the employer donate an animal.
- f. degree of contractual arrangement: are the terms of reimbursement specific ones or are payments and gifts made at the discretion of the employer.
- g. type of work expected: will the worker exclusively herd, specialize in heavy labor (fencing, well-digging) or more generally help with collecting firewood, water and, in the case of females, childcare and housework.

Note that variables b.c.e and g are determined during the course of the labor relationship. Children are often brought to the host's encampment when they are still largely unskilled. In addition, adult workers, while more experienced, must integrate themselves into a new social community. The manner in which they are accepted will affect the extent of reimbursement as well as the length of stay. In these labor-hire relationships, personal affinities as much as work talent may shape the range of tasks assigned.

In all of the above, the major variable coloring the host/worker relationship tends to be d-- "why is the worker being employed?". In cases where the herdowner seeks assistance, the employer is expected to treat his worker with the kindness and generosity of a relative. The worker, usually a child, can get up and go if he or she feels abused. In instances

8. Even the town-based Samburu, however, generally leave their animals in the encampment of a close relative, usually a parent or brother.

when the worker is in need of employ, the host/worker relationship tends to be more hierarchical (in terms of class, rather, or in addition to, age).

1. Labor relationships initiated when the herdowner seeks assistance:

Lkiritet, Nkiritet, Ntito Naipaiya

In the face of a labor shortage, the young herdowner most commonly commonly decides to borrow a child from a relative. Should the relationship be mutually beneficial, a child of 6 or 7 years might spend most of his or her formative years outside the parental home. The worker in such a relationship is known as lkiritet (m) or as nkiritet and Ntito naipaiya (f). The first two terms, lkiritet and nkiritet, may be applied to anyone who takes animals to pasture (lit. herder) and thus to one's own son or daughter. Ntito naipaiya, loosely translated as "housemaid", is used in reference to the girl who comes to herd (nkiritet) and who is responsible for household chores. As girls never are borrowed exclusively to pasture animals, the feminine form of "herder", nkiritet, is rarely used. All these terms are equally appropriate in describing family labor and imported child labor.

The borrowed-child relationship is initiated when a needy herdowner approaches a friend blessed with many children. The father must himself be a good herder, "clever and honest", as the working potential of the child is largely determined by the qualities of the parent. The future host usually requests any child to help; some may specify the age and sex of the youth desired---but all take what they can get. "You may not be given what you want" or "Why should the father part with his most skilled boys or girls" are frequently expressed sentiments of Samburu elders. Generally, boys are sought in conjunction with cow herding and girls with small stock.

The lending of a child strengthens what is already a close bond between two herdowners. Whereas the borrowed herder is often a sister's or brother's child, (or, later, a daughter's or son's child), the borrowed herder might be related simply through sub-clan, clan or tribal ties. Borrowed children are always Samburu. The borrowing of a child usually initiates a series of lifelong responsibilities towards him or her. The

child who starts tending your animals when he is eight years old may expect a present at his circumcision (c. 16-20 years) or even an animal contribution to his marriage payment (c. 30-35 years). Again, inherent in this employer/worker relationship is the notion that it is the borrower, not the lender, who is in need. The child may come from a well-off family. He must be treated well--liberally supplied with food and accessories and not beaten under any circumstances.

The borrowing of a boy is a qualitatively different entity from the borrowing of a girl. Most significant are the duties entailed. Boys are expected to help with animal management: taking animals to pasture, milking, fencing, watering, and perhaps leading the animals to dry season grazing. Girls, however, aid with all herding chores plus participate in many aspects of household work. A borrowed boy might herd all day, lead the animals home, milk, and then go off singing. A borrowed girl herds all day, simultaneously collects firewood and fedder, and then returns home to help cook, tidy house, etc. This difference in the sexual allocation of work loads equally applies to one's own offspring; daughters have a greater range of chores than do sons.

