



IGAD CENTRE FOR PASTORAL AREAS AND LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT (ICPALD)



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FACT SHEET: CROSS-BORDER COMMUNITY RANGELAND GOOD PRACTICES

1.0 Introduction

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) rangelands account for about 60-70% of the total land area. They are characterized by low erratic rainfall of up to 500mm per annum; substantially below the global average of 1,385 cubic meters and lower than the minimum amount (2000 cubic meters) required to meet human needs. These rangelands are predominantly inhabited by pastoralists and agro-pastoralists that developed several traditional principles and strategies to control access to and manage the utilization of pastoral rangelands in order to adapt to harsh and variable physical environment. Their vast Indigenous Knowledge has thus contributed to their socio-ecological resilience.



2.0 Range Management Practices

The community range practices are based on community by-laws enforced by Councils of Elders who arbitrate over issues of water use and natural resource management, migration strategies to reserved areas, land disputes, uncontrolled bush burning and tree cutting, and punish offenders.



The adopted range management practices can be grouped into herd and grazing management.



2.1 Herd Management

This is subdivided into two: Herd heterogeneity and Herd splitting.

2.1.1 Mixing of Species

Herders keep a variety of livestock species. This ensures maximization of range utilization, efficient labour utilization and also lessens the risk of total livestock failure. It also contributes to reduction in susceptibility of the livestock to diseases, and better use of the environment since different species have different feeding habits.



2.1.2 Herd Splitting;

The herders split their herds into two; those that remain near homesteads and the other that feeds on pastures that are far. This promotes optimal use of resources across the landscape and prevents degradation. The animals that remain at homesteads provide food for women, elderly and young children who remain at home and are usually under the care of women and children.



2.2 Grazing Management

This includes planned seasonal migration, controlled stocking, reserved grazing, rangeland assessment and controlled burning.

2.2.1 Planned Seasonal Migration

This is the most preferred grazing management adopted by pastoral communities. It is considered a cultural asset and an effective means of rangeland management. It is a key tool in preventing and managing risks. Preservation of seasonal migration requires legal recognition of existing customary tenure arrangements especially those which provide for seasonal use of a wide variety of ecological resources.

2.2.2 Stock Planning and Controlled Stocking

This practice involves equitable allocation of stock to specified grazing landscapes for a specified time for purposes of allowing sustained supply of pasture.

2.2.3 Rangeland Assessment

This involves collection of information on numerous aspects of the grazing landscape and related social issues like diseases, security by a team of traditional range scouts for purposes of guiding the elders' councils in decision making regarding access and deployment of other practices.

2.2.4 Rotational and Deferred Grazing Reserves

Rotational and deferred grazing are among the drought coping rangeland management practices by pastoral communities. These techniques are frequently used to save forage for critical periods. Accordingly, dry season pastures are deliberately not used during the wet season to enable them regenerate for use during the dry season.

2.2.5 Burning of Grazing Landscapes

This is guided by systematic procedures and robust controls to keep grasslands healthy, more vigorous and productive in order to support both livestock and wildlife.



2.3 Best Practices

The IGAD range users have adopted best practices including: setting by-laws, prohibiting access to certain parts of rangelands and cutting specific trees, setting time for watering animals, transferring of indigenous knowledge to the young generation, involving both boys and girls in herding animals and adoption of planting pastures among others.

Formulation of by-laws is the most adopted practice by the pastoral communities ($\chi^2 = 55.282$; $p = 0.000$). This is because range users have traditions, customs and cultural beliefs that function as bye-laws and these play an important role in rangeland conservation and biodiversity. Resources require some form of coordinated regulation to coordinate individuals' activities; develop rules for resource use; monitor compliance with the rules and sanction violators.



2.4 Means of Transfer of Practices

The pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in IGAD have means of transferring good practices that include; meetings, demonstration/training by extension workers, use of public media like radios and through drama and folk songs. The most preferred means of transfer of practices is meetings presided over by elders.

Effective management of resources requires ongoing communication, sharing of information, information exchange, and building of trust. There is therefore need to support documentation and sharing of best practices among range users as Meinzen-Dick and Knox (1999) opined that indigenous knowledge, knowledge of government regulations as well as technical or scientific knowledge is required for effectiveness of the user groups.

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