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## Changing youth work models in pastoralism : questioning the disruption of institutional compromises in Burkina Faso.

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### Abstract

The future of pastoralism in sub-Saharan Africa has historically raised questions, triggered either from the political perspective of a “productivist” sedentary modernization, or by concerns about its capacity to support sustainable livelihoods and its role in the environment. Such narratives are currently fuelled by the critical combination of demographic, economic, climatic and political factors.

We aim at questioning current changes in pastoral production and reproduction through the relationships of families to youth labour migration in Burkina Faso, by situating our empirical work in the Sahel within the perspective of the Theory of Regulation (Boyer 1986). We define pastoralism as a livelihood and an animal production system specialized in valuing unpredictable environmental variability through diverse strategies, among those the mobility of people and herds is key. Its capacity to build and steward functional integrity (Hubert and Ison, 2011) between heterogenous agroecosystems and socio-economic activities depends on collective resource governance institutions (FAO, 2021).

The progressive disruption of institutional compromises (André 2002)<sup>1</sup> around land tenure and mobility reconfigures pastoral systems and their place in rural territories. The concept of social activity relationship (RSA)<sup>2</sup> helps understanding these dynamics of change: family and/or wage labour changes in connection with growing inequalities in terms of mobility, livestock marketing and diversification opportunities. The regional labour migrations of young pastoralists are described as more and more difficult and risky. However, they play on different institutions within the RSA: making possible to renegotiate access to land and public services, and to acquire income outside the family, strengthening and transforming endogenous social protection circuits.

Analysing the work in pastoralism from this perspective emphasizes the political dimensions of accumulation and redistribution, and calls for linking changes in pastoral societies with the forms that the State assumes locally. Beyond ambivalent relationships ranging from unfair integration to avoidance and exclusion, the future of pastoralism depends on new and more equal institutional compromises building on and renewing moral economies in rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> By institutional compromise, the theory of regulation refers to the temporary crystallization of power relationships between social actors instituting "arrangements" linked to the social organization of production and redistribution processes that play a key role in rural livelihoods.

<sup>2</sup> RSA refers to an institutional form based on different dimensions: the relationship to resources, capital, different types of knowledge, the redistribution of value and collective institutions allowing individuals to cope with risks.

# Changing youth working models in pastoralism: Questioning the disruption of institutional compromises in Burkina Faso

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XII Convegno Annuale SIAA, Università di Messina, 19-21 dicembre 2024  
PANEL 4 : Work & Pastoralism : Trajectories for rural areas





### Results

- Youth searching for their **adult** and **citizen** status
- **Diversification** and **multilocalization** of the pastoral economy
- **Continuum** between urban areas and pastoralist households
- Ongoing changes within pastoralism, as a result of its integration into wider territories, societies, and economies

