



Regional Learning &  
Advocacy Programme  
for Vulnerable Dryland  
Communities

## SUMMARY BRIEF: Opportunities to promote integrated planning in the drylands of Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda

By Fiona Flintan, Consultant, February 2013<sup>1</sup>

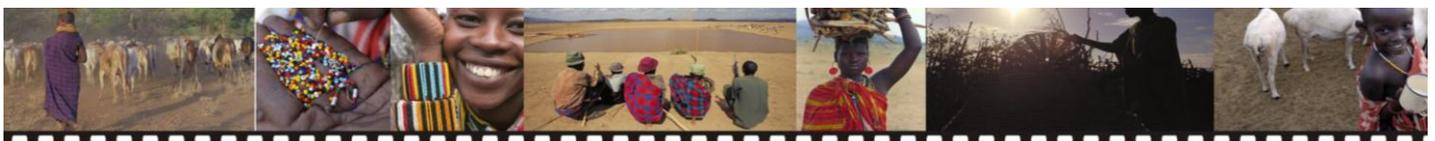
### Introduction

Ill-advised, uncoordinated and badly planned development interventions have contributed to the continuing poverty and food insecurity in drylands. Imposed technology-based interventions (such as those used in water interventions) have had particularly negative impacts. Dryland development interventions have often been sectoral—with development planners locked into manipulating one or two key factors without properly taking into account their interconnectedness, or the needs of dryland communities. Planning for development in the drylands faces unique challenges, including the sheer size of administrative units with sparsely distributed populations, and spatially variable resources. Planners must also confront the challenge of managing high- and low-potential areas that are functionally interdependent, and the seasonal dynamics of drylands systems. Integrated development planning offers an opportunity to address these challenges.

Drylands are increasingly being seen as potential locations for expanding agricultural production to meet growing global food demands. They are being recast as “frontier” regions, rather than peripheries, emphasising their positive potential for development as “lands of opportunity”. The dryland areas of the Horn of Africa have a major comparative advantage over non-dryland areas in livestock, tourism, and renewable energy. They are also often strategically located as the bridgehead to new markets beyond country borders. However, if these opportunities are to be fully realised their planning needs to fully account for, and incorporate, their linkages with the entire drylands ecosystem and the communities that live there. Planning in the drylands must urgently consider land tenure security and its enforcement, and the building of the resilience of drylands ecosystems and communities. The new drylands and ASAL-focused bodies and platforms promise better and more appropriate support. The governance of the landscape as a whole needs to be coherent and robust, ideally a nested system that provides an institutional framework for access and use across different scales.

This brief is an edited extract of the report *‘Plotting Progress: Integrated Planning in the Drylands of Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda*, which responds to the many issues and challenges of integrated development planning. The extensive report draws together and reviews current and recent experience in planning processes in the drylands of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The components of ‘good’ integrated planning, and their strengths and weaknesses are discussed, and extensive case studies inform the discussion. Opportunities and principles for future interventions

<sup>1</sup> This brief has been prepared by Helen de Jode, REGLAP consultant, based on the report: *‘Plotting Progress: Integrated Planning in the Drylands of Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda*, by Fiona Flintan  
[http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/drought/docs/Plotting%20progress\\_Flintan\\_2013\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/fileadmin/user_upload/drought/docs/Plotting%20progress_Flintan_2013_FINAL.pdf). The ideas and opinions expressed in this brief are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of REGLAP, nor its members or donors. The author can be contacted at: [fionafintan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fionafintan@yahoo.co.uk)



and support are highlighted and provide the foundation for a series of recommendations for Governments, NGOs and donors.

## The context for development planning

The 'Plotting Progress' report looks in considerable detail at the current policies, legislation and administrative structures that can support development planning in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. In considering the different political and institutional contexts of the three countries, the report focuses in particular on those elements most relevant for drylands. Details are included on the specific national development policies in each country and the challenges involved in their implementation, as well as the many new institutional frameworks, working groups and task forces now in place to support development planning. The report provides an informative summary of the processes of devolution and decentralisation in place in each country that now provide greater opportunities for the participation of local communities as well as other stakeholders. The cross-border and regional frameworks now being established are also discussed.

