Livestock keepers often have strong traditional institutions, but they are not formally organised, making it difficult for them to participate and be heard in policy making processes. Together with our partners that form the LIFE Network, we are changing this. Over the last several years, we have facilitated, in an extended series of grassroots sessions with livestock keeping communities, the concept of Livestock Keepers’ Rights. These are a bundle of rights that are already implicit in existing legal frameworks and - if implemented - would help to create a more level playing field with the industrial systems. We have supported numerous livestock keepers to participate in national and international policy processes and as a result, governments are increasingly supporting this concept. Nevertheless, it will need sustained advocacy to turn Livestock Keepers’ Rights into legally binding norms.

To help livestock keepers argue their case, we are providing research support and policy analysis. Currently we are looking into the nutritional qualities of livestock products from pastoral systems, and we are also analysing how the Livestock Revolution has impacted rural livelihoods.
The livelihoods of livestock keepers depend on access to land and on their genetic resources. As a means of securing these resources, we promote the development of *Biocultural Community Protocols* (BCPs). These are a tool that is backed by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and that assists communities in developing awareness about their resources and rights under various international legal frameworks. By invoking rights for in situ conservation, BCPs can help to preserve traditional grazing lands and breeds, uphold sustainable management practices and protect from biopiracy.

Originating in the western world, industrial animal farming has now spread around much of the globe. This form of production is increasingly criticized due to its negative impacts on the environment, rural livelihoods, public health and animal welfare. Pastoralist and other small-scale production systems are much more sustainable, as well as usually more benign for animals. Yet, these systems cannot economically compete with industrial animal production.

In order to strengthen small-scale livestock keepers and raise awareness about the unique characteristics of their products, we are working towards developing a special label called *Ark of livestock biodiversity* that indicates to consumers that a product originates from an indigenous livestock breed and from a production system that helps to conserve biodiversity. We work with our partners and a range of specialists to create innovative products from local livestock that appeal to niche markets, for instance bio-diverse paper from camel dung, soap from camel milk, and trendy camel wool products.