Herdowners describe desired qualities of a borrowed boy as follows:

Someone who:

1. knows how to count animals (this is the most important quality)
2. can find good graze and know when livestock are satiated
3. is very active; who prevents problems before they occur
4. (should an animal get lost) is responsible enough to return to camp immediately, report the mishap and seek help. He knows the exact place where the animal was last seen.

A borrowed girl will exhibit the above plus the following:

Someone who:

1. knows how to make the house tidy, clean calabashes, air the mats, without being prompted
2. ensures that firewood and water are in constant supply for domestic use
3. knows how to make ropes and build house

The reimbursement of boy and girl labor is not entirely comparable. During the time of his employ, a boy is supplied with food, cloths,

shoes and, if he has reached warrior status, red ochre, detergent, and maybe a spear. After a period of years, depending on the quality of his service, a boy is usually awarded an animal. The clever herder will receive a female cow, specifically a heifer (ntawo) and possibly several goats. The less competent one may be given a male animal: calf, or steer (lashe, lmongo,) or, in some cases, simply a goat. Girls, who work as herders and all-round maids, can also expect ample supplies of food, cloths, shoes, and if they are older, red ochre and beads. Their awards of animals, however, are consistently less. A girl may be given a goat if her service is exemplary. In cases of indolence, she is usually sent away with no livestock at all.

These reimbursement "rules" are far from set. Much depends on the demands of the worker as well as the sense of fairness on the part of the herdowner. Some herdowners claim that boys and girls receive the same pay for the same work: "If she herds cows, she receives a cow". "If he herds cows, he receives the same." (N.B. girls rarely are recruited to watch the larger stock.) However, boys who herd goats are given a goat and a cow; girls just the former. Such a philosophy of discriminatory reimbursement parallels the future rights of each child. A boy who is given animals owns those animals, and will seek to increase his future livestock holdings through them. The girl who is paid animals will eventually transfer them to her husband's herd or have them incorporated into her father's. It is for this reason that employers complain of the insatiable demands of their girl workers: "They often show little interest in animals but seek those expensive things from town: bracelets, beads, shoes..."

The profiles of the borrowed children described in the Lkisin case study can give a more specific idea of who the lenders may be. Here, only those borrowed through "other kin" (i.e. kin other than brothers or father's brothers) are considered. These 18 children, 12 boys and 6 girls, range in age from 8 to 22 years.

Tables 7 through 9 summarize the diagnostic features of these lenders' families. 1) They share close ties with the borrower's family; when not related directly through the brother, they come from the immediate family of the sister or wife. 2) The lenders are often fairly prosperous herdowners, although poorer families also lend out children. 3) The lending family is usually fairly large, i.e. with 6 or more workers.

Table 7. Profiles of Lkisin Borrowed Children - N = 18

Relationship to Their Employing Elder	N	%
1. Related through female line of immediate family e.g. sister's child or father's sister's child	8	44
2. Closely related to wife e.g. wife's brother or wife's sister's child	8	44
3. More distantly related. e.g. same subclan	2	11
Total	18	99

Table 8.

Family Livestock Holdings	N	%
1. Large (100-200 cows; 150-300 small stock)	9	50
2. Medium (30-60 cows; 40-100 small stock)	2	11
3. Poor (< 15 cows; < 40 small stock)	7	39
Total	18	100

Table 9

Size of Family Work Force	N	%
1. Large. At least 6 workers	12	66
2. Medium. 4 or 5 workers	5	28
3. Small. 3 or fewer workers	1	6
Total	18	100

There are cases in which children are lent from families with few live-stock holdings and/or few workers. What distinguishes these employer

on the part of the borrower. The future host seeks help from a relation or close friend, not vice-versa. The lending of the child further unites two closely-tied families.

