



Manei Naanyu

*Head of Programmes– Participatory Ecological Land Use
Management (PELUM) Kenya*

www.pelumkenya.net,

manei@pelumkenya.net

D'a Désertif' Actions

2026



6^{eme} édition

Facilitating Pastoral Mobility

Mobility is central to the resilience of pastoral systems and their ability to cope with major crises such as droughts.

Controlled movement of animals helps to preserve soils, regulate water resources and maintain biodiversity, while reducing conflicts over land use.

Unfortunately this is becoming difficult due to growing insecurity in these areas, increased regulation at inter-state borders, and the advance of agricultural production reducing the space available for grazing.

Co-organised by



Nations Unies
Convention sur la lutte
contre la désertification



OBSERVATOIRE
DU SAHARA
ET DU SAHEL

In partnership with



Understanding Pastoralism

A way of life and a mode of production based on the ownership, exploitation and organised mobility of herds.

The aim is to guarantee the supply of fodder, and this takes different forms in terms of time and space.

During the rainy season, mobility is said to be daily and of low amplitude. It consists of dispersing the animals across the pasture.

During transhumance in the dry season, it is both larger in scale and longer in duration: herders leave their home region to reach host territories that may be several hundred kilometres away.

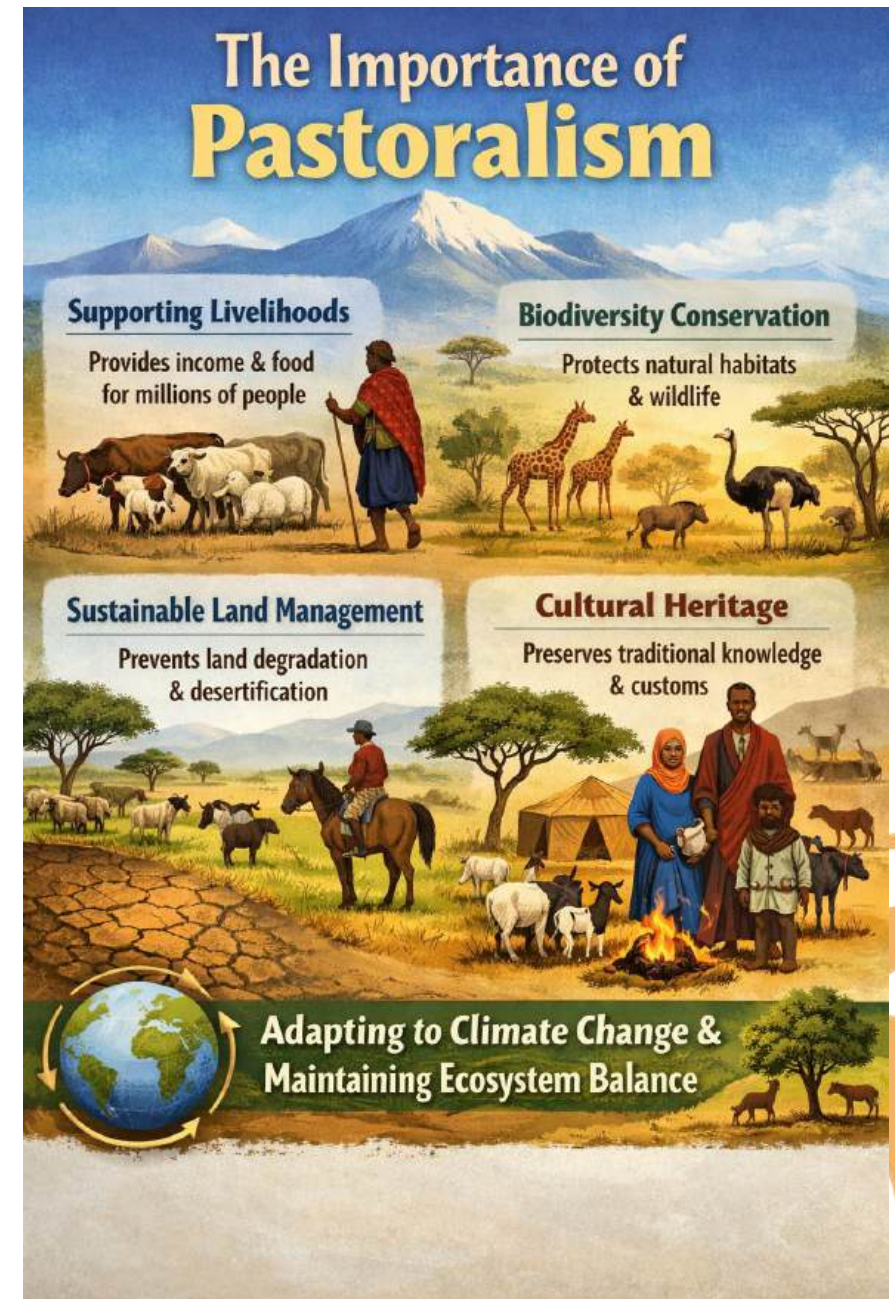
Some nomadic communities practise itinerant mobility: with no fixed abode, they move throughout the year, with a peak during the dry season.



