



Investment in Women-Led Pastoral Economies

1. Pastoralist women as economic drivers

Pastoralist women are central to the economic life of their communities. In Samburu and other Indigenous pastoralist areas, women generate income through:

- Dairy production, processing, and marketing
- Beadwork, handicrafts, and value-added livestock products
- Beekeeping, gum arabic collection, and honey production
- Small livestock trading (goats, sheep, poultry)
- Traditional medicine and Indigenous knowledge-based products

Their work sustains households, strengthens local markets, and preserves cultural heritage. Yet these contributions are often **invisible in policy, planning, and funding programs.**

2. Barriers to investment

Despite their central role, pastoralist women face systemic barriers to economic participation and investment:






- Limited access to credit, loans, and financial services
- Exclusion from markets due to mobility, infrastructure, or gender norms
- Lack of recognition in national economic and development policies
- Minimal technical support for scaling enterprises or accessing technology
- Vulnerability to climate shocks that disrupt income streams

These barriers reduce women's bargaining power, limit household income, and constrain the resilience of pastoralist communities.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
**RANGELANDS AND
PASTORALISTS**
2026

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3. Women-led economic innovation

Pastoralist women are actively **innovating solutions** to environmental, social, and economic challenges:

- Cooperative savings and lending schemes to support livestock and trade
- Diversification into non-livestock income streams during droughts
- Preservation techniques for milk, meat, and other perishable goods
- Community-based value chains for Indigenous products, enhancing cultural visibility and economic impact

These initiatives demonstrate that investing in women-led economies **strengthens resilience, reduces vulnerability, and preserves culture.**

4. Policy and funding demands for IYPR 2026 – Africa

As pastoralist women preparing for IYPR 2026, we demand that governments, donors, and global platform:

- **Directly fund women-led pastoral enterprises**, removing intermediaries
- Provide **technical support and market access** tailored to pastoralist livelihoods
- Integrate **Indigenous knowledge and local value chains** into national and regional economic strategies
- Ensure **infrastructure investments** (roads, storage, transport, digital access) reach women's enterprises
- Establish **climate-resilient financing** that supports women's income diversification
- Promote **cooperative and collective economic initiatives**, amplifying women's bargaining power
- Track and report on investments in women-led pastoral economies to ensure **accountability and transparency**

5. Why investment matters

Investing in women-led pastoral economies:

- Enhances household and community resilience
- Strengthens local and regional markets
- Preserves Indigenous knowledge and culture
- Promotes gender equity and leadership
- Provides pathways for climate adaptation and sustainable livelihoods



6. The way forward

IYPR 2026 is an opportunity to **scale investment in women-led pastoral economies**, recognizing pastoralist women as **drivers of sustainable development, climate resilience, and community prosperity.**

Investing in women is **investing in the future of pastoralist communities and Africa's rangelands.**