2. Labor relationships initiated by worker seeking employ: Rindig, Laisiayiani, Lboi (and their feminine forms)

Child-borrowing involves a relationship of friendship between two herdowners of relatively equal status. Both the performance of the child and the care shown by the employer will color longer-term reciprocal exchanges of two closely-linked families. In contrast, the Samburu also engage in a series of labor-hire arrangements which are of a hierarchical, non-family (unequal) configuration. Adult men and women, entire families, or "foreigners" (Turkana and Rendille especially) may seek employ from wealthier herdowners. The former have few or no animals, little or no family. Raids, droughts, general bad luck or mismanagement, have forced them to sell their services within the encampments. Working for others is seen by laborers as a temporary phenomenon; it provides the means to rebuild herds and again establish a separate household. There are exceptional cases of extended dependency. Widows without family may serve as nursemaids up to their death. A handicapped individual may complete small chores here and there until he is physically incapable of continuing.

These hierarchical relationships encompass a wide range of labor arrangements. The type of work, duration, method of payment, degree of incorporation are of unlimited variation. What is constant is the sense that the worker is "not like one of us" and that he/she is in need of subsistence. The Samburu have several words to describe these workers. Rindig, and laisiayiani (and their feminine forms errindig and nkaisiayiani) can generally be translated as servant or worker. The third term, Lboi, of Swahili origin, is also widely used; these workers are perhaps the most "unlike" or "foreign" to the host (e.g. from another clan, a pauper, of different ethnic background).

What follows is a discussion of the variety of arrangements embraced by the vocabulary. Distinctions among the terms are not clear-cut; some herdowners use all three interchangeably. The description tires to capture the slightly different nuances which such words Rindig, laisiayiani and Lboi evoke. When applied to labor in the encampments all

have slightly negative connotations; a Samburu likes to work for himself.

Rindig (f. errindig)

A rindig is generally an adult male hired to help at Samburu encampments. The word conjures up an image of great strength; the man is assigned to do the heavy labor: fencing, digging wells, felling trees, carrying large loads. "Rindig" has been described by Samburu as "slave". Not only is the worker involved in an unequal relationship, but he "slaves", that is, works without rest.⁹

These laborers are paid in both food and animals. The former is not an insignificant expense. Herdowners complain about the quantities of milk and maize meal consumed (in accordance with their considerable expenditures of energy). In addition, while these workers may come singly, they often bring whole families in tow. Wives and children (both of whom work to a limited degree) are also fed from the employer's larder. As in all arrangements where work is reimbursed in animal transfers, the terms of payment are indefinite. The employer may wait two to six months before giving anything. If the worker is industrious, he is usually paid first a sheep or goat; then, within the year, a cow may be transferred. The worker may stay on two or three years, and not infrequently six or seven. A sub-chief lost his rindig after a decade of service and the transfer of fifteen cows (which multiplied to over forty before his departure).

Only a wealthy man can hire a rindig on a long-term basis. But bringing in a rindig, along with family, can solve a labor-shortage problem quickly. In addition, some herdowners prefer hiring an adult to a child; the former can not only do more physically, but can assess the problems embraced by each task; i.e. adults have the strength and the ken. Likewise, as the rindig relationship is not a familial one, it is easier to let the incompetent worker go. Returning a child to a friend leaves lingering ill sentiments.

The female form, errindig, is rarely used as the rindig concept is specifically tied to the idea of very heavy labor. When women do act as heavy laborers, they smear houses with dung, fetch water during

9. Girls, herding for their fathers, sometimes refer to themselves as "rindig". They assert that they have no inheritance rights in the herd and wrongfully have to pay their dues pasturing all day.

drought periods. Unlike men, women hired as laborers are not paid in animals. They may simply be fed or, on unusual occasions, given meat in return for services.¹⁰

Laisiayiani (f. nkaisiayiani)

Laisiayiani is the most flexible of the hired labor terms. It is an open category of laborer; a laisiayiani may herd on a long-term basis like a rindig. In addition, however, he may shift from place to place doing isolated chores in return for food. "Anyone who demands something in return for work" is a lasiayiani. The reimbursement of this individual may be comparable to that of a borrowed child, but the payment stems from a different motivation. A lasiayiani is paid "for his sweat"; a borrowed child is paid "paid from a feeling of goodness". While the term rindig is inextricably bound with the idea of herding, laisiayiani is transferable to a market context. The warrior who works as a watchman in Nairobi and the MPs representing Samburu District are equally laisiayiani.