In these areas where water and food are scarce, sharing is essential. Access to pastures, water points, rangelands and forests is negotiated collectively

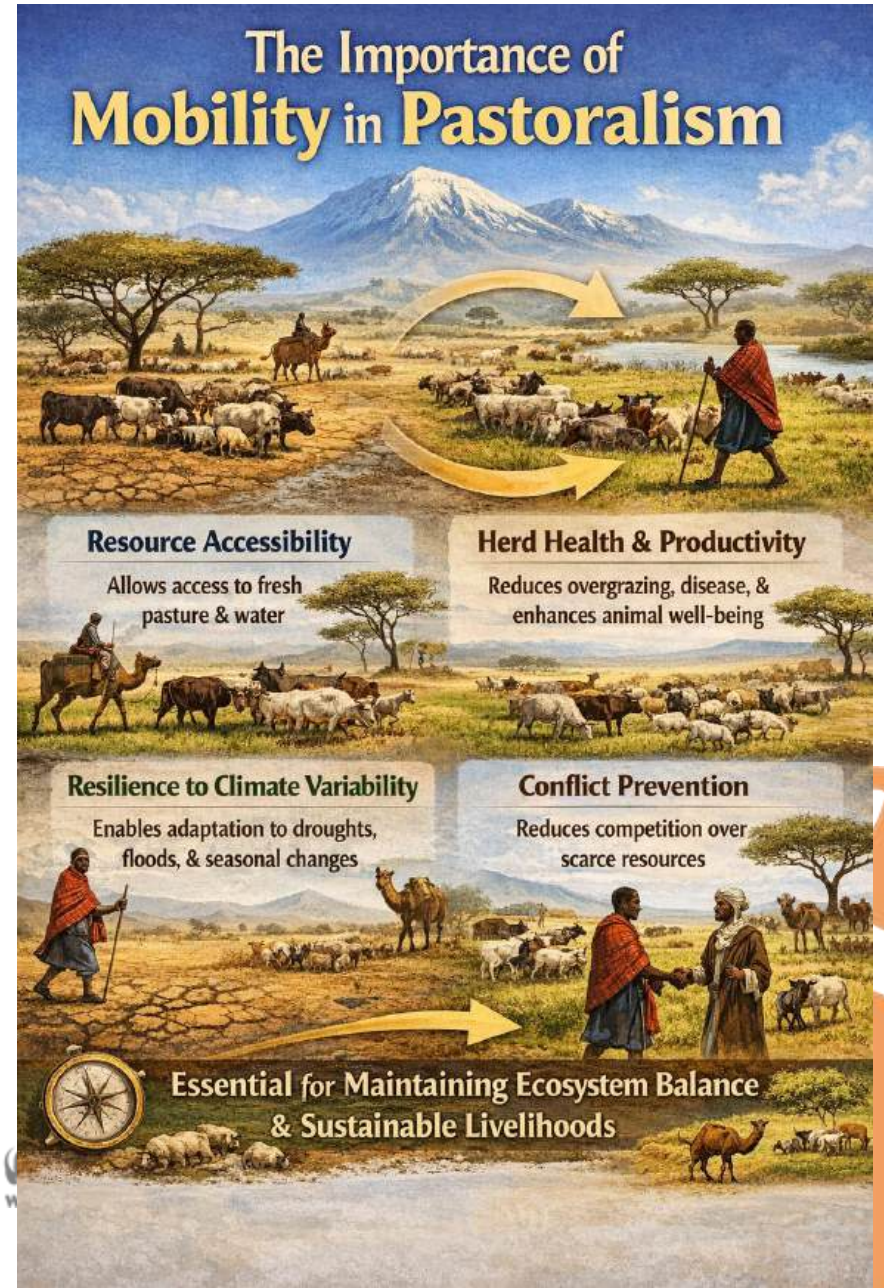
Why Preserve Pastoralism?

