



Supporting livelihoods and local livestock breeds

**Guidelines for putting Livestock
Keepers' Rights into practice**

LIFE Network, March 2010

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I. Introduction

1. The guidelines build on the principles and rights included in *Livestock Keepers' Rights*, a concept born out of the recognition that

- Livestock-keeping communities have played a crucial role in the development of most of the world's local breeds and continue to be the custodians of these breeds; and
- Livestock biodiversity, ecosystems and livestock-keeping communities are interdependent.

2. The concept was developed and refined in a series of consultations that took place on three continents, with hundreds of livestock keepers from 20 countries over the last seven years. The outcome was a Declaration on Livestock Keepers' Rights, presenting three principles and five rights (Box 1) that would enable and encourage livestock-keeping communities and pastoral and small-scale livestock keepers to continue keeping their breeds and making a living from them. This would help conserving diversity and improving rural livelihoods. The Declaration also list legal frameworks backing *Livestock Keepers' Rights* (Appendix 1).

3. In September und October 2009, participants of consultations in Kenya and India (Appendix 2) identified the issues behind each principle and right and developed guidelines to address these issues. The results are presented in these guidelines.

Box 1. Livestock Keepers' Rights

Principles

- 1 Livestock Keepers are creators of breeds and custodians of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture.
- 2 Livestock Keepers and the sustainable use of traditional breeds are dependent on the conservation of their respective ecosystems.
- 3 Traditional breeds represent collective property, products of indigenous knowledge and cultural expression of Livestock Keepers.

Livestock Keepers have the right to

- 1 make breeding decisions and breed the breeds they maintain;
- 2 participate in policy formulation and implementation processes on animal genetic resources for food and agriculture;
- 3 appropriate training and capacity building and equal access to relevant services enabling and supporting them to raise livestock and to better process and market their products;
- 4 participate in the identification of research needs and research design with respect to their genetic resources, as is mandated by the principle of Prior Informed Consent;
- 5 effectively access information on issues related to their local breeds and livestock diversity;

4. These guidelines are long overdue. They are urgently needed to counteract the rapid loss of livestock breeds and to support rural livelihoods. Only if ecologically responsible livestock keepers receive sufficient recognition and support will it be possible to conserve breeds, livelihoods and the environment in marginal areas. It is hoped that all those involved in livestock research and development will recognize and follow these guidelines to make Livestock Keepers' Rights a reality.

II. Goal and objectives

5. The guidelines have the following goals and objectives:

- To provide practical guidance on how to plan and implement activities relating to local livestock breeds and animal genetic resource management according to the principles and rights embodied in Livestock Keepers' Rights.
- To ensure that pastoralists and small-scale livestock keepers take an active role in activities concerning their breeds and resources and benefit from them.
- To prevent adverse effects from any such activities on livestock keeping communities and their breeds.
- To further the conservation of local breeds.
- To support ecologically, socially and economically sustainable livestock development in marginal areas.

III. Target groups

6. The guidelines are written for the following stakeholder groups:

- Development professionals: individuals and members from non-government organizations (NGOs) and other development organizations
- Business/scientists from the corporate sector
- Scientists and researchers
- Research institutions
- Governments/national policy makers
- International policy makers and intergovernmental working groups.

IV. Definition of terms

Livestock Keepers

7. In the context of these guidelines, *Livestock Keepers* refers to mixed crop–livestock farmers, pastoralists, and landless livestock keepers from both indigenous and non-indigenous communities. They have either a long-standing cultural association with their livestock over many generations and have developed their breeds in interaction with a specific territory or landscape; or they sustain their animals and the environments, where these animals live, relying largely on natural vegetation or home-grown fodder and crop by-products and without artificial feed additives.

V. Issues behind Livestock Keepers' Rights

Lack of recognition of Livestock Keepers' role in breed development and conservation

8. Local breeds are the result of centuries of purposive selection, socio-cultural influences and traditional knowledge combined with natural selection (see also principle 3). However, the human factor in their development is commonly overlooked and the breeds regarded just a genetic resource.

