Fieldwork in the main pastoral areas of Senegal and Chad

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Camels - Wadi Fira region

Cerdi in the Field

CONTEXT

Pastoralism is one of the main activity in Sahelian countries like Senegal and Chad, which are my fields of study for my thesis.

The pastoral zone of Senegal is located in the north-east of the country with an area of about 67,610 km² or nearly a third of the national
territory. However, livestock sector is more important in the case of Chad where rangelands are estimated at 84 million hectares or 65% of the national territory. The economic importance of livestock appears through its contribution to national GDP of 3.9% in Senegal and 14% in Chad in 2010.

CLIMATE VARIABILITY AND INCOME INEQUALITIES IN SAHELIAN PASTORAL AND AGRO-PASTORAL ZONES

In my thesis, I study the impact of climate variability on the income of pastoral and agro-pastoral households of Senegal and Chad, and their adaptation strategies to climate shocks. I also examine how climate variability affects inequalities. Pastoral activity faces a context marked by the recurrence of climatic crises and a strong spatio-temporal irregularity in the distribution of rains. Sahelian pastoral and agro-pastoral households use mobility and diversification as adaptation strategies to secure their production systems and livelihoods. However, these strategies are characterized by complex relationships, which hide multi-level recourses but also various form of inequalities.

I work on a database collected by the CIRAD (Wane et al., 2016) to evaluate incomes in pastoral systems. These data concern a sample of 237 and 500 pastoral households respectively in Senegal and Chad. During the last summer, I conducted surveys with the same groups of herders to better understand their perception of climate variability and their adaptation strategies.
HETEROGENEITY OF INCOME AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES IN SAHELIAN PASTORAL SYSTEMS

The first results show large income disparities among the different types of pastoralists and among pastoral areas. According to field surveys, pastoralists perceived the impact of climate change and variability through delayed rainy season, rainfall breaks, rising temperatures and the recurrence of droughts over the past 20 years. In this context, different adaptation strategies are put in place according to the sites and pastoral households. This fieldwork allowed me to clarify the assumptions of the model I am working on. Now, I am looking forward to return to Chad this summer for further investigations. This time I will participate in quantitative surveys to collect the data I need to check my model assumptions.

RÉFÉRENCES


FAO (2014), Capitalisation des appuis au Développement Pastoral au Tchad, Rapport de capitalisation, Mai 2014


About the author

Alioune Ndiaye is a PhD student at Tropical and Mediterranean Animal Production Systems (SELMET, Cirad) and Cerdi.