

FAO and EU launch new program to support pastoralists in Eastern Africa

August 29, 2024



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union (EU) have signed a €47 million program aimed at enhancing the resilience and food security of pastoralists in Eastern Africa. The four-year initiative, titled “Pastoralism and Livestock Adaptation to Climate Change in Eastern Africa Program (PLACE),” will address the critical challenges facing pastoral systems in the region, including climate change, environmental degradation, and socio-economic pressures.

“The EU has been a longstanding partner in Eastern Africa, especially in enhancing the resilience of pastoral livelihoods. We welcome this timely programme as the region’s rangelands face increased incidence and severity of climate-related shocks and a gradual degradation of the natural resource base, which is further threatening the pastoral way of life,” said Rein Paulsen, FAO’s Director of the office of Emergencies and Resilience.

Livestock plays a vital role in the livelihoods of over 250 million people in Eastern Africa, serving as a source of income, food, and social capital. However, pastoralism is facing significant challenges, including societal shifts, severe droughts, and the loss of livestock.

PLACE aims to foster a sustainable and resilient environment for pastoralists by promoting innovative solutions and addressing environmental, economic, and social dimensions. The program will be implemented across four cross-border cluster areas, spanning Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Key areas of focus for PLACE include strengthening land tenure systems, reducing greenhouse gas

emissions, preserving biodiversity, building strong local economies, fostering sustainable economic growth, reducing resource-based conflicts, and creating jobs. The program will also prioritize improving living conditions, ensuring fairness and inclusivity, and amplifying the voices of pastoralists, with a particular focus on gender and youth inclusion.

By addressing these critical challenges, PLACE seeks to empower pastoralists and contribute to the sustainable development of Eastern Africa.