9. The Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources does recognize the contribution of Livestock Keepers to breed development and conservation. But so far this recognition is little reflected in the planning and implementation of activities and policies relating to livestock development and animal genetic resources conservation. Livestock Keepers are rarely involved in the planning and implementation of activities to conserve and use their local breeds and their genetic materials – whereas in fact they should be the starting point and key players in such activities.

10. In FAO's DAD-IS and other data bases, the communities associated with breeds are not mentioned, giving the impression that the breeds exist in a social vacuum.

Failure to recognize the link between Livestock Keepers, local breeds and ecosystems

11. In marginal areas, livestock, environment and livelihoods are closely interconnected. However, mainstream development efforts rarely account for this interdependence. They also overlook

- the fact that breeds retain their adaptive traits only as long as they remain challenged by the environment. Once the traits are lost, they are difficult to bring back;
 - the importance of breeds for ecosystem maintenance;
 - the value of mobile pastoralism and the use of local breeds for sustainable food production and food security in marginal areas; and
 - the services livestock keepers provide to wider society.
12. As a consequence of the forgoing,
- Governments, development professionals and scientists continue to focus on the promotion of exotic breeds and their crosses, and on *ex-situ* rather than *in-situ* conservation.
 - Pastoralists and smallholder livestock keepers are rarely reimbursed for the ecosystem services they provide and their contribution does not appear in official statistics.
 - Many countries have settlement policies, assigning pastoral lands for agriculture and other uses. The lack of access to grazing land, water and other resources threatens local breeds and livelihoods.

Disregard for culture and traditional knowledge and misappropriation of knowledge and genetic resources

13. Animal scientists and other stakeholders in livestock development commonly have little, if any, awareness about the social exchange mechanisms, the cultural factors and the traditional knowledge influencing the development of indigenous breeds.
14. The loss of culture, customary laws and traditional lifestyles, knowledge and structures can lead to loss of livelihoods and local breeds. Such factors can also further conflict.
15. The collective ownership systems of communities clash with the international system privatizing knowledge.
16. Genetic materials and indigenous knowledge have been patented through outsiders. Challenging such patents is expensive and requires insider knowledge that communities don't have.
17. Information from communities on their knowledge and genetic resources has helped outsiders make inventions that could be patented but benefits from such patents have rarely flown back to the communities.
18. Patenting and privatization of genetic materials may reduce the natural resources in a community's surrounding and interfere with a community's ability to market their livestock.
19. Changing socio-economic dynamics are threatening collective ownership.

Breeding taken out of Livestock Keepers' hands

20. The international breed classification system tends to underreport local breeds because its criteria differ from local systems: the international system commonly groups animals with similar external characteristics together while local systems may rely more on other criteria, meaning that animals with different exterior may be grouped together.
21. In many countries, national breed surveys have yet to be conducted or distinct breeds have remained unreported.
22. National breeding policies are production-oriented and promote high-yielding breeds at the expense of local breeds.
23. Promoters of high-yielding breeds rarely inform communities about the drawbacks of the breeds to be introduced (e.g., need for high inputs such as concentrate, veterinary care, shelters, etc).
24. Lack of recognition disadvantages local breeds and can curb their exchange and further development.
25. Livestock Keepers are rarely included in the planning and implementation of breed development and conservation activities and policies.
26. In many countries, artificial insemination is promoted (even forcefully) as a method, often leaving livestock keepers in the dark about which semen is used.
27. Many government interventions in breeding farms have failed but this is rarely acknowledged. Research is needed on this aspect.

Exclusion of Livestock Keepers from policy formulation and implementation processes on animal genetic resources for food and agriculture

28. Livestock Keepers have rarely been included in planning and implementation of breed conservation and use at all levels ranging from community-based livestock development to national, regional and international processes.
29. Lack of recognition of value of local breeds and mobile pastoralism for sustainable use of marginal areas and food security has led to policies disadvantaging pastoral and small-scale Livestock Keepers and furthering settled lifestyles.
30. Lack of institutional structures to link and integrate policies from different fields (e.g., agriculture / environment) with each other and translate them into a road map or timelines for implementation.

Lack of access to services, grazing land and water, and markets

31. Training of veterinary and livestock extension personnel not adequate /relevant to pastoralists, small-scale Livestock Keepers and vulnerable groups.

