

Assessment of Policies, Legal, & Institutional Framework on Land Tenure to Identify Barriers and Enablers of Securing Customary Tenure and Climate Resilience, with a Gender Dimension

Country Report: Uganda





Executive Summary

Pastoralism is a vital livelihood and cultural practice in Uganda, supporting millions of people through livestock production and contributing significantly to the national economy. This report examines the social, economic, political, legal, and cultural dimensions of pastoralism in Uganda, focusing on challenges such as land tenure insecurity, climate change, competing land uses, and inadequate policy frameworks.

Key findings highlight the historical shift from customary communal land management to individualized tenure systems, which has disrupted traditional pastoral mobility and resource access. Despite the existence of laws and policies that govern rangelands and pastoralism in Uganda, implementation gaps persist, leaving pastoralists vulnerable to land grabbing, conflicts, and environmental degradation.

The report underscores the importance of mobility for climate resilience, emphasizing indigenous knowledge and communal land management. Interventions such as the formation of Communal Land Associations demonstrate progress in securing pastoral land rights, though challenges to tenure security for pastoralists in rangelands persist.

Recommendations include strengthening legal recognition of pastoralism, integrating gender-sensitive approaches, harmonizing policies, and enhancing stakeholder coordination. The domestication of regional protocols, such as the IGAD Protocol on Transhumance, is critical to safeguarding cross-border pastoral mobility.

Ultimately, sustainable pastoralism in Uganda requires inclusive land governance, climate adaptation strategies, and equitable participation of pastoral communities in decision-making processes.



Introduction

Pastoralism refers to any predominantly livestock-based production system that is mainly extensive in nature and uses some form of mobility of livestock.¹ Uganda's economy and culture are strongly entwined with pastoralism, a traditional method of raising livestock involving herding animals across vast stretches of land.² It is practiced by pastoralists who derive most of their subsistence and income from keeping livestock under natural pastures, with humans and livestock co-existing in a symbiotic relationship.³

An elaborate definition of pastoralism is provided in the Policy for the Development of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) where the broad tenets of pastoralism as an economic activity and cultural identity are stated thus;

“Pastoralism refers to both an economic activity and a cultural identity, but the latter does not necessarily imply the former. As an economic activity, pastoralism is an animal production system which takes advantage of the characteristic instability of rangeland environments, where key resources such as nutrients and water for livestock become available in short-lived and largely unpredictable concentrations. Crucial aspects of pastoralist specialization are: (1) The interaction of people, animals and the environment, particularly strategic mobility of livestock and selective feeding; and (2) The development of flexible resource management systems, particularly communal land management institutions and non-exclusive entitlements to water resources.”

Pastoralism is mostly practiced in the cattle corridor that consists of bush and shrub vegetation commonly known as a rangeland sustaining 80% of the national livestock herd and 90% of the cattle.⁴ By definition, Rangelands are lands on which the native vegetation is primarily grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, shrubs or woodlands suitable for browsing or grazing by animals.⁵ In Uganda, rangelands are characterized by high temperatures, low and highly variable rainfall regimes, low vegetation cover density and fragile soil.⁶ They cover an estimated area of 44% (84,000 sq.km) of the country's total land area and with a population of 6.6 million.⁷

¹ Hatfield and Davies (2006), *The Economics of Mobile Pastoralism: A Global Summary*; Nomadic Peoples 11(1):91-116

² Kisamba-Mugerwa, W. 1992. Rangeland tenure and resource management: An overview of pastoralism in Uganda. Makerere Institute of Social Research.

³ Sanford, S.1983. Management of pastoral development in the third world. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester.

⁴ Government of Uganda. 2014. Draft Rangeland Management and Pastoralism Policy. Kampala: Animal Industry and Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture

⁵ MAAIF 2020 National Rangeland Management and Pastoralism Policy Implementation Plan FY 2019/20- 2024/25

⁶ Draft Rangelands Policy, 2020

⁷ CD Waiswa 2019 'Introduction to Pastoralism' in CD Waiswa and others (eds), *Pastoralism in Uganda: Theory, Practice, and Policy* (1st edn, Centre for Basic Research).

Rangelands spread over several districts with varying coverage from complete coverage (100%) as is the case of Moroto, Kotido, Soroti, to over 60% in Kiboga, Mubende, Nakasongola, Sembabule, Mbarara and Ntungamo to very low levels in Kabarole and Mbale.⁸ These areas form the "Cattle Corridor" which runs from the South-west to the North-east direction and across borders from Rwanda to Sudan, Somalia and Kenya.⁹ Broadly, six major pastoralist groups exist in the cattle corridor in Uganda including the Bahima, Banyankole and Basongora in Western Uganda; the Karamojong in the North East; Iteso in the East; and the Baruli and Banyarwanda in Central Uganda.¹⁰

Pastoralism in Uganda: Social, economic, political, legal, and cultural dimensions.

In the pre-colonial era, rangelands were traditionally managed under common property regimes based on customary institutions which provided for all members to enjoy use rights, while transfer was strictly through inheritance of use rights, but not ownership.¹¹ Rangeland resources were managed as commons using customary authority systems that determined access and use. Use rights were generally equal within kinship or territorial groups, while outsiders were excluded except through negotiations with elders.¹² The customary authorities ensured that grazing practices did not harm rangeland resources through the use of sanctions for those who did not adhere to the expected norms and practices.¹³

Customary grazing practices included following herd movement routes and customary land use practices that prevented the over use of rangeland resources such as regular assessment by range scouts.¹⁴ Herd movement and stocking capacity was based on detailed range assessment by the range scouts who would evaluate both the quality and quantity of the available forage, range condition and water availability and quality which ensured sustainable use of rangelands.¹⁵

With colonial rule, private ownership was promoted through signing of agreements between the colonial administrators of Great Britain and traditional leaders of the existing kingdoms in

⁸ Wilberforce Kisamba-Mugerwa (1992) 'Rangeland Tenure and Resource Management: An Overview of Pastoralism in Uganda'

⁹ IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (2020) 'Total Economic Valuation of Pastoralism in Uganda'

¹⁰ JB Wanyama 2020, 'Accounting for Pastoralists in Uganda'

¹¹ Okuku, Juma Anthony. 2006. The land act (1998) and land tenure reform in Uganda. *Africa Development* 31 (1): 1–26.

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Kisamba-Mugerwa, W. 1992. Rangeland tenure and resource management: An overview of pastoralism in Uganda. Makerere Institute of Social Research.

¹⁴ Oba, Gufu. 2012. Harnessing pastoralists' indigenous knowledge for rangeland management: Three African case studies. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 2 (1): 1.

¹⁵ Kyagaba, Emmanuel. 2004. Range resource assessment and monitoring techniques among the pastoral Bahima in Uganda. *Nomadic Peoples* 8 (1): 81–97



central and western Uganda.¹⁶ These agreements introduced individualization of land in Uganda because of the prejudice colonialists held towards the customary communal land system.¹⁷ They believed that the customary communal tenure system was prone to insecurity and that it did not provide an incentive to invest in land or implement improvements due to inadequate tenure security.¹⁸ Currently, the drive for investment in the rangelands ranks high on the government's agenda prompting registration of individual interests on land and support to other economic activities while alienating pastoralism.

