

The Development of Secondary School in Tanzania and Mobility of the Maasai

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This paper is based on a fieldwork I conducted 15 years apart (18 months between 1991 and 1993 and 2 months in 2009). It focuses on the consequences of the newly expansion of secondary schools in Tanzania on the Maasai pastoralists. Since Independence, the development of secondary education had never been an educational priority of the Tanzanian government, and until very recently Maasai pupil had almost no opportunity to go further primary education. Most of the school leavers would come back in their parents' compound to herd livestock or to join their age-mates in their *warrior* age-class activities. The girls got married soon after having finishing school and followed their husband. The remoteness of the schools, the poor quality of teaching in these remote areas and the strong pupils' truancy lent most of them to fail the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) that prevent them to carry on with their studies in public secondary schools. Even if they had thought that secondary school was good for their children - which was rarely the case - parents could not afford the tuition at a private secondary school. During the 1990s school was seen as a mean to cope with daily activities and to be integrated in Tanzanian society.

In the middle of the 2000s, school provision in Tanzania, and to a lesser extent, in the Maasai region, has increased while the socio-economic situation of the Maasai pastoralists has changed, deteriorating for most of them. As a result, more Maasai children go to secondary school - even if they stay far behind the other Tanzanians in terms of secondary school rates. The expansion of the Maasai children in secondary school is not only due to the development of school provision in the area, but also to their need to increase the opportunities of getting a job in order to rely on other sources of income. In this perspective, contrary to their former situation when children were expected to come back home after primary school, geographical and social mobility is now expected when possible. This community is hence experiencing changing patterns of education and employment. The possibility for more primary school leavers to go beyond primary school and the need to diversify resources, encourage parents to sent their children to secondary school while at the same time, poverty prevents some of them to do so, especially outside the community secondary schools which are the cheapest ones but also less favored schools in terms of learning conditions.