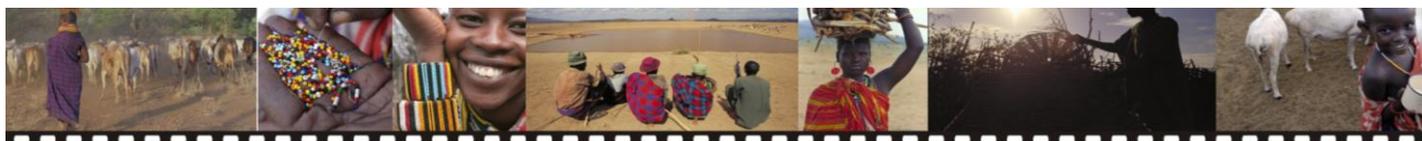
The report then explores the context of land use and land use planning in each country, highlighting the difficulties and opportunities of these approaches, using case study examples. In Ethiopia land tenure in pastoral areas is shown to be weak, with the drive for development leading to large-scale rangeland allocations for crop agriculture. Decentralisation and regional land use planning represent opportunities, but the lack of a national land use plan, and an over focus on water as an 'entry point' can create problems. Resettlement is a key government strategy to improve livelihoods and provide services. Lessons are drawn from the extensive watershed level planning and management taking place as part of local level participatory planning processes: though to date this has been limited to the agricultural-dominated highlands, potential exists for adapting the approach to pastoral areas.

In Kenya important new opportunities are the 2009 National Land Policy and 2010 Constitution, which have introduced the concept of community land and community land boards. Like Ethiopia there is no national land use plan and processes of devolution and county level planning faces many challenges. The opportunities and difficulties that have arisen through Kenya's targeting of water basin development are discussed. A key constraint for Uganda has been that although the Land Act was passed in 1998, the Land Policy to accompany it remained in draft form for a decade. Approved on 7<sup>th</sup> February this year, Uganda's new National Land Policy offers a new opportunity to address ongoing land insecurities. Uganda also has no national land use plan, and the sustainable utilisation of land resources, particularly rangelands, is at risk. Integrated Water Resource Management is being piloted there.

The report highlights that overall in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda the policy and legislative environment that can support integrated planning in drylands has improved greatly in recent years. The shift from a centralised to a decentralised approach, and a devolved policy and legislative environment, has opened up options for multi-sector, multi-stakeholder, integrated planning. However the policies and legislation in place can also offer mixed support for drylands and their communities. Though the principles for integrated planning are supported including participation of communities (land users) and other stakeholders, rights to information and knowledge, rights not to be removed from one's land without compensation, equitable development – in practice many policies and legislation fall far short of fully supporting drylands, the production systems in place there, and the communities that depend upon them.

## The key constraints to integrated dryland planning

The 'Plotting Progress' report looks at an extensive range of dryland planning case studies—analysing the processes and approaches used in each—and in doing so is able to bring together a set of key constraints that need to be addressed in dryland planning. They are highlighted briefly here.



### 1. Weak (often conflicting) policies and development strategies, with poor implementation

Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda have established processes of decentralisation, based on the premise that local authorities are better placed to respond to the needs of local communities, and thus should ensure a more equitable allocation of resources among districts and other lower levels of government. However in all three countries these decentralised processes are incomplete and implementation is poor – with a lack of real commitment to devolve power for decision-making. The new opportunities for participation at the local level are taken up by more powerful individuals, while those that have less power or accessibility to decision-making bodies miss out. Pastoralists in particular are not represented in decentralised authorities. Though a number of good sector policies, legislation and development strategies exist, for example for water, few specifically tackle the needs and challenges of arid and semi-arid areas. In many cases national plans and strategies have not been adapted to the local context but simply copied from other areas. Interventions are often unsuitable for the unpredictable, variable, and often, harsh dryland environments, and focus on one component of drylands at a time, such as water.