Rangelands provide resources for human capital, minerals, fodder and water for livestock and are major habitat for wildlife.¹⁹ Pastoralists keep large herds of cattle and ruminants including goat and sheep for milk, meat, hides & skin which provide a major source of incomes for both pastoral and agro-pastoral communities.²⁰ Pastoralism, as the major economic activity in the rangelands, contributed 4.3 per cent to GDP in 2017/18 compared to 4.2 per cent in 2016/17.²¹ Therefore, effective management of rangelands is vital for improved productivity of pastoralism as a viable economic activity in the rangelands of Uganda.

Rangelands provide livestock with pasture and water resources, harbor large plantations of crops, wildlife, woodlands including medicinal plants, minerals, honey, scenic landscapes and water shades. Many non-pastoral people and companies therefore engage in commercial crop production, honey production, quarrying, mining, wild fruit collection, brick making, and wood gathering for timber, charcoal and firewood in rangelands.²² Some rangeland areas are equally endowed with oil and gas. Livestock production and wildlife conservation support the livelihoods of many actors in the rangelands and agriculture sector thereby generating foreign exchange earnings through trade and tourism.²³

Notwithstanding the contribution of rangelands and pastoralism, numerous challenges exist and these manifest through population growth, insecure land tenure rights, privatization of communal lands, intense impacts of climate change, pressure for land for mega infrastructure

¹⁶ Byakagaba et al. 2018 Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice

¹⁷ Beyaraza, Ernest. 2004. Evolution of property rights in Uganda: A legal and philosophical analysis of past, present, and future trends. Makerere University Printery.

¹⁸ Brock, Beverley. 1969. Customary land tenure, 'individualization' and agricultural development in Uganda. East African Journal of Rural Development 2 (2): 1–27

¹⁹ Draft Rangelands Policy, 2020

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2017. Uganda National Household Survey (2016/17). Kampala, Uganda

²² MAAIF 2020 National Rangeland Management and Pastoralism Policy Implementation Plan FY 2019/20- 2024/25

²³ *ibid*



projects, as well as intra and inter community conflicts.²⁴ These challenges are exacerbated by inadequate legislation on pastoralism in the rangelands.²⁵

For over a decade, the government of Uganda has engaged in the development of a policy for the sustainable management of rangeland resources in Uganda. The overall objective of the first draft Rangeland Management and Development Policy (2014) was to contribute to the national goal of wealth creation through sustainable investments, proper management and conservation of rangeland resources for the benefit of all. This was premised on the need to stimulate economic growth by improving productivity levels in pastoral and agro-pastoral systems, ensuring food security, and promoting sustainable use and management of rangeland resources.²⁶

Efforts by the government to address the identified challenges revealed existing gaps in the legal framework on rangelands resource management that had to be addressed through developing a Rangelands Management policy. The first draft policy was developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) in 2014. The Ministry of Agriculture with support from the Coalition of Pastoralist Civil Society Organizations (COPACSO) conducted nationwide consultations on the policy to gather views of pastoralists and other communities that live within the cattle corridor. A final draft was prepared and shared with Cabinet in 2019.

Currently, the government through Cabinet is in the process of reviewing the Rangelands Policy (2020) to address the contemporary challenges in the management of rangelands. The policy intends to strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable management of rangelands; enhance sustainable production and productivity of rangelands; enhance resilience of rangeland communities to mitigate and adapt to shocks; strengthen research for rangelands development; and strengthen institutional and stakeholder capacity for sustainable rangelands and pastoralism management.

The review of the Rangelands Policy aligns the ongoing legislative processes in Uganda particularly the signing on to the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region in May 2023 and the review of the National Land Policy that extensively addresses management of pastoralism in the rangelands in Uganda. The task before the line ministry is to revise the Policy's Regulatory Impact Assessment to assess the opportunities available and to accommodate any strategies required to address the demands for domestication of the protocol prior to resubmission to Cabinet.

²⁴ Impact Trust (2022) An analysis of regional and sub-regional policies on Pastoralism and Conservation in East Africa. Opportunities for engagement

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ Beyene Tadesse (2016) Policies and Proclamations relevant to Pastoral Areas Land Management for Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda; IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD)



Pastoralism and Land Use Planning

Land use planning is the systematic assessment of land and water potential, alternatives for land use and economic and social conditions in order to select and adopt the best land use options.²⁷ Its purpose is to select and put into practice those land uses that will best meet the needs of the people while safeguarding resources for the future.

Land Use planning in Uganda is anchored in the National Land Use Policy²⁸ that emphasizes sustainable utilization of natural resources to transform the Ugandan society from a backward, peasant society to a modern, industrialized and private sector driven economy. This underpins the drive to transform traditional subsistence mode of pastoralism to a commercially viable practice through support to initiatives that promote optimal utilization of rangeland resources.

In Uganda, pastoralism as a land use practice, is recognized in the development of frameworks for sustainable land and resource use at national and local government. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) develops national land use policies and frameworks based on data from censuses and surveys. These frameworks recognize pastoralism as a legitimate land use practice and support the formulation of development plans for its effective administration at all levels.

These regional development plans facilitate the incorporation of specific pastoralist needs like access to water and pasture into the regional sectoral plans. This takes the form of integration of pastoral corridors and grazing areas into physical plans with input from pastoralists. These plans also facilitate the documentation of mobility patterns, livestock numbers and drivers of conflict in resource utilization. This ensures prioritization of initiatives around land tenure security for pastoralist common lands and recognition of the traditional leaders' role in managing conflicts especially around resource exploitation within and with other communities.

However, obstacles in land use planning continue to persist due to inadequate coordination among government sectors, insufficient acknowledgment of pastoral mobility in official planning processes, gaps in data, and a lack of representation for pastoralists in decision-making, compounded by disputes arising from conflicting claims such as conservation versus grazing rights. More effort is required to improve data systems to accurately reflect pastoralist practices, increase the representation of pastoralists in land use planning spaces, include mobility corridors in land use plans and ensure legal protection for communal rangelands.

Key Stakeholders and Institutions

- Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development responsible for formulating policies that acknowledge, respect and guarantee land rights of pastoral communities.
- Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries responsible for the formulation and implementation of the Rangelands Policy in Uganda
- Local governments institutions particularly District Land Boards and Area Land Committees with the role of land administration and particularly registration of land.

²⁷ Metternicht, G. (2017). Land use planning. *Global Land Outlook (Working Paper)*, 2(3), 25-31.

²⁸ The National Land Use Policy, 2006 Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development



- Traditional leaders at household, community and clan levels engaging in conflict resolution among pastoral communities
- Civil Society Organisations supporting in the development and implementation of policies and initiatives that support pastoralism
- Academic and research institutions providing data and analyses of pastoralism for development of policies and interventions for pastoralists.
- Private sector actors involved in land and livestock value chains
- Regional bodies (IGAD) responsible for development of policies that facilitate the conduct of pastoralism across borders.

