

Pastoral Women's Socio-Economic Way of Life
United Nations Human Rights Council: Forum on Minority Issues
Theme: Minorities and effective participation in economic life
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Thank you, Chairperson for giving me the floor.

I, Irene Nadunga, representative from Uganda Coalition for Crisis Prevention hereby make a statement for intervention to the forum at hand.

Basing on the Minority Declaration and CEDAW¹, this statement highlights discrimination of pastoral women from the communities of Karamoja. Karamajong communities live off from Pastoralism as their main source of livelihood. However, pastoralism's economic and social values have for long been understood and underscored by the policy makers and still consider it to be primitive and economically incoherent with modern trends of development. With this perception based on a narrow view of what constitutes value in pastoral systems, national policies have undervalued pastoralism, putting it at the periphery of national development plans and actions².

The Government of Uganda in line with its commitments to international obligations has over the years made considerable achievements under good governance by instituting relevant national reforms, frameworks and interventions in developing the country's economy. These have included the development of the National Development Plan (NDP) that replaced the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), and more specifically for the Karamoja region; Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan (KIDDP), Northern Uganda Social Action, NUREP and PRDP for infrastructural development. However, pastoralists' concerns have not yet been adequately addressed, due to the simple fact that pastoralist are not comprehensively consulted in the development of the programmes specifically designed for their region, hence the programmes are failing to meet the expectations and economic development of Karamoja.

The economic disadvantage of the pastoralist is most felt by the marginalised and vulnerable pastoral women of Karamoja who are economically discriminated within their community due to cultural domains of power limiting them from inheriting resources and assets despite national legislation enforcing equitable inheritance of property. This has caused direct impact on their economic rates and sustainable livelihood. Pastoral women have therefore failed to build an independent economic status, generally unable to benefit from the principal output from the pastoralist economy, despite contributing numerously to key tasks in pastoralism.

In addition to that, pastoralist women have little or no access to financial services; female headed households succumb more quickly to this effect and take longer to recover economically. For those who have lost their entire livestock herd, abandoning the pastoralist economy is often the only option and they are forced to settle on the outskirts of urban areas.

I therefore concur with the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council to adopt the drafted recommendations for the 3rd session of the Forum on "Minorities and effective participation in economic life"; specifically:

¹ Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities (1992) and Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women.

² By Naomi Kipuri and Andrew Ridgewell (2008). A Double Bind: The Exclusion of Pastoralist Women in the East and Horn of Africa. Minority Rights Group International.

- Recommendations 14, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against minorities;
- Recommendation 15, adoption of special and concrete measures to prevent and to remedy the effects of direct and indirect discrimination;
- Recommendation 19, achieving the MDGs and effective participation of minorities in economic life;
- Recommendation 21, establishment of a national task force to review and devise strategies for improving employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for minorities;
- Recommendation 22, adoption and implement of national legislation and policy in protection of labour laws and social security and;
- Recommendation 27, review social security access by minorities and effective participation of minority groups, equal access to land and security of land rights and property rights for minorities.

I strongly support the adoption of drafted recommendation 48 that stipulates that a voluntary fund for minorities should be created to enable minority representatives to participate in, assist and use the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations system.

In conclusion these recommendations should emphasize on the economic welfare of women within the larger minority community and their equal participation in the economy. Specifically for the Ugandan Government pastoral women should be given attention to influences plans, and allocated resources for development of their capacities and funding activities developed by the women groups for them to own productive assets.

Thank you.