Nkaisiayiani (f. of lasiayiani) do all kinds of work in the encampment. Their tasks may encompass heavy labor (as in the case of errindig --- fencing, shovelling dung) but these women are particularly famed for their babysitting responsibilities. (They spend all day seated on skins amidst numerous toddlers.) Unlike their male counterparts, all female hired workers are universally bordering on pauperism. Women would never choose to work in hired relationships; only dire economic straits would force them to do so. Also unlike men, working women are always paid in food. That is, neither shillings nor animals are transferred to women working in the encampments.

Lboi¹¹

Though a Swahili word, Lboi is frequently used within Samburu encampments. It generally refers to "worker" and can encompass all relationships described by rindig and lasiayiani. In addition, lboi, when used by Samburu, has an exaggerated sense of the employee as being different. The epithet probably derives from colonial times when the term "boy" was commonly used to address male servants of all ages.

10. One old woman mentioned a rate of payment of "a long time ago" c. 1930. In exchange for removing the hair from a goat skin, a woman was given either the fat, kidneys or the head of a slaughtered goat.

11. The Samburu don't use the female form and generally don't employ females as lboi herders.

Typically, an lboi is from another tribe, usually Turkana or Rendille. He is employed to herd animals and is usually paid in animals. As most of the foreigners employed by Samburu tend to be destitute (often made stockless through widespread raiding), a Turkana or Rendille frequently renders service for years. The lboi who comes as a child, alone, may eventually be incorporated as a Samburu adult; he is adopted, circumcized, given a Samburu wife and even takes the employer's name.

Such hired workers from other tribes have traditionally been paid in the kind of stock they herd. Their lengthy service enables them to build up considerable holdings. In one case cited, a Turkana, with family, herded a young herdowner's small stock for about ten years. He was paid a kid at every birthing period, about eight times a year; and after a decade established himself as an independent herdowner with a flock of 150-200 animals. In another case, an lboi, also a Turkana, grew up within the employer's household and left with livestock holdings of over 60 cows, about a third of which had been directly given as payment for work rendered. Such long-term workers are also fed and, depending on age, given cloths, tobacco, sugar and other appropriate commodities.

In rare instances when hired herders are paid in shillings, the epithet lboi is also applied. Four current contracts were noted; wages ranged between 190 and 250 shillings a month (US\$ 14.00-18.50). The extra benefits were varied; one worker was also given food, cloths and "investment advice"; the others received nothing beyond cash.

It remains to comment on the frequency of these relationships. In section III, the incidence of borrowed and hired herders was discussed in reference to a small community of twenty-five families. At the time of the study, August 1983, there were no hired relationships; herdowners recalled hiring laborers in the near past and a single worker was hired in November 1983. In contrast, borrowed labor comprised about one-fourth of the total work force. Both these relationships have existed as long as people remember. Some elders recount the lending of specific children and hiring out of older family members during the time of The Disaster, c. 1890.

Samburu claim that borrowing, rather than hiring, has always been the more common form of acquiring additional workers. The short-term costs of borrowed labor may be slightly less than those of hired labor, but

certainly the long-term diffuse obligations mark borrowed labor as an equally expensive proposition. And many borrowed workers are less skilled, less strong than those hired. When the herdowner needs an all-round handyman, a mature hired hand would be the choice employee.

