



## **SERIES NO. 1: REPORT ON MEETING OF AFRICAN YOUTH PASTORALIST LANDSCAPE SHARING ON IYRP 2026 AND WORLD PASTORALIST FORUM**

*Sustainable Pastoralism: Bridging Global Initiatives and Local Impact through the International Year of Rangelands (IYRP) and the African Youth Pastoralist Initiative (AYPI)*

Meeting recording link: [Meeting in General -20231114\\_144158-Meeting Recording.mp4](#)

Date: 14 November 2023

Time: 14:30–17:00 EAT

### **Agenda of the meeting**

- Introductions
- Overview of IYRP 2026, youth and World Pastoralist Forum (WPF)
- Updates of AYPI and its aspirations
- Discussions on the vision and mission of APYI
- Way forward / other business'

### **Participants**

Loupa Pius, IYRP East Africa, Uganda; Longole Hanna, Uganda; Andiswa Finca, Southern Africa; Elka; Imanathy Kekaya; Jacob Lekaitogo, Kenya; Jodene Foster, South Africa; John Peter Lowot, Uganda; Khululiwe Primrose Ntombela, South Africa; Liben Boru, Ethiopia; Venomukona Tjiseua, Namibia; Thantaswa Charity Nashipae, Kenya; Joshua Laizer, Tanzania; Josephat, Tanzania; Yien Bachuch, Ethiopia; Chepkopus, Kenya

Absent with apologies: Caroline Ruto (FAO), Timothy Okudu (AWF), Agaba Brian (COPACSO), Teba Arukol (KDF), Gideon George Sway (AYPI), Farhiya Bishar Maalim (AYPI), Lorenzo (AYPI)

### **Introduction**

The meeting centred around key aspects of the International Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists (IYRP), delving into the complexities of the Pastoralist Youth Working Group and the African Youth Pastoralist Initiative. Attendees, representing a variety of organisations, shared their backgrounds and affiliations, setting the stage for a focused discussion.

### **Background**

The IYRP to be celebrated in 2026 is an initiative of pastoralists, governments, civil society organisations (CSOs) and various global institutions. In March 2022 the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution to declare the year 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists. To move this initiative forward, the interested parties created various Working Groups (WGs) on different themes related to the IYRP. Youth engagement and involvement in pastoralism and rangelands around the world is one of the thematic focus areas of the IYRP 2026. So, to increase youth participation in IYRP activities working towards 2026, a Pastoralist Youth WG was created to amplify the voices of youth in the IYRP coalition. Various organisations and institutions are working closely towards achieving the 2026 road map and beyond. For example, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) is developing a [Global Rangelands Atlas](#) and the [League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development](#) is compiling a map of pastoralists worldwide.

The African Youth Pastoralists landscape sharing meeting is part of the [IYRP](#) series of activities to engage a wide range of stakeholders including youth, women and governments. This meeting was organised collaboratively with the IYRP Pastoralist Youth WG, the Africa Youth Pastoralist Initiative (AYPI) and the World Pastoralist Forum (WPF).

AYPI is a forum of African youth formed in 2022 after a gathering of pastoralist youth in Lukenya, Kenya, supported by ILRI and the Climate Smart Agriculture Network. The AYPI platform brings together pastoralist youth from different parts of Africa with vested interest to promote and advance pastoralism and rangeland users' voices and aspirations in the African continent. The **mission** of AYPI is to empower youth pastoralists in Africa economically and politically. AYPI acknowledges the fact that the traditional pastoral way of life is threatened by shifting weather patterns, droughts and resource scarcity because the changing climate is making a lasting impact on these communities. The **vision** is to become a leading global organisation for pastoralist youth community development.

The meeting was chaired by Loupa Pius, landscape officer with the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) Uganda and member of CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism). He is a pastoralist active in many networks and co-chairs the Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) in Eastern & Southern Africa (ESA).

### **Overview of the IYRP 2026: presentation by Hannah Longole**

Hannah Longole, a member of the RISG in ESA, introduced what the IYRP 2026 stands out about, highlighted briefly what it is currently doing (number of meetings held, activities) and emphasised the role of pastoralist youth in the proposed IYRP thematic framework for 2026. She highlighted that the IYRP recognises youth as key for sustainable pastoralist livelihoods, and promotes support and rights for the development of pastoralist youth.

Hannah's presentation highlighted the current governments, the CSOs and other institutions that support the IYRP 2026 and the objectives of the Year, in which she emphasised awareness raising and research. She showed the thematic focus areas of IYRP and pointed out that the youth agenda will be a focus in November 2026, stating that the IYRP themes are driven by the calendar of events. She guided the discussion on the IYRP thematic WGs. Her presentation emphasised the need for collaborative support from CSOs, local governments, the private sector and international organisations. The goal is to promote policies and legislation based on evidence to bolster sustainable pastoralism, challenging traditional norms. Finally, Hanna encouraged the AYPI and other youth organisations to write letters of support and join the IYRP family.

### **Presentation on IYRP Pastoralist Youth Working Group**

In this presentation, Loupa Pius highlighted that the IYRP Pastoralist Youth WG is coordinated by Caroline Ruto of the Pastoralist Knowledge Hub of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). As Caroline was otherwise occupied, she had asked Loupa to present the PowerPoint on the IYRP Pastoralist Youth WG during this meeting.