Interventions- A case of CLAs in Karamoja

In Uganda, the Constitution vests land in its citizens²⁹ and provides for four land tenure systems all of which exist in the cattle corridor. The Land Act, 1998 provides for the acquisition of a Certificate of Customary Ownership³⁰ and formation of Communal Land Associations.³¹ Pastoralist communities have actively pursued the registration of their customary land to improve access to, use of, and management of their shared resources. These initiatives have received substantial support from government agencies, development partners, and civil society organizations to enhance the tenure security of pastoralists, especially in the face of competing land use practices in the cattle corridor.

In 2006, government conducted a disarmament exercise to curb widespread insecurity caused by cattle rustling in the Karamoja sub-region thereby restoring relative peace in the region. This move enhanced access to the region but also made it vulnerable to land grabbing, largely because of the mineral deposits present in the land. The increased activities in the extractives sector led to the registration of common lands for individual gain from mining, which, in turn, negatively impacted the pastoralism that relies on those same lands.

In 2010, the Uganda Land Alliance supported an initiative to register common lands by establishing Communal Land Associations (CLAs) in the Karamoja sub-region. These associations were formed according to clan structures to uphold traditional livestock management practices. CLAs promote pastoralism in the face of changing land use practices and ensure that communities benefit from resource exploitation. Over time, communal land associations have evolved into Community Development Trusts, with the Rupa Community Development Trust (RUCODET) serving as an example of this effort in Moroto District. The Ministry responsible for Lands adopted and replicated this model, working with development partners to register Communal Land Associations for pastoralists in Karamoja sub-region.

²⁹ Article 237(1) of the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 (as amended)

³⁰ Section 4 of the Land Act, Cap 227

³¹ Section 15 of the Land Act, Cap 227



Currently, with support from Land Equity Movement in Uganda (LEMU), Communal Land Associations for over 32 pastoral communities have been formed in Napak and Amudat districts in Karamoja sub-region since 2016. LEMU is also supporting the documentation of customary land rights for pastoral communities in the Karamoja sub-region by demarcating over 40,000 km of customary grazing lands and registering names of legitimate landowners based on clans and grazing lands.

Other initiatives by government and development partners include support to the acquisition of Certificates of Customary Ownerships (CCOs) to strengthen tenure security at family and community level for pastoralists and awareness creation through community education about land and resource rights for pastoral communities in Uganda.

Challenges and lessons learned

- Insecurity in pastoral communities of Karamoja often poses a threat to implement initiatives to support pastoralists land rights.
- Power clashes among traditional and judicial systems of governance often deter expediency in addressing land conflicts.
- The inefficiency of government institutions in implementing their mandates often suppresses the work of CSOs in advancing land tenure rights of pastoral communities. These inefficiencies manifest in the form of delayed justice and long processing times for CCO and CLA certificates, among others.
- Limited financial support to land governance initiatives by the government manifested among others in poor staffing of land offices across the country, deters efforts towards formation of CLAs and support to registration for award of CCOs to pastoralist communities to secure their land.
- Rise in the land markets for pastoral lands endowed with mineral resources has increased incidences of dispossession of pastoralists of their land. Due to poverty, local communities now have to weigh the opportunity cost of keeping the land or selling it to afford immediate basic needs.
- The mobility of pastoralists has undermined the efforts of the CLA formation. The inter-community exchange of communal grazing lands within pastoral communities makes it difficult to document the legitimate users of the grazing lands.
- The process of CLA formation and registration is tedious and lengthy which limits uptake of initiatives for CLA formation in pastoral communities.
- Conversion of hitherto grazing rangelands into crop farming, mining zones, and infrastructure projects, conservation and fragmenting traditional grazing areas tend to accelerate degradation. A case in point is the 53.8% of Karamoja land under conservation.
- Women and children disproportionately bear the brunt of these challenges for they face increased workloads and reduced educational opportunities.



Scope of the Assessment

The PLACE Project is implemented in 4 clusters: Bahr el-Arab/Kiir, Karamoja, Mandera and Mara-Serengeti Clusters. It covers seven countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Objectives - Through the services of ILC, the program will build a better understanding of existing policy, legal, and institutional frameworks related to tenure security. It will also seek to understand local contexts and dynamics, encompassing social, economic, political, legal and cultural aspects in the specified clusters, including traditional governance and gender dimensions. The research will also aim to recommend practical actions/interventions in the targeted cluster areas that support sustainable and climate-resilient pastoral systems by improving rangeland management, enhancing access and tenure security, and integrating gender-sensitive approaches.

Purpose- The assessment will identify existing barriers and enablers aligned to climate resilience, recommend the most appropriate tenure regime, and provide considerations on customary tenure and climate resilience beyond the country context. It shall further examine the existing positive dynamics championed by the state and other stakeholders towards a holistic multi-stakeholder approach to pastoralism and climate resilience. Furthermore, it will integrate land tenure management with other pastoral development interventions, with a specific focus on promoting gender mainstreaming in the assessment. This involves considering customary dynamics and making recommendations for policy review.

Research Questions

Acknowledging pastoral contexts

- 1) What are the social, economic, political, legal, and cultural characteristics of pastoralism in each country, and how do they, along with perceptions of pastoralism, shape pastoral livelihoods, land tenure security, and land use for pastoralist communities in the specified clusters?
- 2) How pastoralist activities are currently monitored and embedded within land use planning practices at different levels of decentralisation/deconcentration?
- 3) Who are the actors and institutions engaging in land tenure management programs with pastoral development interventions, and what are the current interventions for securing tenure rights for pastoral communities, including their achievements, challenges, and lessons learned?

Pastoral and land political frameworks (Legal and Policy frameworks)

- 1) What policy, legal and institutional frameworks - govern land tenure and land use planning, and how do they impact tenure security, particularly for pastoralism?
- 2) How do local contexts and existing land tenure frameworks act as barriers or enablers to building climate resilience for pastoralists?
- 3) How can land tenure, policy, legal and institutional frameworks be strengthened to support climate change resilience while considering pastoral development needs?

Recommendations

- 1) What policy recommendations can be used to effectively integrate land tenure management with pastoral development interventions?



- 2) How can gender issues be effectively incorporated into land tenure policies and pastoral development programs and strategies?
- 3) What targeted actions and interventions can be implemented in the cluster areas to improve rangeland management, secure communal land tenure, and promote climate resilience while integrating gender-sensitive approaches? Specifically, what roles can the government, non-state actors and communities play?

Methodology

Approach

To comprehensively assess the legal framework and institutional arrangements related to land tenure and climate resilience for pastoralist communities, the study employed a mixed-methods approach to facilitate a holistic analysis of the study objectives. The methodology was grounded in both qualitative and quantitative data collection, drawing on local knowledge, customary systems and existing institutional frameworks.