In terms of herding, however, the preference for a borrowed laborer probably derives from the nature of the objects themselves, i.e. animals. Cows and small stock are only relative stores of wealth. If carefully tended, their value may increase; hence the notion of herding ken is an important one. They also, however, can be easily abused or destroyed. If neglected, livestock may lose weight, fall prey to wild animals, or slip into gullies. If actively misused, they can be overmilked, bled profusely, or even consumed in entirety. Herdowners can direct their workers only to a limited degree as animals graze far from encampments. Thus, the most basic quality for a non-family worker need be his sense of loyalty to his employer.

Borrowed children are more closely related to the employer than those hired. Thus the sanctions ensuring their correct behavior are stronger and more encompassing. A dishonest hired worker can only be fired; a dishonest borrowed child can be dismissed, punished by his own family, and suffer from the general reproof of a wide social community. It is notable that hired workers never herd solely by themselves. At dry season camps, they are accompanied by the family's kin. When at the base encampment, these workers' activities are monitored by both the herdowner and his wife. It is also revealing that the more successful hired laborers, i.e. "outsiders", are those who become "insiders". Many many of the more trustworthy Turkana lboi and rindig have become Samburu; they are circumcized, they take a Samburu spouse, and adopt their employer's name.

Hiring, per se, however, was relatively more frequent in select past decades than it is at present. The change may be related to several factors: a) fluctuations in the demand and supply of potential hired hands b) desire on the part of workers to be paid in money, at a competitive rate.

In brief, Samburu is presently a declining cattle economy. Per capita cattle holdings may be as low as 2.4, whereas in the decades 1925-1955, per capita cattle holdings probably hovered between 9.0 and 10.0 (Fumagalli 1977). During this golden age (as evidence in both oral history

and official records), the population tripled and cattle holdings were able to match the pace. Individual herdowners commonly managed one to two hundred cattle (vs. thirty to fifty today). It was during these decades that herdowners recruited outside workers with regularity.

Further, the rising fortunes of Samburu coincided with troubled times for the Turkana. During the late teens and early 1920s, British punitive expeditions and widespread drought combined to create a large Turkana pauper population. Turkana streamed into Samburu to offer their services as herders and to start to rebuild livestock holdings of their own. The number of hired laborers probably peaked in the late 1950s. At that time, government officials expelled Turkana from Samburu District as "they were becoming too numerous". Shortly thereafter, Samburu cattle holdings started to fall; drought, floods, and epizootics have combined to create a twenty-five year secular decline in cattle holdings.

Not all Samburu herdowners, however, relate their present economic woes to their lack of hired labor. Many find it difficult to recruit hired workers and describe the problem as two-fold. Fewer potential employees want to work for the promise of an animal (plus food, lodging and accessories); they want cash. Elders lament: "Young men no longer have the patience to watch animals multiply". The rates, however, may also influence the supply of workers. Paid workers in encampments can earn at most 250 sh/month (US\$ 18.50); milk and lodging are sometimes provided in addition. In contrast, even uneducated pastoralists can find employment in Kenya's cities for 400-1000 sh/month (US\$ 30-74).

This dearth of hired labor within encampments contrasts sharply with Samburu involvement in the larger labor market. Their forms of commitment vary, but Samburu use paid work as a means to preserve and enhance their livestock holdings. With an alternate source of money, one need not sell stock for food and one can buy additional head. In some cases, only select members of encampments emigrate. Over forty percent of the herdowners have at some point in their careers been paid for their labor. Some have held longer-term posts in the army, police, or game reserves. Another ten per cent have remained in the encampments and, intermittently, dabble in livestock trading. Further over two-fifths of the Samburu warrior age-set is presently engaged in non-traditional activity,

possibly for the short-term.¹² There are, in addition, town-based Samburu who permanently have left or never have lived in the reserves. These men generally teach, hold administrative posts or work as technical assistants in government ministries. Town-based Samburu also invest in cattle, sheep and goats; they lend their animals out to those still in encampments. It is remarkable that most of these progressive men, wage-earners, prefer to use traditional networks to recruit their herding labor.

