



UNCCD COP 16 Saudi Arabia, Blue Zone, Mongolian Pavilion, 5 December 2024, 14:00–15:30 h

Title of the event: "Custodians of Land and Territories: How Pastoralist Communities and Women Strengthen Resilient Rangelands"

Presentation Title: Policies on Pastoralists' Land Rights and Women's Leadership: A Case Study of Uganda

By Hannah Longole, Pastoralist / Executive Director, Women- and Youth-led Ateker Cultural Center, Uganda.



Photo by Hannah Longole, Uganda

Rangeland Overview:

Uganda's pastoralists occupy 84,000 km² of rangeland in the "cattle corridor."

Livestock population: 14.5 million cattle, 17.4 million goats and 4.4 million sheep.

Rangelands cover 42% of Uganda's total land area (199,710 km²).

Pastoral Groups:

Key Indigenous groups (population 6 million): Karimojong, Bakiga, Bahima and Basongora.

Shared experiences of restricted land access, marginalization, discrimination and human rights violations.



Land Challenges:

Shrinking land availability due to competing demands from mining, wildlife conservation, agriculture and urbanization.

Need for appropriate land-tenure rights to support mobility and non-exclusive land use.

Importance of Mobility:

Mobility is essential for sustainable rangeland use and economic productivity in pastoral systems.

Formal Land-Tenure Systems:

Existing systems fail to recognize customary rights, particularly for temporary use by mobile herders.

Value Recognition:

Pastoralism contributes value to the land, but this is often unrecognized, leading to detrimental policies.

Call to Action (Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism / CELEP:

<https://www.celep.info/policy-note-on-pastoralists-land-rights/>):

Guarantee legal access to land for pastoralists.

Protect mobility as a fundamental right.

Expand legal frameworks to cover all pastoralists' land rights.

Recognize and register customary land-use rights.

Acknowledge pastoralism as land development.

Avoid and regulate conversion of pastoral lands to non-pastoral uses.

Include pastoralist communities in decision-making processes.

Women's Land Rights:



Photo by Hannah Longole, Uganda

Women constitute 51% of Uganda's population but face legal and social inequalities in land rights.

Existing legal frameworks promote gender equality but conflict with entrenched social norms favoring men.

Exploration of Women's Leadership:

Lack of studies on pastoralist women's leadership and their role in decision-making hinders progress.

Recommendations for Women's Empowerment:

Promote participatory research involving pastoralist women and girls.

Map and protect women's rangeland access under Communal Land Associations (CLAs).

Facilitate participation of pastoralist women in regional and global conferences.

Accelerate finalization of the Peace and Rangelands Policy.

Support advocacy for pastoralist women leaders at various levels.

Strengthen networks of pastoralist- and women-led organizations.

Facilitate capacity-building and sharing of success stories of pastoralist women's leadership and self-organization.

Conclusion:

Urgent attention needed on the diminishing resources for pastoralists amid diversifying land pressures. Sustainable policies prioritizing the rights of pastoralists, especially women, are crucial for long-term livelihood viability and environmental preservation. Collaboration among stakeholders is essential to address challenges facing pastoralists effectively.