1) Desk Research

To build a foundational understanding of the current policy, legal, and institutional frameworks on land tenure and climate resilience, particularly for pastoralist communities in the IGAD region. Key Activities included the following;

Review of literature- this involved review of academic literature on customary tenure systems, climate resilience, and gender integration in pastoral communities. Analyzed literature from organizations working on pastoralism in Uganda and ongoing initiatives by national and regional actors like IGAD, FAO, EU, ILC and African Union (AU).

Policy and Legal Mapping- Collected and analyzed national and sub-national policies, laws, and regulations related to land tenure, land use planning, rangeland management, and climate adaptation. Assessed customary tenure systems against statutory land tenure systems and identified existing frameworks that enable or restrict tenure security for pastoralists, including gender-related provisions.

Institutional Mapping- Assessed the roles of formal institutions (e.g., ministries, land commissions) and informal/customary authorities. Analyzed the interface between traditional and statutory systems and their role in conflict resolution and rangeland governance.



2) Stakeholder Mapping and Interviews

To identify and engage relevant stakeholders to capture diverse perspectives on land tenure, climate resilience, and gender dynamics. The research team identified stakeholders from government, academia, civil society and pastoral communities to share their experiences and perspectives on the fields under study.

The research team conducted key informant interviews (KIIs) for duty bearers in the areas of land tenure rights, customary practices, institutional challenges, gender inclusion, and climate adaptation. The team also held focus group discussions for women, youth, and traditional leaders to explore specific issues on land and pastoralism that are of concern to them.

3) In-country Workshops

To validate findings from desk research and stakeholder engagement and to co-produce recommendations and solutions with identified stakeholders. The research team facilitated a meeting with the identified stakeholders to present the preliminary findings from the study for validation to reflect the local realities. The team generated recommendations and developed a roadmap for policy engagements and programmatic interventions to be implemented by the National Land Coalition Uganda.

Data Sources

Primary Data:

- Key Informant Interviews (KII) with government officials, traditional leaders, civil society and land tenure experts.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with women and youth leaders in pastoral communities.

Secondary Data:

- National policies and legal documents including land laws and pastoral policies.
- Project and program reports by development partners and government agencies.
- Academic literature on land tenure systems, pastoralism and climate adaptation.

Legal and Policy Framework

Legal Framework for Rangelands management

Rangelands management is supported by regulatory frameworks developed and implemented by government and other development actors to facilitate the exploitation of rangeland resources.³² The 1995 Constitution of Uganda forms the foundation upon which laws and

³² National Development Plan (NDP III), 2020/21 to 2024/25



policies relating to Rangelands management are developed. This is supported by Regional and International Instruments that the Country is a signatory to.

There is no principal legislation for the management of the Rangelands in Uganda. This is premised on the existence of different laws and policies for the management of rangeland resources which, if legislated independently, would most probably cause legal and administrative contradictions and with cost implications for its implementation.

The Draft Uganda Rangeland Management and Pastoralism Policy 2015/17/18: recognizes the importance of rangelands, which provide grazing pastures, wetlands, forests, arable land, and water bodies. These resources contribute to the livelihood of pastoralists and agro pastoralists, as well as other users.³³ This policy envisions providing for sustainable rangeland resource utilization and environmental protection to sustain soil fertility, increase crop and livestock productivity, and protect the ecosystem. The Rangelands Management Policy for Uganda was developed in 2015 and revised in 2017 to include pastoralism. The current version of the 2018 version is under Cabinet review.³⁴

The laws and policies that relate to rangelands management are explained below.

The 1995 Constitution of Uganda

In Uganda, land vests in the people and with customary tenure as one of the recognized systems of land holding.³⁵ It vests powers in Government both Central and Local to hold vintage land in trust for the people of Uganda and to protect natural lakes, rivers, wetlands, forest reserves, game reserves, national parks and any land to be reserved for ecological and touristic purposes for the common good of all citizens.

The Constitution, under the *National Objective XIII* and *Directive Principles of State Policy*, emphasizes the state's role in the protection of important natural resources including land, water, wetlands, minerals, oil, fauna and flora on behalf of the people of Uganda. The *National Objective XXVII* observes that the utilization of the natural resources of Uganda shall be managed in such a way as to meet the development and environmental needs of the present and future generations of Ugandans. It obligates the State to take all possible measures to prevent or minimize damage and destruction to land, air and water resources resulting from pollution and other causes.

Other legislation that promotes sustainable use of rangelands and the environment include:

³³ Uganda's rangeland policy (2018): intentions, consequences and opportunities

³⁴ Uganda's rangeland policy (2018): intentions, consequences and opportunities

³⁵ Chapter 15, Article 237 of the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 (as amended)

- ***The Land Act, 1998*** - provides for establishment of rangeland management institutions including Communal Land Associations, to enable customary owners to acquire certificates of ownership and manage their land sustainably.
- ***The National Environment Act of 1995*** – provides for sustainable use and management of environment and natural resources in Uganda.
- ***The Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003*** - prohibits cutting, taking, working or removing forest produce in or from a forest reserve, village forest or open land without a license. It further prohibits clearing, using or occupying any land in a forest reserve save for as permitted under the Act.
- ***The Water Statute, 1995*** - provides for sustainable use, protection and management of water resources in the country.
- ***The Soil Conservation Act, 1964*** - requires every owner or occupier of land to use it in a manner that does not cause soil erosion.
- ***The Cattle Grazing Act, Cap 222, 1964*** - makes provisions for the control and regulation of grazing of cattle, to prevent overstocking and overgrazing.
- ***The Prohibition of Burning of Grass Decree, Decree No. 5 of 1974*** - prohibits the unauthorized burning of grass.
- **Draft Rangelands Management Policy**- This proposed policy has been in draft form for decades now and advocacy for its expedited passing have not yielded fruit. This means advocacy on pastoralism remains hanging in space as there is no elaborate document to guide it.
- **National Climate Change Policy** - Enacted in April 2015, this Policy recognizes the impact of climate change on the “variability of rainfall” and heightening of temperatures. It predicts “increases in aridity” which will lead to droughts and in effect “influence agricultural production.”³⁶ The Policy promotes “highly adaptive and productive livestock breeds.” It also advocates for “sustainable management of rangelands and pastures through integrated rangeland management to avoid land degradation and deforestation.”

³⁶ Ministry of Water and Environment, ‘Uganda National Climate Change Policy’ 67.



National Policy Framework

- ***The Uganda National Land Policy, 2013*** - defends the right of citizens to own land, which should be optimally utilized and guarantees state protection of communal land ownership by among others ensuring that pastoral lands are held, owned and controlled by designated pastoral communities as common property under customary tenure system. The policy is currently under review and pastoralist communities were involved in the review process, there is hope for bringing issues of pastoralism to the forefront in the revised National Land Policy.
- ***The National Land Use Policy, 2006*** – sets out measures for rational and sustainable use of land for both socio-economic development and environmental protection and specifically addresses issues of agriculture, urbanization and human settlement, industrialization and infrastructure development, environmental management and conservation.
- ***National Agriculture Policy*** – articulates areas of investments for increasing agricultural production and productivity; value addition and marketing, which among others include the rangelands
- ***National Environment Management Policy, 1994*** - sets out the overall goals and objectives for environment management in Uganda and articulates strategies to integrate environmental concerns in all development activities.
- ***National Water Policy, 1999*** – provides for effective management of Uganda's water resources in ways that are sustainable and most beneficial to the people.
- ***National Policy for the Conservation and Management of Wetland Resources, 1995*** – provides for sustainable use of wetland resources while making sure that vital functions are preserved.
- ***The Uganda Wildlife Policy 1999*** – stipulates measures for long term conservation of the country's wildlife and biodiversity in a manner that is cost effective and maximizes benefits to all people of Uganda.
- ***The Uganda Forestry Policy 2001*** - provides for the sustainable management of Uganda's forests, woodlands and trees and recognizes wider rangeland types; ownership, access and management of forest resources.