### 2. Inappropriate land use planning and insecure land tenure

The land use system that commonly provides the highest economic returns in drylands is pastoralism—a system that integrates ecological, social and economic components and which combines easily with other productive uses. For pastoralism to be economically viable however, natural resource-centred development plans, resource management approaches and policies need to maintain the intrinsic integrity of all elements of the drylands landscape. A crucial factor in the increased vulnerability of communities living in dryland areas is their lack of security of tenure and their lack of control over the land use changes taking place.<sup>2</sup> Pastoral areas are predominantly characterised by communal land tenure systems,<sup>3</sup> and this traditional resource management system of group rights and access of use is rarely supported by national governments—which attempt to individualise these rights or ignore them (hoping that if they do this for long enough they will breakdown and disappear). The resultant land tenure insecurity allows settlers and agriculturalists to move into pastoralist areas. In Ethiopia for example, current land administration and land use laws have only limited applicability to pastoral areas characterised by communal land tenure systems.

### 3. Lack of capacity

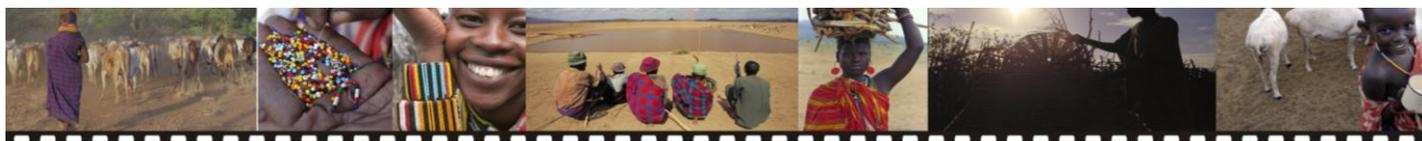
The capacity of local governments in particular to facilitate full and effective development and land use planning is highlighted as a key constraint to appropriate planning, particularly in the drylands. There is a lack of qualified, skilled and experienced human resources for implementing the policies and strategies that are designed to facilitate more coordinated and integrated planning processes. As processes of devolution and decentralisation progress, the need for capacity at the local level increases, but difficult working conditions make it hard to recruit and retain competent and experienced civil servants. In Uganda for example, ongoing constraints on performance include inadequate human capacity of local governments to undertake the devolved functions—especially at the sub-county level. Further, many positions are not filled within the staffing structure at local government level. This is especially true of Karamoja.

### 4. Insufficient and ineffective use of resources

Lack of or insufficient resources is highlighted as a limiting factor in all three country's decentralisation processes, with local revenue mobilisation the core problem. In much of rural Ethiopia budgets for development planning are minimal, with local governments relying on NGOs to provide funds for planning. In Kenya to date, districts have not had the necessary instruments, capability or finance to plan and implement district specific projects, and thus districts only accomplish the specific duties that they are given from the central government and the ministries. National development plans are therefore dominated by (national) sector plans, rather than building on what is coming up from the districts, and there is no strong link between district development plans and national ones.

<sup>2</sup> A World Bank study (2010) found that planned and implemented investments were significantly and negatively correlated with recognition of rural tenure, suggesting that lower recognition of land rights increase a country's attractiveness for land acquisition.

<sup>3</sup> In dryland landscapes, where natural resources are unevenly distributed, herders use mobility as an essential strategy for opportunistic resource utilisation, and arrange common property land tenure systems in order to ensure negotiated access to the different resources.



Although this is likely to change with the new county structure.

### **5. Poor data collection, storage, learning and communication**

A major constraint for planning is a lack of information and poorly developed information sharing systems. Although there have been attempts to design national systems (such as agricultural information systems) in relation to land use, none of the three countries studied in the report have them in place. Most of the information in rural settings is manually generated and analysed, isolated and scattered in various institutions lying in dust-gathering piles (Richard 2007). The many land users or people who could benefit from such information also do not have skills or access to computers, and/or are hampered by irregular electricity supply or poor computer security. Translation of information into local languages can also prove a task too large for information providers.

### **6. Insufficient integration and coordination**

Integration and coordination of the different sectors involved in land use and drylands planning still proves to be a challenge. NGOs in particular tend to have a silo mentality, unless prompted to work together by donors or governments. Collaborative initiatives depend on continuous dialogue between partners and other key stakeholders. Cross border programming is particularly challenging.

### **7. Governance and management issues**

Identifying and strengthening appropriate integrated governance structures at the local level is extremely challenging but good governance and adaptive planning is vital for robust and resilient development, including in the face of climate change. Plans without management capacity are incomplete instruments. Community action plans (CAPs) for NRM that are created without strengthening the institutional capacity to manage natural resources, that insufficiently include the existing institutions, or promote new ones, and/or that lack government involvement, lead to processes that end as soon as funding dries up. Planning at the scale of a complete rangeland is rare, despite its obvious advantages.