32. Veterinary and livestock production extension services reward extension of modern technologies many of which are not sustainable in marginal areas.
33. Veterinary and livestock production services generally geared towards large farmers and industrial producers in high potential areas (e.g., vaccines need cold chain, vaccine packages contains large amount of dosages that will spoil if not used immediately).
34. Education system alienates people from their culture.
35. Access to credit difficult for Livestock Keepers.
36. Information on livestock marketing is not reaching remote communities.
37. There is no support for marketing or for developing specialized value chains for the products of indigenous breeds, although this has shown to create income in developed countries.
38. There is little support for the development value chains appropriate to mobile pastoralism.
39. Infrastructure in remote areas is neglected.

Exclusion of communities from research planning and failure of research to meet the needs of communities

40. Communities are rarely involved in the identification of research needs.
41. Research and development are planned out of context, therefore rarely relevant to the field level.
42. Research policies of government and international research institutions – if they have any – strive for high-tech solutions inappropriate for the field level.
43. Prior Informed Consent set-up geared towards national sovereignty over resources, not communities.
44. People are rarely informed on intent of research.
45. Contracts on use of results are rare.
- 46.. Research results are not shared with communities.
47. In many instances, research results benefit outsiders rather than communities.
48. Research outputs continue to depict pastoralist as the main culprits on environmental degradation.

Lack of access to information on issues related to local breeds and livestock diversity

49. Livestock Keepers often receive one-sided information (e.g., omission of the high maintenance costs of high-yielding livestock, disregarding the value of local breeds).

50. Information about livestock breeding is not accessible at grassroots community levels.
51. Research results are rarely fed back to the field level.
52. Livestock keepers do not have access legal advice.
53. The language used in scientific publications and during international negotiations makes effective participation of livestock keepers difficult.

VI. Guidelines for putting Livestock Keepers' Rights into practice

Principle 1: Livestock keepers are creators of breeds and custodians of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture

54. Breed databases should include references to the communities or individuals associated with the breeds.
55. Establishment of Biocultural or Community Protocols should be promoted to further clarify the relation between communities and breeds.
56. Governments should focus on monitoring, facilitating and providing enabling conditions for community-based conservation and work together with NGOs and communities to remove the constraints that threaten the breed. In any planning and activities concerning specific breeds, the communities associated with the breed must be involved. Livestock Keepers should participate in decisions on the allocation of government funds for conservation.

Principle 2: Livestock Keepers and the sustainable use of traditional breeds are dependent on the conservation of their respective ecosystems

57. Conservation of breeds *in-situ* in their native adapted ecosystems must be prioritized over all other conservation methods.
58. The role of local breeds and associated traditional knowledge in maintaining the eco-system and in conserving biodiversity should be made better known.
59. The eco-friendliness of local breeds must be highlighted.
60. Governments should ensure that official statistics reflect the services of Livestock Keepers and their contributions to the conservation of ecosystems.
61. Livestock keepers should be rewarded or paid and provided with incentives for maintaining ecosystems and conserving breeds.

62. The potential of local livestock production systems for receiving carbon credits should be investigated.
63. Communal ownership and control of grazing land, ponds and water bodies (in the case of buffaloes) must be supported (prevention of private ownership, squatting).
64. Governments should ensure access to grazing land and protect migratory corridors.
65. Methods should be developed to document and quantify the contribution of Livestock Keepers to conserve the ecosystem.
66. Traditional livestock production systems should be recognized and protected as “agricultural heritage” (or better pastoralist/livestock farming heritage). “Local heritage sites” should be protected by State Biodiversity Boards.
67. Governments and other stakeholders in livestock development should recognize that keeping adapted breeds helps people survive in marginal areas.
68. Indigenous breeds should be recognized as a means of adopting to climate change.
69. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREG) in India has to have a component grazing guarantee scheme (India).
70. Governments need to recognize local Biodiversity Management Committees as these play a crucial role in the conservation of environment and biodiversity.

