



Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA)

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February 24th, 2025

H.E. Mr Bolorchuluun Khayangaa

Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia (MoFALI)

13381 Governmental Building 9th, Peace Avenue 16a,

Bayanzurkh District, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Email: info@mofa.gov.mn

Dear Minister Khayangaa,

RE: ILEPA's Ongoing Support and Engagement

ILEPA is a non-for-profit community-based organization for human rights, environment and climate change, and self-determined sustainable local-level development registered with the government of Kenya. The organization serves among the indigenous pastoral community in Kenya, with its current base in Narok and Kajiado County.

ILEPA is pleased to express our strong support for the **International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026**. We acknowledge the vital role that this initiative plays in recognizing, preserving, and enhancing pastoralist livelihoods and rangeland ecosystems globally. This is key because rangelands cover over 83% of Kenya's landmass, while in Africa as a whole, rangelands make up approximately 43% of the land area. These are spaces where pastoralism will flourish.

The recent drought in Kenya has significantly impacted Maasai pastoralists by causing widespread livestock deaths, leading to severe food insecurity, disruption of their traditional nomadic lifestyle, economic hardship due to loss of income from livestock sales, increased reliance on external food sources, and potential social and cultural strain as their cattle, central to their identity and livelihood, dwindle due to lack of grazing land and water. Therefore, ILEPA is willing to engage with other like-minded partners to reduce the pressure of climate change impacts on pastoralists who depend entirely on livestock keeping for their livelihoods.

Importance of IYRP to ILEPA

Pastoralism is an essential livelihood system that significantly contributes to the national and county economies, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation. However, it continues to face marginalization due to policy gaps, shrinking pastoral spaces, and climate change-induced challenges. The IYRP presents an invaluable opportunity to bring these issues to the forefront and advocate for sustainable and inclusive policies that support pastoralists.

ILEPA's Activities Before IYRP 2026

1. **Hosting the Maasai Pastoralists Indigenous Food Festival Annually:** Highlighting indigenous food systems and cultural heritage to promote local value chains and sustainable rangeland management. ILEPA has Convened an inaugural Maasai Pastoralists indigenous Food Festival event to highlight the value of pastoralism as nature-based solution livelihood system. Through interactive demonstrations, observations, interactions with traditional knowledge holders, and cultural activities, the festival engaged the younger generations, ensuring the transmission of Maasai culinary knowledge, heritage, and traditions.
2. **Assessing the Value Chain of Pastoral Livelihoods.** ILEPA Conducted a study to establish trends and support initiatives for enhancing pastoral value chains, focusing on milk, hides, and skins. The study focused on the economic value of pastoralism, associated products, and additional value opportunities for promoting investment in the sector. The study assesses pastoralists' enduring challenges, strategies deployed by communities and other players to enhance resilience and opportunities for sustaining pastoral economic and cultural values through promotion of value chain addition.
3. **Cost-Benefit Analysis of Pastoralism vs. Community-Based Conservation.** On the same note ILEPA did a study to assess to cost benefit between Pastoralism and Community -Based conservation models. There is an increasing scale and influence of Community-Based Conservation on landscapes, livelihoods, biodiversity, and cultural heritage, tension remains between pastoralism and conservation. The opportunity cost of foregoing pastoralism and various trade-offs to allocate land for conservation remains under-researched. Therefore, this study sought to unpack the narratives of CBCs as a win-win land-use system arrangement and not a competing land-use arrangement that marginalizes pastoralists.
4. **Hay Production and management training.** ILEPA trained pastoralists on hay production and management with a demonstration on the farms. **Why do pasture training?** Drought intensity coupled with climate change has affected the livelihood of many pastoral communities in the ASAL areas of Kenya. This has affected the forage supply for livestock, which is the main livelihood option. Pasture production is among the interventions that will contribute to building the resilience of pastoral households.
5. **International and Regional Collaboration:** Engaging with global and regional forums to share best practices, case studies, and strategies for sustainable pastoral development. ILEPA supported its team members and its networks active and sustained engagement with pastoralists and pastoralism relevant spaces, mechanism and processes across scales. ILEPA recently sent representatives to the 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, colloquially known as UNCCD CoP16. The conference had participants representing governments, civil society organizations, and private sector actors converged on Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to debate and define a response to the global threat of rising aridity: The high-level event featured Indigenous representatives from all seven UN socio-cultural regions, current and former heads of

state, UN agencies, and government ministries. They discussed how existing participation and financial support mechanisms within UNCCD and other multilateral processes can better recognize and support Indigenous Peoples' contributions, as well as how to ensure that Indigenous Peoples can get direct access to funding to support their leadership in land restoration.

Proposed Activities

To contribute to the success of IYRP 2026, ILEPA commits to the following activities:

1. **Production of hay and construction of silos to facilitate storage and access to pasture during drought season.** Purchase of land for production of hay and Construct pasture storage demonstration silos. Silos will be constructed within designated community lands where available and/ individual landowners willing to provide land for construction and open for other pastoralists to come and learn. The goal is to provide security of pasture access for improved management of livestock, feed and rangeland resources while promoting social inclusion and environmental resilience.
2. **Dialogues on and development and application of technology apps on market dynamics - Pastoralism, innovations and appropriate technology.** Enhance the uptake and use of appropriate Technologies and integration of indigenous knowledge technologies in weather focusing, livestock disease control, livestock market access and monitoring.
3. **Promotion of the uptake of indigenous Led-Research.** Developing a robust well-researched scholarly coursework/unit validated by pastoralists thought leaders. enhance deeper appreciation of pastoralism as a significant land use system, livelihood production and cultural heritage for which general approaches under the traditional Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries departments may not effectively respond to its unique needs.
4. **Enhance security of pastoral livelihoods through improved livestock breeds - Providing He-Goats (Billy Goats) to Improve Maasai Pastoralists' Goat Breeds.** Goats are more drought-resistant than cattle, making them a crucial asset for pastoralists in arid and semi-arid regions. Traditional indigenous goat breeds kept by many Maasai pastoralists produce low milk yields yet drought resistant. Introducing improved he-goats with higher genetic potential for milk production can enhance the productivity of the local herd. This will contribute to better nutrition, particularly for children and lactating mothers, and increased household milk supply.

Indicative Financing Strategy

ILEPA will mobilize resources through:

- Collaboration with international partners that supports indigenous pastoralist concerns
- Engagement with county and national governments to secure funding and policy support for IYRP 2026 activities.
- Partnership with private sector stakeholders interested in supporting pastoral economies and conservation.
- Seeking grants from multilateral organizations and philanthropic entities committed to sustainable land-use and indigenous livelihoods.

We look forward to actively participating in the IYRP 2026 and working alongside global partners to advocate for policies and initiatives that secure the rights and resilience of pastoralist communities.

We appreciate your leadership in coordinating this important initiative and look forward to continued collaboration.

Long Live ILEPA and Long Live Our Partnership with you!

Sincerely,



Kimaren Ole Riamit

Executive Director

Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA)

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Enclosures: Organizational Logo (if applicable)

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