### **8. Lack of community participation**

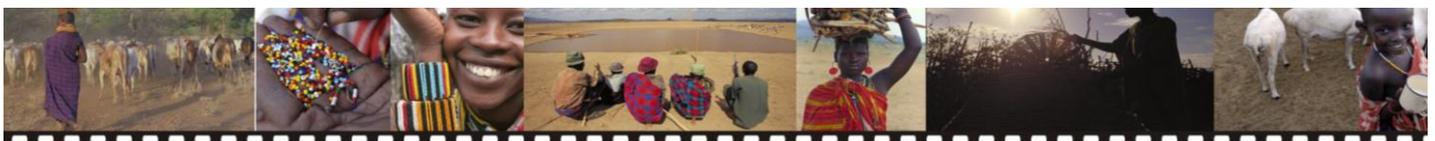
Despite the rhetoric in the current processes of devolution in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, traditional pastoral and formal government planning processes do not complement each other. Government is either unaware or not sufficiently supportive of community-level planning mechanisms, while local people are uninformed of, or ignore, government planning procedures. Consequently, formal planning does not benefit from the participation of local communities that have learnt over time how best to exploit the ecological and economic dynamics of dryland environments (IIED 2010; KHRC and SPAN 2010). Pastoralists in particular feel that their views and needs are not incorporated into development planning.

### **9. Unrealistic and inflexible plans**

Integrated large-scale planning is highly challenging. Programmes such as river basin development have often been over ambitious and inflexible, trying to adopt blueprint approaches resulting in limited success. Planning is time-consuming, especially where there are diverse stakeholders with different interests. Relations between different actors need to be developed and managed, and delays can be caused by drought, elections and changes in council members. Processes can also often become politicised. Rigid and inflexible administrative planning frameworks of government conflict with the flexibility required for appropriate and timely planning in drylands.

## **A case study example - Land Use Master Plan (LUMP) in Kitengela, Kenya**

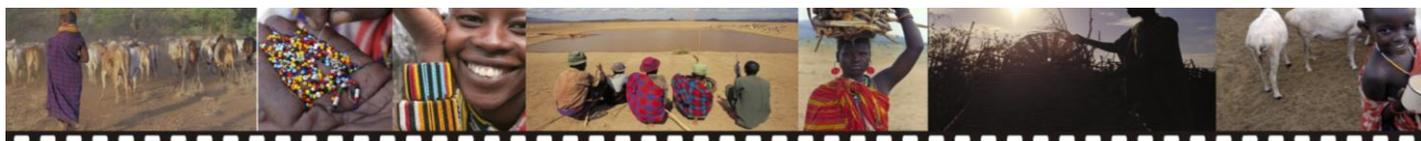
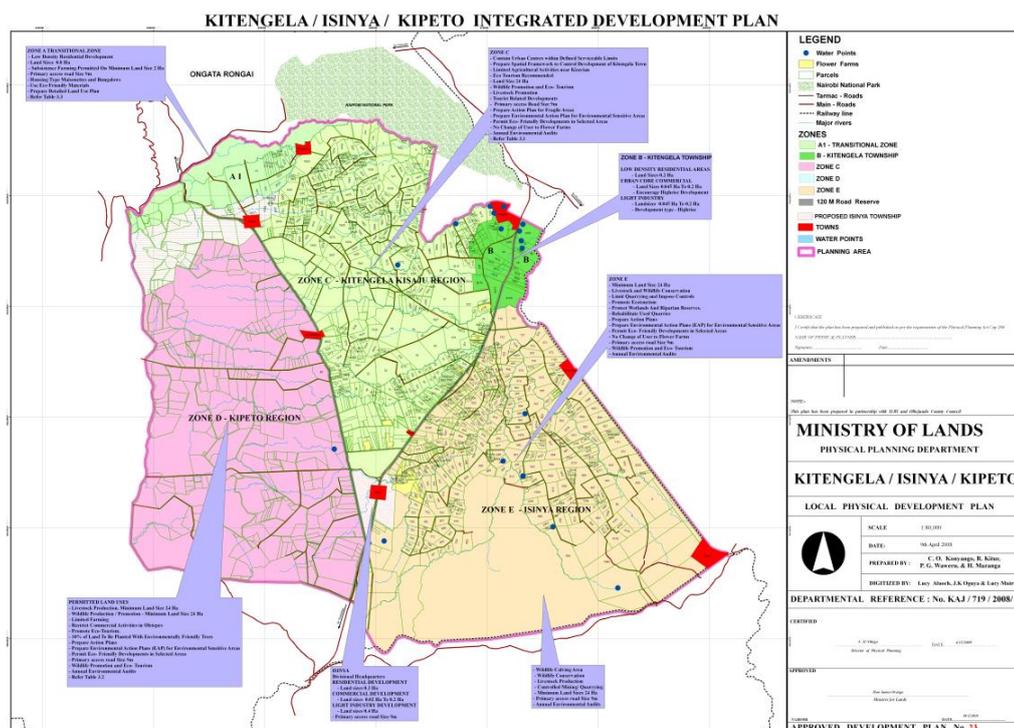
The report provides a number of interesting case studies that find ways to overcome the difficulties of integrated planning. One such example is the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP) in Kitengela, Kenya. Since 1998 the African Wildlife Foundation has used conservation enterprises as one of several strategic interventions for conserving wildlife and for