National Policy Planning Frameworks

- ***Uganda's Vision 2040*** - aims to trans-form Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 20 years". The Vision recognizes that land and the environment are critical factors in the promotion of agricultural production and productivity. The Vision therefore aspires to create a green economy and clean environment where the ecosystem is sustainably managed and community livelihoods greatly improved.
- ***National Development Plan (NDP III), 2020/21 to 2024/25*** - stipulates national medium term strategic development priorities and implementation strategies. The Plan is cognizant of the importance of sustainable land and environment management as critical for increasing rangeland productivity.
- ***The National Agriculture Strategic Investment Plan*** - articulates areas of investment and implementation strategies that will spur growth and transformation of the agricultural sector. Key implementation strategies among others include development of rangelands.
- ***The Environment Impact Assessment Regulation, 1998*** - requires that a developer, whose activities are provided for in the Third schedule of the National Environment Statute, should carry out an environment impact assessment to determine the effect of his/her activities on the environment. In case it is found out that such activities are bad for the environment, the law requires the developer to adopt mitigating measures to avert the ill effects.
- ***Rural Development Strategy, 2005*** – provides for improvement of household incomes with emphasis on sustainable use of natural resources including rangelands.

Regional Instruments

- **East African Community (EAC)- EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resource Management**-seeks to promote sustainable development and utilization of the Partner States' environment and natural resources through prevention of activities that are detrimental thereto and to harmonize policies, laws and strategies for environment and natural resources management.
- **African Union (AU)- African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa (2010)**- seeks to secure and protect the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoral peoples and ensure continent wide commitment to political, social and economic development

of pastoral communities and pastoral areas and; reinforce the contribution of pastoral livestock to national, regional and continent-wide economies.

- **African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)-** guarantees collective rights to property and culture, which underpin pastoralist land and resource claims. The charter provides for mobility for it provides for the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of the state provided he abides by the law.³⁷
- **IGAD Protocol on Transhumance (2020)-** seeks to exploit the full social and economic potential of the pastoral system by allowing free, safe and orderly cross-border mobility of transhumant livestock and herders in search of pasture and water as an adaptation mechanism to climate change and weather variability within the IGAD region; committing Member States to invest adequate resources to pastoral regions and competent institutions managing transhumance and; harmonization of national laws and policies related to livestock and pastoral development, land use and governance, disease control and cross-border measures.³⁸
- **Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region (2020)-** provides for the progressive realization of free movement of persons, rights of establishment and residence in IGAD Member States.³⁹ The Protocol accords citizens of Member States the right of free movement of persons and guarantee right of entry, stay move freely and exit the territory of other Member States.⁴⁰
- **IGAD Regional Migration Policy Framework-** aims to manage migration in a systematic and harmonized manner while recognizing the diverse challenges and opportunities it presents in the IGAD region. It provides for a regional approach to address migration, proposes areas for harmonization at the regional level and acknowledges the contributions of migrants through efforts to integrate and reintegrate them into host communities.
- **The East African Common Market Protocol July 2010** guarantees freedom of movement of goods, persons, capital, services and labour as well as rights of establishment and residence for citizens of the East African Community now comprising of eight states: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

³⁷ Article 12(1) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)

³⁸ Article 2 of the IGAD Protocol on Transhumance (2020)

³⁹ Article 2 of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region (2020)

⁴⁰ Article 3 of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region (2020)

International Frameworks

- **Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGTs)**- a framework that seeks to improve governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests. It addresses food security and progressive realization of the right to adequate food, poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection and sustainable social and economic development with emphasis on the vulnerable and marginalized people.

Efficacy of the existing laws and policies on Pastoralism

Historically, pastoralists in Uganda practiced transhumance, moving their livestock seasonally in search of water and pasture. Pastoral mobility is further facilitated by the customary nature of land holding in the rangelands that provides for access and utilization of common property resources. Currently, pastoralists' mobility in Uganda faces various challenges, primarily due to changes in land use, population growth, climate change, and policy interventions that impact pastoralists' ability to maintain traditional migration patterns.⁴¹

In communities where traditional pastoral mobility subsists, conflicts over land, resources and ethnic tensions have contributed to displacement and insecurity among pastoral communities. This is evidenced by the movement of Balaalo in Northern Uganda and the attendant tension it has caused in the host communities. The conflicts prompted the intervention of the President to de-escalate the tensions. Through protracted negotiations without much success, the President issued an Executive Order to provide guidance on resolution of the conflict.

In the ***Executive Order No. 3 of 2023*** issued on May 19th 2023,⁴² the President noted that the Balaalo are cattle keepers from Ankole- Mpororo and Bunyoro in Uganda and from across borders particularly from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania. They move from their traditional communities and illegally acquire land in the different parts of Uganda particularly in Teso, Lango and Acholi sub-regions. As such, the President made two pronouncements including banning the illegal presence of the Balaalo in Northern Uganda by the end of June, 2023 and to criminalize nomadism. The instructions on criminalizing nomadism stated thus;

"The Attorney General should bring a draft of the law criminalizing nomadism. A wrongdoer could serve seven years in prison for bringing cattle to Northern Uganda illegally. The

⁴¹ Draft Rangelands Policy, 2020

⁴² Article 99(2) of the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 (as amended)



Attorney General to also provide for the confiscation of the cattle for the Balaalo involved in entering the indicated areas, illegally.”

The President issued further directives upon meeting leaders from Acholi sub-region on November 3rd, 2023 calling for sedentary pastoralism that requires pastoralists to register and fence off pastoral land to restrict animal movements.

It's worth noting that the pronouncements in the Executive Order contravene provisions of the National Land Policy, 2013 that requires the government to provide alternatives for displaced pastoral communities through initiatives like land swapping and resettlement.⁴³ In the absence of a legislation directly addressing pastoral mobility in Uganda, the government is also bound to adhere to its obligations under the regional protocols that it's a signatory to, in particular, the **IGAD Protocol on Transhumance (2020)**.

With the absence of national legislation to manage pastoralism in the rangelands as well as to facilitate the domestication of the protocol, the Presidential directives will continue deterring mobility of pastoralists which is a major tenet of pastoralism in Uganda.