1. *A guarantee of economic and food security in areas that are extremely vulnerable to desertification:- Food, income, food and nutrition security, environmental conservation, supports biodiversity, national economy GDP.*
2. *A tool for preserving social ties, which are essential for coping with crises and uncertainties: social networks and community solidarity contributing to their resilience- IK, traditions.*
3. *A tool for protecting and even regenerating natural resources in particularly fragile soil and climate contexts- reduces the risk of vegetation and soil degradation associated with grazing and preserves the biodiversity of pastures.*



Importance of Mobility in Pastoralism

- 1. It gives herding communities the ability to anticipate, absorb and adapt to climatic, economic or social shocks while maintaining their livelihoods.*
- 2. Pastoralism provides ecosystem services such as improving soil fertility, maintaining open landscapes (notably through fire regulation and carbon storage), and restoring fragile areas.*
- 3. Creating new economic and social links between communities.*
- 4. Pastoralists maintain their knowledge and culture. The identity of communities is closely linked to their movements.*



Lessons learnt from Preparatory workshop in Kenya

1. Community-led approaches are sustainable – Indigenous practices (rotational grazing, sand dams are effective and scalable.
2. Policy without financing is ineffective – Policies must be backed with dedicated budgets.
3. Inclusivity is critical – Women, youth, and marginalized groups ensure ownership and sustainability.
4. Research must be localized – Community-driven and culture-sensitive research enhances relevance.
5. Education is vital – Schools and clubs are long-term platforms for resilience building.
6. Innovation can turn challenges into opportunities – Opuntia and other invasive species can be transformed into resources.
7. Partnerships enhances impact – Collaboration across government, CSOs, NGOs, and communities is essential.



Sand dams constructed by the community



Paste made from the invasive species Opuntia

Constraints to pastoralism

1. The lack of land policy frameworks:- many formal legal systems do not recognise or guarantee these customary rights leading to tensions and conflicts.

2. Increased pressure on land: strong population growth and the need to derive greater economic value from the land are reducing the space available for pastoralism.

3. Borders cut across traditional grazing lands or migration routes. increasing restrictions on cross-border movements, have forced herders to change their seasonal routes.

4. Violence by armed groups, banditry and inter-community conflicts are leading to the establishment of border barriers, but also to the closure of livestock markets and an increase in livestock theft



Recommendations



1. *Collect data on pastoralism in order to understand and act accordingly- measuring and demonstrating the positive impacts of pastoralism by communicating research results.*
2. *Adapt public policies, in particular by taking into account and respecting pastoralists' self-governance schemes.*
3. *Establish effective land governance bodies-recognising the importance of the plots and grazing areas used by pastoralists and giving them flexible access to these areas in line with their migration patterns.*
4. *Adapt cross-border movement arrangements- Without this mobility, pastoralists are deprived of part of their resilience.*
5. *Improve knowledge sharing and information dissemination- Observatories, early warning systems, that can facilitate mobility and, therefore, crisis anticipation and adaptation.*
6. *Integrate pastoralists' participation in planning at all relevant levels – local, regional, national and international by appreciating their expert knowledge in co creating solutions*



D'a Désertif' actions

2026  6^{eme} édition

**For drought-resilient territories:
let's act from now on !**

From 25 to 28 March 2026 in Djerba (Tunisia)

Co-organised by



In partnership with



With the financial support of