ensuring that positive conservation and livelihood outcomes result at the landscape level. In general these activities take place on community land, where there is also a high conservation value. In Kitengela, south of Nairobi, a larger land use plan was produced in collaboration with the local District Council and based on activities initiated by other organisations including ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute). It became the first community-led land use plan approved by the GOK. Kitengela's resources are under pressure from urban sprawl, increased sub-division of land holdings, fencing of open rangelands and industrial development of the Export Processing Zone. A comprehensive and holistic land use planning process that would protect and facilitate co-existence between the areas for livestock and wildlife was required.

Kajiado Pastoralists Forum (KPF) (a grassroots CSO) took the lead in initiating discussions with the Olkejuado County Council, playing a critical role improving the understanding of land issues amongst community members and gaining their support. The presence of two consultants, who were Maasai residents of Kitengela with expertise in land issues and community organisation, was also critical to the success of the process. Participation in this process gave pastoralists and other land users increased awareness on land matters and greater strength in and power over decision-making processes. Radio broadcasts in Maa were used to ensure that everyone, including illiterate community members, understood the planned LUMP and participated in discussions.

The LUMP was prepared within the legal framework of the Physical Planning Act Cap. 286, which empowers local authorities to control, guide and prohibit developments, while recognising individual stakeholders and community participation in the spatial plan making process. The LUMP includes a zonation plan for the region that limits sub-division in the various zones and outlines the allowed expansion zones for urban areas, stopping the increasing encroachment of human settlement on prime agricultural and pasture areas. The LUMP designates areas for livestock and wildlife as well as urban development, and provides restrictions on various land uses in each zone. The LUMP balances various land uses and demonstrates that wildlife, pastoralism and development can take place simultaneously through a coordinated plan. It is a key example where a group of diverse stakeholders can work together in order to achieve a common goal.



With increasing interest in the drylands as a source of land and resources for development it is ever more important to ensure that decisions related to these assets are made through good land use planning, embedded in or at the very least, linked to, good development planning. Land use planning tends to be applied at three interactive levels—national, regional and local—where different priorities, planning strategies and kinds of decisions are made. At the core of land use planning is the balancing of competing land uses by all stakeholders. Recent opportunities for improving integrated planning in the drylands provide some ways forward for promoting this balance, and are summarised here.