C. Encampment Rearrangement

The addition of a non-family worker to the family's work force may not always represent the best solution to a labor problem. Shortages may be too extensive for any one or two individuals to alleviate. The problem may be a localized one, e.g. fencing, and long-term employment unnecessary. In addition, some herdowners simply don't like doling out animals, commodities, or money to non-family members. In this section, a different set of labor-compensatory strategies are discussed. Herdowners always have the option to reorganize a labor force by tapping into someone else's resources. That is, by moving to encampments in which select services are exchanged or work responsibilities shared, a herdowner expands "his" work force immediately. Such modification may be complementary to or instead of hiring and borrowing workers.

In terms of encampment rearrangement, the herdowner generally follows one of two strategies. He can join forces with brothers or share any encampment where children are abundant. The latter move usually implies living with other clan members or living with affines. While the desire to increase shared work motivates both kinds of encampment choices, the decision to move in with brothers vs. non-family members is qualitatively very different.

1. Sharing an Encampment with Brothers

The most oft-cited and satisfactory means to get extra help quickly involves moving to the encampment of a close relative, usually a

12. In August 1983, a wage labor survey was made throughout the clan of Lewogoso. At that time, one-third of the 130 warriors were either in school or working. In September 1984, a similar survey was made throughout the same population. The intervening year was one of severe drought and almost half of the warriors were off seeking wage work --- few remained in school. The figure two-fifths is thus a conservative estimate covering the entire research period.

brother. Although the inheritance of the herd is segregated along male sibling lines, brothers often see their interests as coterminous. The Samburu proverb, "Many problems cannot occur when brothers are present" aptly conveys the trust and affection brothers often share. In the Lkisin case study, one-half (48%) of the herdowners were sharing encampments with brothers. In addition, over 40% of the borrowed laborers were acquired through this male sibling link.

What are the benefits of moving in with a sibling? Most important is the instant access to a large labor pool which cares about the herd-owner's animals as much as the herdowner himself. Brothers emphasize that they act as substitute managers for each other, taking full responsibility for the animals of the entire encampment, not just those of their immediate family. The leap in the number of workers available increase the chances that each of the herdowner's animals will be optimally managed; stock can be spread over a wide terrain and divided into many specialized herding units. Further, access to the children of several brothers offers each a potentially longer-term constant labor supply.

The costs of such familial labor have to be assessed differentially. The brother's warrior who takes animals to dry season camps is reimbursed in the manner of a borrowed herder; he may be given cloths, spears and sandals in the short-run, and livestock if his service is longer-term. However, the encampment-based shared arrangements bear principally the cost of generalize reciprocity. Brothers share everything, more or less; and "sharing" often involves an imbalanced exchange.

When brothers are on amiable terms, there seem to be few disadvantages to following such a labor strategy. Being in such close proximity, however, increases the chances that brothers will quarrel. Cattle rivalry, in particular, is not uncommon. As the price of a sibling fall-out may be beyond measure, many brothers live apart for much of their married lives (see Spencer 1965:59-62).

2. Sharing an Encampment with Clan Members or Affines

The decision to move to an encampment of many children, but not brothers, is qualitatively different from settling in with immediate kin. The motivation may be the same, need of a large labor pool, but the

benefits are not as well defined. This non-familial encampment is frequently that of one's clan members and sometimes that of affines.

The advantages of such a move overlap with those of settling in with brothers. One has increased access to a large labor pool and the potential for improvements in animal care. This labor force, however, may be less motivated in performing optimally; the quality of the work rendered depends largely on the sense of responsibility of the child (and the negative sanctions applied should he misbehave). When living with affines, the herdowner usually has great leverage in controlling his in-law's children. That is, the herders must show the herdowner respect and are beaten if they take a wayward course. The herdowner, however, has no similar privileges when sharing an encampment with fellow clan members. There, only a very close relationship between clansmen can encourage children to herd conscientiously.