### Recommendations

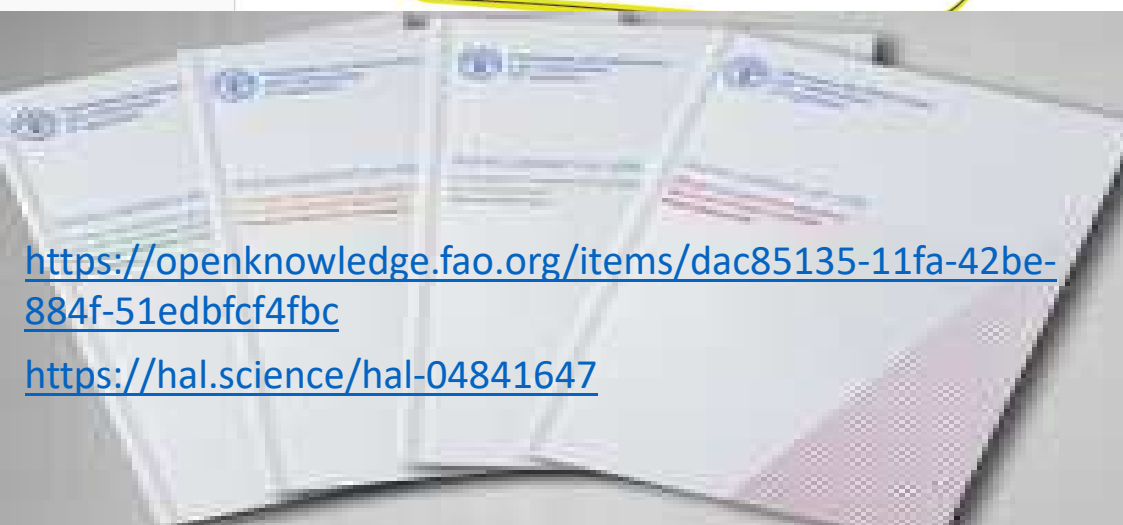
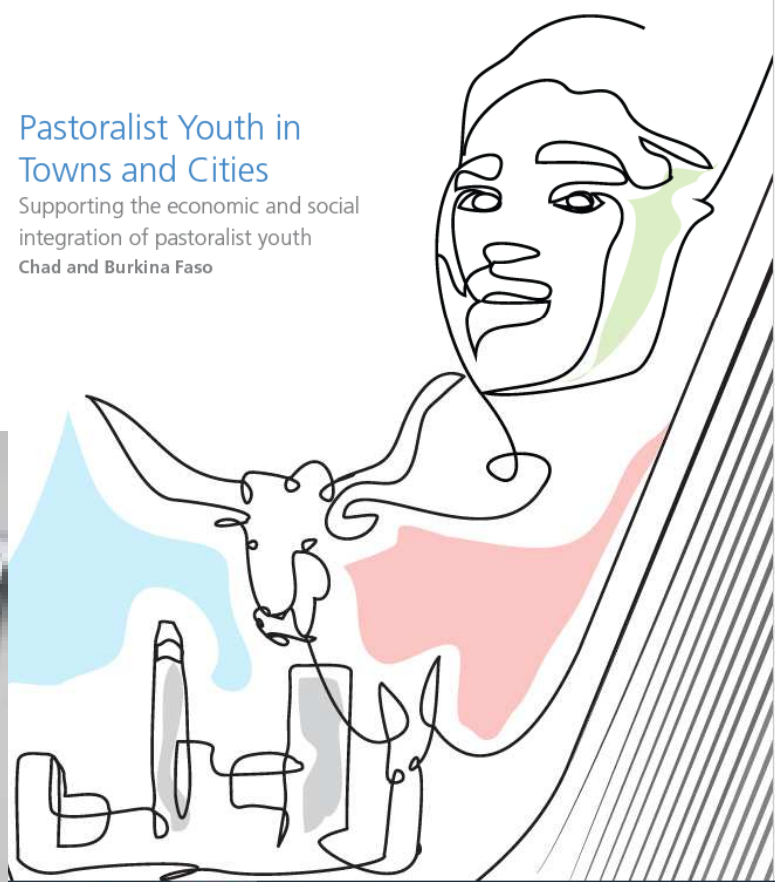
- Securing the mobile strategies of pastoralism and its youth, instead of hampering it
- Launching **dialogue** for a cross-sector public action
- Considering the whole networks and trajectories of the migrant youth
- Taking into account the multilocalized setting of the pastoral economy
- Building new relationships between the migrant pastoralist youth and the **State**



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## Pastoralist Youth in Towns and Cities