### 1. A facilitating policy and legislative environment

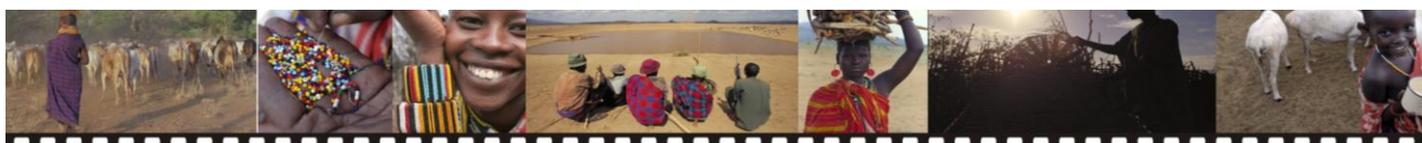
The policy and legislative environment of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda supporting more integrated planning in drylands has improved greatly in recent years. Slowly the positive attributes of drylands and their contribution to regional, national and local development is being better understood and recognised. The establishment of the ASAL Secretariat in Kenya represents the GOK's long-term commitment and focus on the drylands, working across and with different sectors and in support of the diversity of drylands production systems, ecology, culture and society. In Uganda the Ministry of Karamoja Affairs appears to be taking a more nuanced approach to Karamoja, integrating development into peace building interventions rather than the more interventionist approach that viewed Karamoja only as a problem. The review of the Rangelands Management Policy and a Pastoral Code for Uganda are also positive steps and opportunities for improving the policy and legislative environment. In Ethiopia the establishment of a Pastoralist Technical Working Group in the MOA and a State Minister for Livestock will be welcome steps towards raising the profile of pastoral issues and platforms for better considering the future of pastoralism building on its positive contributions.

### 2. Resilience focused humanitarian and development responses

In all three countries activities in the drylands are moving from a largely humanitarian or food security focused response to one based on longer-term development. The new (for many) focus on 'resilience' provides a rationale and opportunity that incorporates systems-based and non-linear approaches to development that are better suited to drylands. The focus on 'resilience-building' has also provided a stronger rationale for planning and working at a scale that better reflects the dryland or rangeland ecosystem, i.e. often requiring working across administrative boundaries. Conservation and natural science-focused organisations have been recognising the need to do this for some time. New approaches to planning and in particular those that work with both government and communities to plan at scale—such as river basin planning, watershed management, ecosystem management and participatory rangeland management—are providing increasing evidence base and proof that planning at scale is beneficial for both the environment and for societies. NGOs can play an important role in piloting different approaches as neither governments nor communities are likely to have the resources or capacity to do so.

### 3. Capacity building and resources

Increasing opportunities for investments in the drylands now exist from the private sector (e.g. commercial investors, water service delivery companies) or through carbon offsetting, as well as from donors (including the Global Alliance supporting IGAD's IDDRSI process). There are also a number of integrated dryland-focused programmes that have been established recently: USAID's PRIME (in Ethiopia) and REGAL programs (in Kenya) as well as ECHO's well-established DRAPP. These have brought significant resources for the pastoral areas where they are working, and opportunities to improve planning processes working with government at different levels. Rewards (financial or non-financial) for environmental services, voluntary and regulatory arrangements, are also a relatively new source of funding, whilst also supporting a change in behaviour towards sustainable and adapted management of these ecosystems. Investments by donors and partners must be tied to the impact pathway and outcome indicators associated with productivity and resilience.



#### 4. Improved data collection and storage, learning and communication

Governments in particular are making concerted efforts to improve knowledge collection and management, as are development and research agencies. In Kenya GIS laboratories have been established in Nairobi and Mombasa to expedite land use planning. The Ministry of Lands has also drafted a National Spatial Data Infrastructure Policy whose primary objective is to provide a framework for standardising and sharing land related information to various stakeholders. A number of knowledge management systems are also being developed. The African Development Bank through the African Water Facility is supporting a project to develop a water information and knowledge management system in Ethiopia. In Uganda, the MAAIF is ambitious to undertake an inventory of rangeland resources and develop a rangeland management resource centre, depending upon the availability of funding. In order to improve cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder information sharing and planning, the three governments have also established a number of platforms, working groups, and committees at different levels of government to share information, encourage joint decision-making and improve coordination.

#### 5. Better integration and coordination

NGOs today are better placed and committed to working together than they were in the past. Some donors such as ECHO and USAID have encouraged this through funding consortia and learning networks. Such collaboration provides better opportunities for working and planning together. Over the last two decades regional and cross-continental bodies and initiatives have increased in order to provide a stronger, united, collaborative foundation for economic growth, pastoralism, and natural resource management etc. These include the African Union (including the Land Policy Initiative and the Pastoralism Framework); NEPAD; COMESA; CAADAP; EAC; the Nile Basin Initiative. These bodies provide valuable integration and coordination roles.