Barriers and Enablers to Climate Resilience

Climate resilience is the ability of a system and its component parts to absorb, accommodate or recover from the adverse effects of climate change in a timely and efficient manner through ensuring the preservation, restoration or improvement of the essential basic structures and functions of that system.⁴⁴ Pastoralism survives on three pillars namely the herd, indigenous knowledge and mobility. The relationship between these pillars is vital in upholding climate resilience for it enhances sustainable pastoral practices within the rangelands that enable pastoral communities to anticipate and respond to adverse climate impacts that damage the grazing areas and reduce pasture productivity.

Pastoralists possess knowledge on adaptation to climate variability through strategies like rotational use of pasturelands, division and diversification of livestock which bolsters their resilience to threats to their ecosystem.⁴⁵ Adverse climate impacts like floods and drought mostly affect the rural communities who largely depend on animals for food and earn an income through the sale of animal products. This is heightened by restrictions to pastoral mobility, attributed to insecurity, that increases pressure on pastoral resources available in the community. Pastoral communities have developed systems that enhance their capacity to adapt and recover from the adverse impacts of climate change as elaborated.

⁴³ Strategy 61(vi) of the National Land Policy, 2013

⁴⁴ Section 2 of The National Climate Change Act, Cap 182

⁴⁵ Dr Arrjumend Hasrat (2018); Review of Pastoralists' Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change: Can Technology Help Pastoralists Mitigate The Risks?



Enabling Factors

- Pastoral mobility facilitated by the existence of community-based resource management initiatives like registration of communal grazing lands, establishment of water committees and promotion of local conflict resolution enhance climate resilience. These initiatives are anchored in resource sharing agreements amongst communities that legitimize pastoral mobility and promote effective resource exploitation.
- Application of indigenous knowledge through traditional early warning systems, grazing patterns and water management techniques helps communities adapt to climate variability.
- Diversification of pastoralists' livelihood means through engagement in crop farming and trade in pastoral products within and across borders reduces reliance on livestock.
- Existence of social networks across communities that facilitate sharing livestock within kinship networks to build collective strength during shocks.
- Support to pastoralism by the government and development partners through access to climate information services, financing efforts towards access to pastoral resources and building pastoralist communities' capacity to advocate for their rights.
- Government restrictions on utilization of rangeland resources through legal action that outlaws practices like charcoal burning which contribute to the destruction of the environment.

Barriers to Climate Resilience

- Tenure insecurity for pastoralist communal grazing lands exposes it to grabbing which undermines efforts towards sustainable investments in climate-adaptive practices like water-holding systems and climate-smart agriculture.
- Lack of knowledge and capacities on climate-resilient pastoralism arising from limited knowledge on sustainable practices for climate adaptation in pastoral communities partly attributed to the mismatch between scientific research and traditional knowledge systems.
- Government policies on management and financing for pastoralism prioritize the practice of sedentary pastoralism thus limiting pastoralists involvement in policy making processes and allocating limited resources to transhumant pastoral communities leaving them more vulnerable to adverse climate impacts.
- Restriction of access to protected areas in communities where conservation areas overlap traditional grazing lands intensifies resource scarcity and escalates conflict that hinder sustainable resource utilization.
- Restrictions to cross-border mobility due to insecurity occasioned by cattle rustling hampers access to pastoral resources, disrupts traditional migration routes and discourages investment in improved livestock and infrastructure.

- Frequent and prolonged droughts reduce availability of pasture and water causing mass livestock deaths and forced migration while rendering traditional coping mechanisms like herd diversification increasingly ineffective to foster resilience.
- Land fragmentation through actions like individualization and enclosure of communal grazing lands for practices like crop farming and mining limits pastoralists access to and sustainable utilization of the available pastoral lands.
- Environmental degradation prompted by overgrazing very often due to restricted mobility, deforestation and desertification perpetuates loss of biodiversity and affects land productivity thereby compromising the resilience of rangelands.
- Instability of markets for pastoralist products characterized by weak livestock value chains and price volatility due to seasonal surpluses and drought-induced distress sales limit investment in sustainable resource exploitation for climate resilience.

Solutions to the Barriers

- Adopt mobility strategies — moving herds over longer distances to find pasture and water. Karamojong pastoralists traditionally practice transhumance to survive dry spells.
- Use climate information services for better planning. NGOs, IGAD and government agencies provide seasonal weather forecasts via radio to pastoralists.
- Establish mobile veterinary clinics to offer vaccinations against diseases worsened by drought stress in pastoral communities.
- Restore degraded lands and practice controlled grazing. In areas like Napak District, communities are using pasture reseeding and grazing committees to manage grasslands sustainably.
- Establish and facilitate peace committees in parts of Karamoja to address conflicts arising from cattle raiding driven by drought competition
- Involve pastoral communities in national land governance and climate planning using local knowledge to increase ownership, legitimacy, and sustainability of climate adaptation strategies
- Facilitate access to land registration services to acquire CCO's and CLA certificates to guarantee land for climate adaptation strategies.
- Harmonize and improve the coordination between different legal and institutional frameworks of land governance to heighten cross-sector support for land protection and climate change mitigation.
- Build the institutional capacity of area land committees and district land boards to support local climate resilience efforts.

Recommendations for improving legal recognition of pastoralist land tenure.

- Strengthen the legal and policy framework to explicitly recognize pastoralism as a legitimate land use and production system through providing for mobility as a facilitator of the practice of pastoralism. Strengthen coordination among government agencies, civil society, and development partners to support coherent policy implementation and resource allocation.



- Facilitate legislation on dispute resolution by addressing conflicts and competing land uses through inclusive dispute resolution mechanisms and recognition of traditional authorities and practices.
- Support the documentation and registration of pastoralist communal lands under appropriate legal provisions, such as Communal Land Associations (CLAs) provided for under the Section- Land Act.
- Promote public awareness and education about the rights of pastoralists and the importance of securing communal land tenure. Build the capacity of pastoralist communities to claim and manage their land rights, including through training, legal aid, and support for local institutions.
- Ensure pastoralist communities are adequately consulted and involved in land use planning and natural resource management processes.

Policy Review and Recommendations

- Harmonize land and pastoral policies by aligning the pastoralist demands and proposed strategies in the Draft Rangelands Management Policy to the National Land Policy that's under review. This will facilitate the incorporation of customary land rights into formal land administration systems to protect pastoralists' communal lands.
- Recognize and strengthen pastoralists' customary land rights through registration of their communal grazing lands to prevent land grabbing and minimize resource use conflict. This would take the form of formation of Communal Land Associations for pastoralists' common grazing lands and award of certificates of customary ownership to these associations to formalize ownership of their land.
- Facilitate participatory land use planning and zoning that is appropriate for the promotion of pastoralism in the rangelands through initiatives like community engagement in ensuring access to water for the animals, defining grazing zones and documenting livestock migratory corridors. At the local government level, rangelands management plans should provide for grazing corridors and seasonal access routes in to support transhumance. Pastoral communities are required to make deliberate efforts to minimize land fragmentation characterized by individualization of communal grazing lands as a means to facilitate pastoral mobility.
- Support traditional and statutory conflict resolution mechanisms by recognizing the role of traditional leadership in dispute resolution in pastoralist communities alongside the established statutory frameworks. Traditional authorities working with local council courts should adopt integrated alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to effectively handle community-based land and resource use conflicts especially in the face of competing land use practices like crop farming and mining in the rangelands.
- Promote gender-inclusive land policies that seek to secure land access and control rights for women in pastoralist communities.



