



Concept Note (Draft)

Title: Community dialogue on the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026 in Laikipia County, Kenya.

1. Background

The United Nations has declared 2026 as the *International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)*, presenting a unique opportunity to celebrate, advocate, and raise awareness on the vital role pastoralist communities and rangelands play in global food systems, culture, biodiversity, and climate resilience. In Kenya, pastoralist communities occupy over 70% of the land mass, serving as custodians of indigenous knowledge, sustainable land management practices, and cultural diversity. Despite their significance, many pastoralist groups remain unaware of IYRP 2026 and the global recognition it accords to their livelihoods and traditions. This knowledge gap risks leaving them behind in benefiting from the advocacy, visibility, and partnerships that the celebration provides.

Laikipia County, one of Kenya's ASAL regions, is home to diverse pastoralist groups whose livelihoods are deeply tied to rangelands. Yet, like other pastoralists across the country, many in Laikipia are not aware of IYRP 2026 or the potential benefits it offers. Without deliberate sensitization, these communities may miss the opportunity to be visible, to influence policy, and to showcase their cultural and ecological contributions to global sustainability.

2. Justification

Pastoralist communities in Laikipia, like many across Kenya, face challenges including climate change, land tenure insecurity, exclusion from decision-making, and erosion of cultural identity. Sensitizing them on IYRP 2026 will:

- Raise awareness of their recognition and global celebration.
- Empower them to use IYRP as a platform for advocacy and visibility.
- Showcase their cultural traditions, indigenous knowledge, foods, and ways of life.
- Highlight youth- and women-led initiatives in pastoralist development.
- Lay a foundation for scaling awareness to other ASAL counties such as Samburu, Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo, Garissa, Moyale and Kajiado.

3. Objectives

Overall Objective:

To sensitize pastoralist communities in Laikipia County on the significance of IYRP 2026, enabling them to fully engage and benefit from this global celebration, with the intention of scaling similar initiatives to other ASAL counties in Kenya.

Specific Objectives:

1. To create awareness among Laikipia's pastoralist communities on IYRP 2026 and its importance.
2. To document and showcase indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, and pastoralist innovations.
3. To amplify youth- and women-led initiatives and strengthen their advocacy platforms.
4. To build local capacity for active engagement in IYRP-related events.
5. To develop a replicable sensitization model that can be rolled out in other ASAL counties.

4. Expected Outcomes

- Increased awareness of IYRP 2026 among youth and pastoralist communities.
- Strengthened youth leadership and participation in sustainable rangeland management.
- Enhanced visibility of pastoralists' cultural and economic contributions.
- Establishment of a scalable model for IYRP youth sensitization in other counties (e.g., Samburu, Marsabit, Turkana, Kajiado, and Isiolo).

5. Methodology / Proposed Activities

1. **Community Sensitization Forums** – Engage pastoralist leaders, elders, youth, and women in dialogue sessions within Laikipia.
2. **Cultural Exhibitions** – Organize events where pastoralists display foods, attire, traditional dances, songs, and crafts.
3. **Storytelling & Documentation** – Capture stories, practices, and knowledge through video, photography, and written narratives for local and global dissemination.
4. **Youth & Women Empowerment Workshops** – Train participants in advocacy, communication, and leadership.
5. **Policy Roundtables** – Facilitate interactions between pastoralist communities and policymakers to align priorities with IYRP 2026.
6. **Media & Communication Campaigns** – Partner with media and digital platforms to spread IYRP messages.

6. Beneficiaries

- **Direct:** Pastoralist communities of Laikipia County (elders, women, youth, community-based organizations).
- **Indirect:** Other ASAL pastoralist counties, policymakers, civil society, researchers, and development partners.

7. Scaling Strategy

The Laikipia activity will serve as a **pilot project**. Lessons learned, best practices, and community-driven approaches will be documented and packaged into a replicable model for roll-out in other ASAL counties. Partnerships with county governments, civil society, and national agencies will ensure expansion across the ASAL belt.

8. Budget Outline [Click here](#)

9. Partnerships

This initiative will be implemented in collaboration with:

- Local pastoralist associations and community-based organizations in Laikipia.
- Youth and women pastoralist networks.
- County government of Laikipia and other county governments.
- Civil society and NGOs working on rangelands.
- UN agencies and development partners.

10. Role of the African Youth Pastoralists Initiative (AYPI)

The **African Youth Pastoralists Initiative (AYPI)** will spearhead the coordination and implementation of this sensitization campaign. AYPI is a youth-led organization founded in 2022 to represent and amplify the voices of pastoralist youth across Africa. The initiative operates in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Ethiopia, advocating for climate justice, land rights, inclusive policy participation, and sustainable pastoralist livelihoods.

In this campaign, AYPI will lead community mobilization, youth engagement, documentation, and coordination with national and regional partners. As the official youth voice for the **IYRP Youth Working Group – Africa**, AYPI will ensure that youth perspectives and innovations are integrated into IYRP 2026 preparations and that the outcomes from Laikipia contribute to a continental dialogue on the future of pastoralism and rangeland management.

11. Conclusion

The IYRP 2026 offers pastoralists in Laikipia and across Kenya's ASAL regions; a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for recognition and empowerment. Sensitizing these communities is critical to ensuring they are prepared to showcase their culture, advocate for their rights, and contribute to global conversations on sustainable rangelands and pastoralism. Starting in Laikipia and scaling to other ASAL counties will maximize the reach and impact of this initiative.