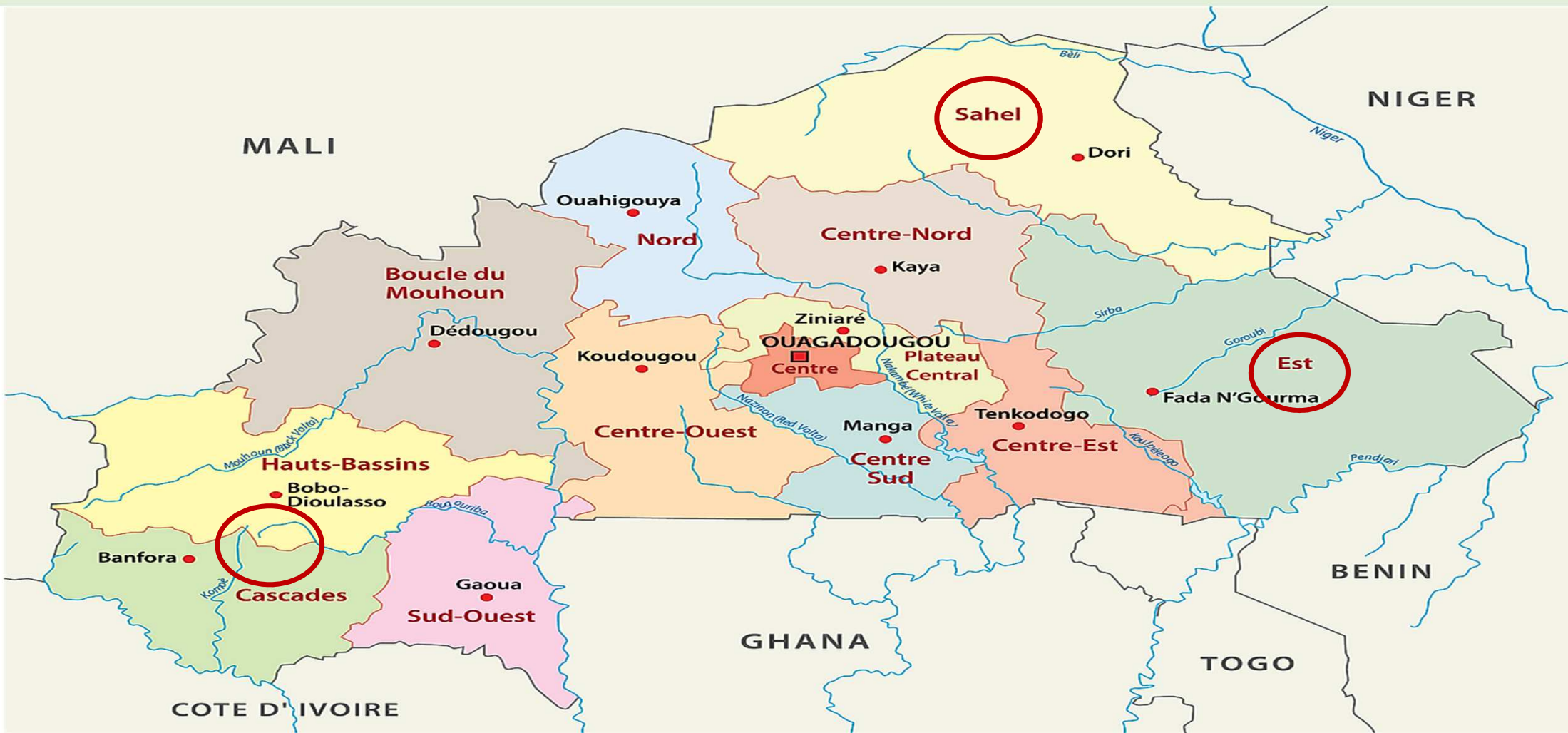
Supporting the economic and social  
integration of pastoralist youth  
Chad and Burkina Faso



<https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/dac85135-11fa-42be-884f-51edbf4fbc>

<https://hal.science/hal-04841647>

## Historic and current trends of disruption of institutional compromises in three Burkinabé regions



## Changing working models, higher inequality in production and redistribution processes

Transhumance : forced sedentarity or changes in nature (no way back, young pastoralists with hired shepherds only, disruption of key social institutions, low attractivity (danger) but new spaces of autonomy, responsibility and knowledge); concentration in and through production processes

Livestock markets : reorganization of national and international trade, closing of collection markets in rural areas, loss of job opportunities and major changes in horizontal redistribution processes





Conclusion: a set of powerful effects on rural areas questioning political relationships at local, national and regional scale

- ✓ Territories without livestock and/or agriculture (empty spaces, abrupt change in land tenure, disruption of complementarities, spatial constraints on pastoral mobility and agriculture) // Unsustainability & need to compromise ('each needs the other')
- ✓ Growing inequalities (redistribution jeopardized) within and beyond pastoralism
- ✓ Avoidance of the State no more a viable strategy --- claims for political, citizen, social and productive rights
- ✓ Imported development models ('social contract', developmental state, decentralization vs. extraction enclaves) // pastoralism as a vantage point to question implicit referentials : sedentariness, centralism, pro-agriculture, delimitation, specialization, fragmentation of space
- ✓ What beyond developmental, post-colonial State? What new compromises linking local, national and regional scales ?

## DIAPO 1

General presentation : a group of researchers in anthropology, socioeconomy, geography and practioners working on rural and pastoral development.

The point we want to make : a long term and progressive process of disruption of institutional compromises\* around land tenure and mobility in Burkina Faso has led to the political crisis of the last 10 years (still ongoing and worsening).

The (non)treatment of the political dimensions of the insurgencies (demands)\*, reinforced by a military driven response has brought to major changes in working models in pastoralism in connection with growing inequalities in mobility, livestock market and economic diversification opportunities.

By understanding these changes, we can envision powerful trends of reorganization of rural territories, changing political dimensions of accumulation and redistribution, and then highlight the stakes of citizenship and productive rights for the peasantries at national and regional scales.

## DIAPO 2

To do so we rely on a two phases Research that we have conducted in Burkina Faso within the FAO framework from 2019 and 2021.