It is the costs of such encampment rearrangement which are hardest to gauge. The rhetoric of Samburu suggests that relationships between clan members should parallel those of direct siblings. Indeed, clan members refer to each other as "brothers", "sisters" etc. Ideally, clansmen share the same interests and problems; clan are one's family in the widest sense and certainly one's backbone of support against all future misfortune.

While the idiom of clanship, however, suggests that of "kin", one clan member does owe another for help rendered. Clan children who tend another herdowner's livestock should be paid, e.g. sometimes they are given an animal. At the very least, the boy who herds the encampment's milking cows is guaranteed his fill of milk.

The relationship with affines presents a contrast with that to clan members...as do the costs. While clan members share parallel rights and interests, a herdowner's relationship with his in-laws is always an asymmetrical one. The herdowner has received his wife from another clan and as such has a "debt" which can never be repaid. When living with in-laws, the "costs of labor" may be a continual begging of animals, milk, tea, and other commodities purchased in town (NB. yet no direct payment for work rendered). And while one may refuse the request of a clansman, a man has little leeway when dealing with affines. Further, herdowners complain that living with in-laws strains husband-wife relations. Their women take

considerable liberties in labor routines and everything else. And a man would rather not beat his wife in front of her kin.

It is not a Samburu norm to live with in-laws. The proverb; "I am not foolish; I do not live with my affines" summarizes the general cultural assessment of such a living arrangement. Men who live with affines are said to be of two types: a) those who have a big problem, e.g. few animals or few children or b) unworthy men--those who are rejected by fellow clansmen. In practice, however, men may choose to live with affines for less ominous reasons. The herdowner may greatly respect the herding skill of his father-in-law and assess that his animals will receive fine care. He may seek wage work and want to leave his wife in her own family's care. The rains may have uniquely blessed his father-in-law's grazing tracts.

The frequency of the clan vs. affinal living arrangements can again be suggested by referring to the Lkisin case study. There, 88% of the herdowners shared encampments with clansmen, while only 8% chose to live with affines.¹³

In general, the move to increase the degree of shared encampment activity proves to be the most effective strategy for harnessing many of the family's needed workers. The herdowner gains immediate access to an extensive labor pool. He can make more or less use of that labor in accordance with demand. And, if he is dissatisfied with the worker's performance, the herdowner can amiably move elsewhere---always under the pretext of some other economic or social exigency. The ability to use shared labor, however, rests on the herdowner's reputation as a good and generous man, and as a hard worker. Not all men are welcomed into this shared labor pool.

13. See Spencer 1965 for comprehensive discussions of clan and affinal relationships.

Conclusion

None of these mechanisms to increase the number of workers available for household labor are exclusive to a particular stage of the family's development. And many may be insufficient in themselves to alleviate fully a severe labor shortage. At some stage, the majority of Samburu herdowners have hired or borrowed a laborer and married a second. Throughout their lives, there are scattered periods of working intensively alone. All the above labor strategies should be valued, however, as they complement those labor arrangements formed by sharing encampments. It is the residence patterns of Samburu, the encampments they share, which guide access to much of their labor force. Families are not self-sufficient labor entities and encampment labor-sharing allows one worker to provide services for several herdowners. Through adroitly shifting encampments, a herdowner can 1) increase the quantity of his labor force and 2) increase the quality--by residing with those most skilled in animal care. Further, encampment shifting gives him great flexibility to balance the number of workers with his present needs in managing his herds.

The current dearth of hired labor in pastoral encampments is of particular interest. While Samburu are no strangers to the labor market, their participation is asymmetrical. They heavily engage in wage activities themselves, but are far less willing to recruit their own herding labor in this manner. This reluctance stems partially from the increasing cost of hired labor. More important, however, herdowners require loyal and reliable workers. Animals, their wealth, lose value quickly if not properly tended. Samburu believe that such committed workers are more easily recruited through their network of closely-tied kin.

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