- Facilitate climate-responsive policy integration into existing land management policies through strategies like incorporating climate-smart land management in pastoral development programs to address droughts and land degradation. Pastoral communities should integrate climate adaptation strategies including rotational grazing, water harvesting and rangelands restoration initiatives into land policies to enhance resilience of pastoral systems.
- Improve cross-sectoral policy coordination through joint initiatives that advance pastoralists demands in existing policies on land, environment, agriculture, and livestock management. These initiatives could require the establishment of a pastoral development unit in the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development to implement them.

Recommendations for Institutional Strengthening

- Strengthen land governance institutions by enhancing the capacity of land administration institutions particularly at local government level through training, staffing, and budget support to effectively register interests in pastoralists' communal lands through registration. Training for staff should integrate pastoralism-sensitive approaches in land governance to be able to capture peculiar interests of pastoral communities in the course of registration of pastoralist lands.
- Promote partnerships between formal and informal land management institutions by recognizing the role of traditional leaders in the management of pastoralists land and work with them to strengthen the capacity of traditional leaders to apply the existing legal frameworks in the management of common pastoralist land dispute resolution.
- Improve legal and policy enforcement of pastoralists land rights through established monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with grazing rights and land access agreements. Government can establish inter-ministerial task forces to coordinate pastoral development and land governance interventions.
- Prioritize research and data collection to facilitate pastoral-specific land and resource mapping for evidence-based decision-making. Government should invest in the development of a National Rangelands Information System to track land use practices, grazing patterns and resource use conflicts. A national database with particulars on economic returns, demographics and management of pastoral resources would facilitate effective planning for service provision in pastoral communities.
- Enhance pastoral representation in land governance bodies at local government to advocate for the land rights and development needs of pastoral communities. Effective representation would require empowerment of community representatives through awareness programs on land rights to ably articulate the concerns of pastoralists.
- Devolve decision-making authority and budget to local governments for effective pastoral development planning and land governance.



- Foster Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships Engage NGOs, CSOs, and development partners (e.g., FAO, UNDP) in pastoral land governance initiatives and promoting public-private partnerships for investments in rangeland restoration and water infrastructure.

Gender Mainstreaming in Land Tenure and Pastoral Development

"We don't want to change the context of the communities but to empower communities to uphold rights of the people in the execution of their roles." FAO Official

Gender dynamics around governance of pastoral lands involve understanding how the tenets of access to, control over, and ownership of land are managed between men and women within pastoralist communities. These dynamics are shaped by customary practices, social norms, legal frameworks and shifting socio-economic pressures. In most pastoralist communities in Uganda, land is held under customary tenure system with rights to land typically governed by male elders or clan leaders. Women's access to land is usually through male relations and with land inheritance following patrilineal lines that limit women's ownership rights.

The patriarchal nature of pastoral societies still upholds the traditional belief that the woman should be catered for where she is getting married which restricts access to land in their parent's home. Women can access land but control remains with men who decide what the land is to be used for and the proceeds off it. Women often have user rights to land for grazing or cultivation but these rights can be revoked upon divorce, widowhood or disputes within the clan. This limits discussions on access to land by women to performance of tasks aimed at sustaining the home. As such, the traditional nature of land holding alongside limited knowledge of land rights for women in pastoral communities affects the realization of legal obligations that promote gender equality in ownership and access to land.

In contemporary times, individualization of common lands that support pastoral activities disproportionately affects women for it limits access to land as their primary livelihood means. This is exacerbated by the increasing reduction of land available for pastoral mobility arising out of land fragmentation and desertification prompting competition over available land and reinforcing male-dominated control over key resources.

It's worth noting that gender roles in pastoral communities are shifting overtime evidenced by the involvement of women in roles that hitherto were a preserve of the men like cattle herding and set up of pastoral infrastructure like water wells. It's common practice finding women tending to animals especially in families with many girls. At the household level, women are involved in the sale of pastoral products like milk and ghee which boosts their financial status. Property rights of pastoralist women are further promoted through initiatives that empower them to access finances from community saving schemes to procure land. The traditional practice of denying the girl child access to land in the family due to the fear that she would return home after the marriage breaks has since changed as men provide land to their girl children in fulfillment of their rights.

Ultimately, recognition of gender disparities for men and women on land in pastoral communities rooted in patriarchal norms and reinforced by the varying pressures on land is a



vital step in determining interventions that address challenges to women's access and control over pastoral land.

Integrating gender considerations into climate resilience and pastoral development strategies.

Climate change and environmental degradation pose significant challenges to sustainable development, particularly for pastoral communities who rely heavily on natural resources. However, the impacts of these crises are not gender-neutral as women and men experience climate vulnerability differently due to existing social norms, economic disparities, and unequal access to resources and decision-making. To build truly inclusive and effective climate resilience and pastoral development strategies, we must integrate gender considerations at all levels by ensuring that policies, programs, and interventions address the unique needs, knowledge, and capacities of all genders. By doing so, we can foster equitable participation, enhance adaptive capacities and create sustainable outcomes for pastoral communities in a changing climate. There are different measures that pastoral communities can employ to integrate gender considerations into climate resilience and pastoral development as discussed.

- Ensure women and marginalized groups participate equally in the design, planning, and governance of climate and pastoral programs through support to the establishment or strengthening of women's associations and networks within pastoralist communities.
- Build capacity of men and women to utilize available pastoral resources through training in climate-smart pastoralism practices for resilience building in pastoral communities. In societies with resource constraints, facilitate mobility for pastoral men and women to ease access to water, grazing lands, veterinary services, extension services, and climate information.
- Promote supplementary or alternative income-generating activities that align with women's traditional roles and abilities, such as dairy farming, handicrafts, and small-scale commerce. Offer microloans or grants specifically aimed at women-led projects in climate-smart agriculture or value-added production.
- Advocate for policies that recognize women's rights to land and livestock, as well as inheritance and leadership. Integrate gender indicators and targets into national climate change adaptation and livestock development policies.
- Develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor the impact of resilience-building efforts. Ensure accountability mechanisms are in place for addressing gender inequality or violence exacerbated by climate stressors.
- Recognize that climate stress can increase gender-based violence, and include protective measures in programs.
- Engage men and community leaders in transforming harmful gender norms that restrict women's participation in decision-making or resource control.
- Disaggregate data by gender, age, and socio-economic status to understand how climate impacts affect men and women differently. Identify gender-specific vulnerabilities, such as women's limited access to land, credit, education, or early warning systems.



Policy and institutional recommendations for promoting gender equality in land tenure.