During the first phase we realised interviews with young people from pastoral origin encountered in Ouagadougou. These youngsters came from different regions, had different backgrounds in terms of family wealth and status. Our aim was to trace back their mobility and life trajectories, the main institutions on which they relied to live and work in the cities (livestock markets, coranic schools and mosques, lineage and kinship networks, fulani cultural and political associations...); and how these mobilities changed their political views and engagement.

Then, in the second phase, we conducted a survey among 56 families (281 people) in three regions of Burkina Faso. The survey was realised in collaboration with two pastoralist professional organizations that are members of the regional network RBM. The aim was to investigate how pastoralists perceive and face structural changes in the economy with regard the current political crisis and its effects on mobility, access to resources, etc., the place of pastoralism within it, as well as the youth labour migrations between family and individual strategies, and finally the access to social assistance network, development aid and public services.

((André, 2002) institutional compromises : crystallization of power relationships instituting arrangements linked to the social organization of production and redistribution processes --- accumulation regime --- (Boyer, 2015) RSA --- access to resources, to capital, to knowledge, redistribution of value and to social security)). Pastoralist (youth) labour out of technical, value chain approaches...

## DIAPO 3

Sahel : Fulani chieftaincy, hierarchical societies (internal power struggles), Mossi agricultural migration (post-independence, pro-agriculture policies), marginality within the national economic and administration frameworks (underdeveloped public services and infrastructures, underestimation and constraints to pastoral economy), industrial and artisanal gold mining boom (last three decades, ongoing) // hearth of the insurgencies in Burkina Faso, VDP atrocities (ethnic militias), long-term blockades around many cities (Djibo) and struggles to control mining sites;



Cascades : 1<sup>st</sup> pioneer front (from the 1930s, post-independence boom), cotton basin (economic capital Bobo Dioulasso), in-flows movements of Fulani pastoralists from Sahel and northern regions (deforestation, under Tutorat), disrupted complementarities (changes in stock ownership, wage labour vs. confiage, use of chemical fertilizers, in the last two decades cashew plantation boom, new urban and rural agribusiness investors, returnees from Ivory Coast), pastoralist multi-sited livelihoods between Burkina Faso and coastal countries // sporadic violent conflicts, mobility restrictions in the coastal countries, huge in-flows movements from other regions.

Est : 2<sup>nd</sup> pioneer front, pastoral migration by the 1970's (Tutorat under Gourmantche chieftaincies), cross-borders conservation areas (Pendjari), sesame agri-business, multi-sited livelihoods GH, TG, BN // targeted killings, attacks on livestock markets, insurgency movements in the forests and national parks.

Insurgencies enrooted in long-term dynamics : multi-factors/actors land grabbing, disruption of socio-political institutions governing land and resource access, mobilization of land in political struggles for local, customary, communal power --- reflecting marginality, exclusion and subordination of Fulani pastoralists, vis-à-vis the State and public services (very low education rate, absence of identity cards, denial of land rights) --- discrimination, abuse, predatory attitudes of public servants (overestimated or illegal fines, taxes...) --- counter-insurgency policies : ethnicization, militias, violence against civilians.

#### DIAPO 4

Transhumance : forced sedentarity around the cities ('secure areas') and/or changes in nature (no more transhumance but displacement of the stock) in the Cascade region or in coastal countries like Togo, Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast. A consistent part of livestock from Sahel and East region is located in the cross-border parks (negotiation with insurgent groups, fear of retaliation if back, exposure to military operations), closing borders (violation of CEDEAO agreement), criminalization of herders --- we presume that only pastoralists with large herds can assume the higher costs and risks (concentration of means in PRODUCTION PROCESSES) --- only young members of pastoralist families lead the herds with hired shepherds (no more women & children, elders, Garso/Ruuga that played a key role in social relationships and exchanges in the routes of transhumance), 'confiage' also a key institution has become too risky --- loss of attractivity but also a new space of autonomy, responsibility and knowledge for young people.

Livestock markets : reorganization of trade, a significant trend, closing of collection markets in many rural areas, livestock moved by truck from one region to another, no more walk leading (effective strategy to improve the animal conditions and value), loss of jobs in market services and brokering professions (key economic assets for social cadets, requiring limited capital but central for family cohesion, economic diversification, investment in pastoral production). REDISTRIBUTION PROCESSES.

Heavy consequences for pastoralist livelihoods, results show the centrality of livestock activities both for proximity diversification and labour migration in a context where education rates are very low, opportunities of decent wage employment limited and migration failure is often mentioned by the elders.