



IYRP Working Group on Pastoralist Economy

Concept Note

24 March 2023

Background

The contribution of pastoralists to the economy of their societies and lands is indispensable and composite. Pastoralists are able to exploit highly variable productive inputs (such as pasture and water) and deliver moderately variable outputs (such as meat and milk). They provide not only animal products to a large portion of the world population – thus ensuring food security of many, including themselves through self-consumption – but also galvanize the economy of the lands they cross while transhuming. In spite of that, their economic contribution has always been underestimated, because of a lack of understanding of the way pastoralism works (long-term and risk reduction logics) and the non-monetary value of their goods and services. As a result, governments often neglect to invest and to provide public services to pastoralists, and the private sector is not keen to be strongly involved.

Objectives

The Working Group (WG) “Pastoralist Economy” – targeting the IYRP 2026 – would like to focus on and bring attention to the economic contribution of pastoralists.

More in detail, the WG will:

- Collate and analyze existing research results;
- Stimulate and engage in research to fill knowledge gaps;
- Identify and target key stakeholders (international bodies, governments, gatherings) for evidence-based advocacy;
- Engage with pastoralists and other stakeholders in disseminating these messages.

Themes

The thematic scope of the WG will include:

- The pastoralism-linked value chains (*meso level*), such as those relating to live animals, meat, milk, leather, manure, etc. We will focus on all analysis levels – from the local to the regional;
- The economy of pastoralist households: incomes, expenditures, inequalities (*micro level*);
- The contribution of pastoralism to the GDP of their countries and regions (*macro level*);
- The productive and spatial diversification strategies of households and communities, allowing to reduce risks and keep this livelihood alive;
- The access of women and youth to economic assets and opportunities.

Composition

The WG will be made up of:

- Any individual within the IYRP International Support Group (ISG) who is keen to collaborate on this theme, including members/representatives from other WGs;

- Other key resource persons working on pastoralist economy and interested in joining the WG.

Outputs

Some possible outputs of the WG may be:

- Position papers on the economic contribution of pastoralism;
- Policy brief of opportunities/needs for investment;
- Research studies and papers;
- Short videos on case studies.

Resources

Organizations involved in this WG may be able to contribute resources for some activities, mainly through available human resources. Other funds may be raised through projects and external funding.