Principle 3: Traditional breeds represent collective property, products of indigenous knowledge and cultural expression of livestock keepers

71. Local and village based institutions for breeding should be revived.
72. If scientists want to engage in bio-prospecting, they need to engage with communities and obtain their prior informed consent (see Right 4). Scientist should familiarize themselves with social and cultural customs on livestock breeding and management by the communities under study.
73. NGOs should initiate projects helping communities revive their indigenous knowledge.
74. CBD should require governments to recognize and respect community protocols. Governments should recognize community protocols.
75. Intergovernmental bodies and researchers need to acknowledge traditional knowledge/information generated from the communities as Prior Art.
76. Knowledge generated in communities must benefit the local communities by disseminating it in local language.

Right 1: Livestock keepers have the right to make decisions and breed the breeds they maintain

77. Livestock keepers shall have the right to continue their existing breeding strategies, including natural service.
78. Livestock keepers need to be provided with realistic information about the value of exotic breeds and their possible pitfalls.
79. Governments shall recognize the culture associated with breed conservation (such as temple bulls, village institutions).
80. Government shall not introduce exotic breeds through artificial insemination in the breeding tracts of particular breeds. (India)
81. Choice of sires should be participatory and livestock keepers must be involved in selecting bulls used for artificial insemination. (Kenya)
82. Efforts to identify and characterize local breeds need to be stepped up, so that these get recognition and become “descript”.
83. It should be recognized and acknowledged that genome research is of benefit to industrial livestock production rather than to small-scale livestock keepers.
84. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues with respect to animal genetic resources need to be put on the international and national agendas.
85. Effect of IPRs on animal genetic resources and livestock keepers need to be carefully studied.

Right 2: Livestock keepers shall have the right to participate in policy formulation and implementation processes on animal genetic resources for food and agriculture

86. Lack of formal organization of pastoralist/farming communities (compared with elite farmers) makes it more difficult to involve them in policy formulation and implementation. Governments and NGOs need to create proactively structures and mechanisms that facilitate the participation of pastoralist/farming communities in policy formulation.
87. NGOs should assist livestock keepers to articulate their needs and make their voices heard.
88. Existing community institutions and traditional leaders should be involved as primary stakeholders in the planning and implementation of policies affecting their grazing land, livestock and other resources.
89. In dialogue with communities, the inputs of women and poorer and landless members need to be taken into account.
90. Policy makers should

- Respect local knowledge and language.
- Consider existing customary laws and institutions and incorporate them in policy development.
- Build on communities' traditional methods of ecosystem management.

91. Governments need to translate policies into a roadmap of implementation processes with timelines and indicators. This step is crucial but often lacking.

92. 91. Policy makers need training to raise their awareness about the advantages of locally adapted breeds.

93. Policy formulation based on inputs from different parts of the country is a time consuming process, so enough time should be planned for this.

Right 3: Livestock keepers shall have the right to appropriate training and capacity building and equal access to relevant services enabling and supporting them to raise livestock and to better process and market their products

94. Livestock keepers in remote areas often have no access to market information. New information technologies should be made use of (mobile phones) to provide this.

95. Locally adapted breeds often have potential for high value specialty products with a regional flair. For such products value chains should be developed and this may require public investment, in addition to training and capacity-building of livestock keepers.

96. Indigenous community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs need training in marketing skills.

97. Governments, intergovernmental bodies and international organizations need to address globalization challenges i.e. trade barriers, tariffs to ensure a fairer trade environment.

98. Governments should establish strong public animal health care systems to prevent and control diseases.

99. Governments and Groups working in education should development and deliver education for pastoralists that does not alienate them from their roots and their traditional profession.

100. Governments should ensure access to veterinary care in marginal areas. They should recognize the importance of migration and mobile livestock keeping and provide mobile veterinary hospitals.

101. Models for insurance against predators and diseases should be introduced. Governments should provide the necessary legal frameworks for this.

102. Universities, NGOs and other organizations and institutions involved in training should build the capacities of critical stakeholders to understand and appreciate local

conditions, the value of local breeds and the role of Livestock Keepers in breed and environmental conservation.