Pius shed light on the integral role played by pastoralist youth, encompassing individuals of all genders, as the torchbearers of the future within the proposed global framework, a pivotal theme for the 2026 pastoralist agenda. These youth, inheriting and learning traditions and sustainable practices, stand as custodians of the heritage that has shaped pastoralism across generations.

He highlighted that the IYRP, recognising the significance of the youth, acknowledges their pivotal role in accessing information and technologies, serving as founts of innovation that contribute to the sustainable development of pastoralist livelihoods.

The Pastoralist Youth WG seeks to empower pastoralist youth, encourage them to be proactive agents of change, increase their participation in the IYRP 2026, and advocate for policies tailored to their unique circumstances. The primary goal of this WG is to empower pastoralist youth as catalysts for change within their communities. This involves increasing the participation of pastoralist youth

and their organisations in the IYRP and fostering their active engagement in decision-making processes related to pastoralism and range management.

Looking beyond the IYRP, the WG envisions a sustained purpose, aiming to continually elevate the contributions of pastoralist youth on the global stage. It serves as a dedicated space for amplifying the voices and perspectives of these individuals, engaging them in economic livelihoods and advocacy, and recognising the invaluable contributions of pastoralist youth in the ever-evolving landscape of pastoralism.

### **Presentation on African Youth Pastoralist Initiative**

Jacob Lekatong, in his presentation on "Empowering Pastoralist Youth for Sustainable Futures," provided a comprehensive overview of the AYPI, founded in 2022. AYPI's notable engagements include participation in COP 27 in Egypt, COP 28 in the United Arab Emirates, Africa Climate Summit in Kenya, and the African Food System Forum (AGRF summit) in Tanzania. The organisation aspires to become a global leader in pastoralist community development, with plans to expand its reach to more countries in the coming years.

The mission of AYPI is to empower youth pastoralists facing unique challenges due to shifting weather patterns, droughts and resource scarcity resulting from climate change. AYPI aims to make a lasting impact on these communities with the support of its registration currently underway as an international organisation in Kenya.

Current activities involve establishing a new office in Nairobi, strengthening relationships with key partners, and enhancing the capacity of AYPI staff through workshops and seminars. Expansion plans include reaching countries like Uganda, Chad, Somalia and South Sudan, among others, to effectively address the needs of youth in pastoralist communities.

AYPI's Sustainable Livestock Management Plan involves promoting practices such as rotational grazing, holistic management and integrating agroforestry with livestock. The organisation also focuses on improving educational opportunities, addressing healthcare challenges and engaging in community development initiatives for pastoralist empowerment.

Jacob outlined the **main AYPI needs for support:**

- Incorporation into IYRP WG for meaningful contributions to the IYRP 2026 agenda.
- Increased youth participation in workshops, seminars and conferences to develop skills.
- Collaboration and meaningful partnerships with other organisations with the same cause.
- Linkage to pastoralist projects, donors and other networks.
- Accreditation to the United Nations Environmental Programme/Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), African Union, East African Community and Southern Africa Development Community, as well.
- Link to other youth network organisations in West, North and Southern Africa.

### **Discussions and way forward**

- Jacob suggested the need for a global pastoralist youth forum/initiative that brings together youth from various continents (Asia, Europe, Americas etc.).
- Andiswa Finca indicated that we need to leverage and utilise the IYRP Pastoralist Youth WG as a global platform for youth engagement.
- John Peter (Uganda) asked if AYPI is inclusive to accommodate the aspirations of other youth organisations in Africa.
- Loupa noted that we will engage European, Latin American, and Asian pastoralists youth to come up with a similar pastoralist youth initiative for their continents; AYPI marks the beginning of the journey.

- Joshua Laizer highlighted that amplifying voices of pastoralist on resources should also be part of the effort, citing the example of the Maasai situation in Tanzania on the matters of carbon credit projects violating human rights of indigenous communities.
- Liben Boru (Ethiopia) emphasised the importance of building resilient programmes on rangelands to prevent desertification and degradation.
- Andiswa encouraged youth to continue proactively to champion the African youth agenda on pastoralism and rangelands, and encouraged the youth to share their stories with a new call by LEGS (Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards); she shared the link with the youth through Loupa.
- Uganda and Namibia were included in the AYPI platform with John Peter Lowot and Hannah Longole representing Uganda and Venomukona Tjiseua representing Namibia.
- Loupa asked Andiswa to map the potential youth organisations, initiatives or projects that can be engaged in other Southern African countries.
- APYI is open for all youth membership organisations to join.
- The next meeting will take place in February 2024; the specific day and date will be discussed.

### **Conclusion**

The meeting ended with a closing remark from Andiswa Finca, thanking the youth for accepting the invitation from the RISG in ESA. She highlighted that South Africa has no pastoralists but has livestock keepers and rangeland ecosystems, but it requires policy and research. She encouraged youth to demand for inclusion in policy decision making.

She wished everyone who attended a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

*Meeting notes prepared by Charity Nashipae*

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