Review Existing Laws on Gender to Strengthen Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Pastoral communities often operate under customary laws that may discriminate against women in land ownership and inheritance. A thorough review of existing national and local laws is necessary to align national legal frameworks with international human rights instruments to ensure gender-responsive land governance. This could involve amending discriminatory provisions that undermine women's land rights, strengthen enforcement mechanisms to protect women's rights to land and resources and establish gender-sensitive land registration and dispute resolution systems.

Awareness and Education on Harmful Cultural Norms

Deep-rooted patriarchal norms often restrict women's access to land and decision-making. As such, communities need to address cultural attitudes and practices that marginalize women from land ownership and decision-making. The measure for any intervention should be; *"is it fair; is it just; is it right."* This can be realized through actions like conducting community dialogues targeting elders, clan leaders, and local government officials through participatory education methods to challenge harmful gender norms. Platforms that empower pastoralist women leaders should be exploited to voice concerns and lead sensitization campaigns within their communities.

Dialogue with Cultural Institutions

Since pastoralist governance is often rooted in traditional systems, meaningful engagement is key. Government should work with traditional institutions to champion gender-equitable land governance through actions like promoting women's participation in traditional councils and land adjudication bodies, institutionalizing gender-sensitive dispute resolution mechanisms within customary institutions and integrating gender equity principles into customary dispute resolution mechanisms.

Gender-Inclusive Planning

Land use and development policies should deliberately include women's perspectives to ensure that land-use and resource management planning processes include women and reflect their needs. Gender sensitive as opposed to gender responsive programming should be promoted through actions like gender-balanced representation in local government land management and resource allocation committee; gender mainstreaming in land use planning for pastoralist lands; designing land adjudication and titling processes that recognize joint or individual land rights for women and designing land tenure programs that recognize women's roles in livestock management.

Promotion of Economic Empowerment

Economic dependence often limits women's bargaining power in land matters requiring measures to enhance women's economic agency to reduce dependency and increase bargaining power over land and resources. This will require actions to promote women land and property rights through support to credit facilities and market to women engaged in business on pastoral products; integrate vocational and entrepreneurial training tailored to promoting businesses that women in the pastoral communities are engaged in; strengthen collective land rights advocacy and link land ownership to economic incentives.



Engaging Research Institutions and Academia

Evidence-based advocacy is crucial for effective policy influence. Generate evidence-based policy recommendations and enhance knowledge of gender and land dynamics through support to longitudinal studies on gender, land tenure security, and livelihoods in pastoral areas; partner with community organizations to document best practices and innovations to inform successful gender-inclusive land reforms; and training researchers and policymakers on gendered land rights issues.

Capacity Building and Affirmative Action in Education

Long-term change requires empowering pastoralist women and girls through bridging educational gaps that hinder women's effective participation in land governance; conducting leadership trainings for women to participate in land governance; implementing scholarship and mentorship programs for girls in pastoral areas as incentive to stay in school while building schools and adult literacy centers within reach of nomadic populations.

Global and National Partnerships on Gender Enablers

Leverage resources, expertise, and influence to mainstream gender in land and development programming. This requires partnering with development partners to fund gender-responsive land initiatives; integrate gender concerns into national development plans, climate resilience strategies, and land reform agendas; strengthening government-civil society partnerships to implement gender-responsive land policies; advocating for pastoral women's land rights in global forums.

Key Areas for Intervention

Effective rangeland management is critical for sustaining livelihoods, enhancing biodiversity, and building climate resilience, particularly in communal areas in the face of challenges to security of tenure on land. Targeted interventions are required to secure tenure, improve grazing practices and integrate gender-sensitive approaches that ensure equitable participation and benefits for all community members. By adopting sustainable rangelands management strategies, stakeholders can enhance productivity, restore degraded ecosystems, and empower vulnerable groups and marginalized communities that are disproportionately affected by insecurity of tenure and climate change. This section outlines key areas for intervention to achieve resilient and equitable rangeland management systems.

a. Rangeland Management

- Conduct a comprehensive Regulatory Impact Assessment on the draft Rangelands Management Policy to align with the current demands for sustainable management of rangelands prior to its submission to cabinet for approval.
- Support the domestication of the IGAD Transhumance Protocol through facilitating means for its operation. This involves acquiring the land where the transhumance corridor exists through land expropriation by government or degazettement where it

lies in a protected area. Government also needs to develop a policy on proliferation of small arms to forestall acts of violence during transhumance.

- Facilitate research studies to generate knowledge and information on Rangelands and pastoralism management for effective advocacy for legal, policy and institutional reforms.

b. Improved Land Tenure Security

- Support pastoralist communities to protect their common grazing lands through formation and registration of Communal Land Associations as provided under the Land Act, Cap 227. These associations should be formed along traditional leadership structures like clans to ensure their legitimacy and continuity. Pastoralist communities should also be engaged in mapping traditional grazing areas, migration routes, and shared resources.
- Advocate for the registration of common grazing lands to further pastoral movement and to reduce incidences of individualization of the land.
- Enforce planning regulations that promote pastoralism particularly ensuring that national and district land use plans accommodate pastoral mobility.
- Establish governance structures that integrate traditional leaders into formal dispute resolution processes for effective management of conflicts within and among pastoral communities. These structures should be able to establish reporting systems to identify and resolve land conflicts before escalation.

c. Climate Resilience Practices

- Integrate measures that promote mobility as a facilitator of pastoralism in the legal frameworks governing pastoralism in Uganda.
- Introduce alternative income sources to reduce pressure on rangelands and enhance resilience during shocks. This would go along with improving veterinary services and prioritizing investment in water for production technologies.
- Integrate traditional knowledge on pastoralism in the development of climate adaptation strategies.
- Mobilize climate finance to support livestock and crop agricultural insurance policies to mitigate climate impacts for pastoral communities.

d. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Conduct detailed stakeholder mapping (pastoralists, local leaders, CSOs, government, NGOs) to ensure that diverse interests are considered in planning and implementation.
- Facilitate dialogue between traditional institutions and formal authorities for effective conflict resolution and support to sustainable rangelands management.
- Promote Participatory Planning and Monitoring and prioritise participation of communities in planning, monitoring, and evaluating rangeland interventions.
- Emphasize local knowledge exchange to facilitate development of strategies and interventions that promote pastoral development



- Improve coordination among government agencies by creating inter-agency rangeland management task forces for policy coherence and implementation.

Conclusion

Pastoralism remains a cornerstone of Uganda's socio-economic and cultural fabric, yet its sustainability is threatened by systemic challenges. The report highlights the urgent need for legal and policy reforms to secure communal land rights, recognize mobility as a key adaptation strategy and address conflicts arising from competing land uses. Interventions, such as the formation of Communal Land Associations and registration of common lands stand central in upholding security of tenure for pastoral communities. However, governance inefficiencies, climate pressures, and gender disparities persist, requiring coordinated efforts among government agencies, traditional institutions, and development partners to address them. Moving forward, Uganda must prioritize the passing of the Rangeland Management Policy, integrate pastoralist voices in land use planning, leverage regional frameworks to support transhumance and adopt inclusive, climate-resilient strategies to safeguard pastoral livelihoods.