Right 4: Livestock Keepers shall have the right to participate in the identification of research needs and research design with respect to their genetic resources, as is mandated by the principle of Prior Informed Consent

103. Research Institutions should develop a set of minimum standards/guidelines for research involving L/Ks (operational procedures)

104. Livestock keepers should participate in identification of research needs.

105. Budgets for research projects should include funds for communication the research results back to the community.

106. When conducting research and development activities on breeds and local resources in communities, researchers should follow the following steps and procedures:

- (a) Identify community decision making institutions as per their customary laws or community protocols.
- (b) Fully disclose the nature of research/business and all the necessary information regarding process of research and outcome in a form that is understandable to the decision making institution for them to provide you with an educated, free prior informed consent to begin your research/business activities.
- (c) Discuss the range of potential tangible and intangible benefits to the community and the researchers arising from the research/business.
- (d) Disclose the reasonably foreseeable adverse impact of the research/business on the communities.
- (e) Provide details for all the affiliations of the individual/institution/company seeking to undertake activities including appropriate contact details.
- (f) Ensure you have the necessary permission by the community authorities and where relevant other local and national authorities in accordance with the protocols and laws.
- (g) Be respectful of community norms and belief systems and ensure that any knowledge or resources accessed from communities are clearly traceable to their origins for the purposes of due credit to the community, establishing 'prior art' in event of future ownership claims.
- (h) Develop clarity regarding the mutually agreed terms with the community and ensure that any deviation from such terms such as transfer of knowledge or resources to third parties, change in research or business model or priorities etc. are approved by the community.
- (i) Any claims regarding intellectual property of innovations based on community knowledge or resources through patents, copyrights etc. must not conflict with the

- customary norms or protocols of the community and must require the permission of the community.
- (j) Set out an agreement with the community in a language and format that is understandable to all parties- use audio/ visual recording where necessary and ensure that the community has a copy of this agreement. Ensure that the institution you come from respects the agreement!
 - (k) Ensure that any business or research activity will not have a negative impact on the culture, the local environment and resources and the way of life of the community.
 - (l) Ensure that research results are returned to the community in a form understandable and useful to them.

Right 5: Livestock Keepers shall have the right to effectively access information on issues related to their local breeds and livestock diversity

- 107. Governments should ensure that Livestock Keepers can access impartial legal advice.
- 108. Governments and development organizations should develop outreach programmes to inform pastoralists and small-scale livestock keepers understand on policy issues and national and international processes affecting them. This should be done in a language understandable to this audience.
- 109. NGOs should assist in disseminating information about policies.

Appendix 1: Legal instruments and civil society statements backing Livestock Keepers' Rights

Legal instruments

- **Agenda 21:** www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm
- **Convention (No. 169) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries:** www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/62.htm
- **Convention on Biological Diversity:** www.cbd.int/convention/convention.shtml
- **Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions:** http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- **Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities:** www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm
- **Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources and the Interlaken Declaration on Animal Genetic Resources:** www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/documents/Interlaken/ITC-AnGR073_en.pdf
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:** www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:** www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm
- **Rio Declaration:** www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=78&ArticleID=1163
- **United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification:** www.unccd.int/convention/text/convention.php
- **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:** www.iwgia.org/sw248.asp
- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights:** www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

Civil society statements

- **Addis Résumé:** see “The way forward” on page 4 at www.esap-eth.org/Publications/Newsletters/ESAP%20newsletter%20April-%20June.pdf
- **Bellagio Brief:** www.pastoralpeoples.org/bellagio/bellagio_brief.htm
- **Karen Commitment:** www.pastoralpeoples.org/docs/KarenCommitment5.pdf
- **Sadri Declaration:** page 74 at, www.pastoralpeoples.org/docs/Securing_tomorrows_food.pdf
- **Wilderswil Declaration:** www.ukabc.org/wilderswil.pdf

Appendix 2: Participants of the drafting workshops

Some 90 stakeholders from different backgrounds participated in the workshops where these guidelines were drafted. Kabir Bavikatte and Harry Jonas of Natural Justice and Eliamani Laltaika, a Tanzanian lawyer, provided inputs by email. The content of the guidelines does not necessarily reflect the opinion of any single participant or their institutions.

Code of Conduct consultation, Africa

Karen, Kenya, 24-25 September 2009

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Code of Conduct consultation, India

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