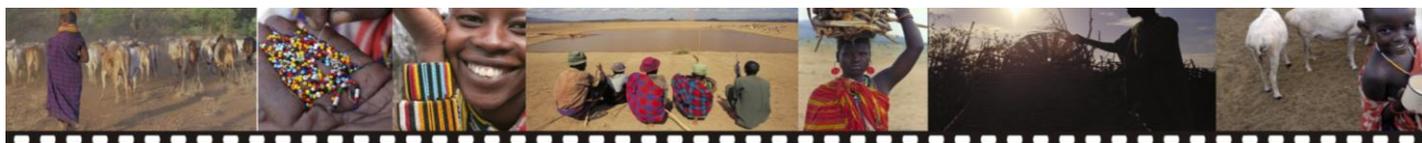
#### 6. Good governance, management and inclusion

Inclusion and participation is espoused in the Constitutions, policies and legislative frameworks in all three countries, and communities are now better placed to demand their role in decision-making and planning—although in practice higher levels of participation by local rangeland users is still elusive. Particular challenges arise for the participation of pastoralists. Modelling is being promoted as a useful way of predicting change, whilst ‘scenario planning’ is being used by a number of actors as a participatory means of considering changes and planning for pastoralists. In rangelands there is a strong case for governance structures to cut across administrative boundaries in order to reflect the reality of resource use and mobility. In this case a ‘nested’ governance structure can hold more relevance—with governing institutions in place and functioning for each different layer of resource use as it decreases in size of numbers of uses, for example and in area from a landscape or rangeland to a well or tree.

### Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

The review of the development planning case studies in the ‘Plotting Progress’ report identifies a number of essential components that were key in their success:

1. Supportive and functioning policy/legislative environment – decentralized, multi-sector etc.
2. Employed systems approach including environmental and livelihood concerns, plus influence of ‘external’ factors.
3. Embedded in government systems, structures and policies.
4. People-centred, demand-driven, community-owned.
5. Inclusiveness (particularly including mobile pastoralists).



6. Governance clear (roles/responsibilities) and functioning (including conflict resolution).
7. Capacity building a priority (problem solving, knowledge management/access, communication).
8. Transformative learning processes and innovation.
9. DRR and CCA mainstreamed.
10. Scale-able and sustainable.

The report also identifies a number of ways in which governments, donors, NGOs and development agencies can work towards improving integrated drylands planning to the benefit of vulnerable drylands communities.

#### **For Governments**

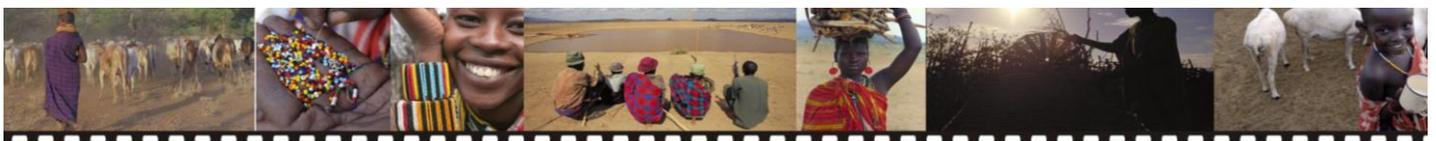
1. Establish, strengthen and enforce policies, legislation, structures and mechanisms for development planning in the drylands that provide for a more devolved, integrated, participatory, flexible and adaptive approach that protect the rights of local rangeland users to their land and resources.
2. Invest in building the capacity of local government authorities and support their transformation into more sustainable and productive entities.
3. Ensure that multi-sector coordination mechanisms and structures are functioning and well resourced.
4. Develop comprehensive land use plans for the country, regions, counties or zones, with input from dryland communities.
5. Work with the commercial sector in development planning processes, in order to more effectively develop appropriate provision of services that are well managed by local communities and those committed to their interests.

#### **For Donors**

1. Fund development planning in the drylands as a priority – at regional, national or local levels. The involvement of government and community should be central, and linkages built up between the two.
2. Provide longer-term and flexible funding that can better support the complex, multi-sectoral, multi-actor, often dynamic and protracted processes of planning in drylands.
3. Fund the development of countrywide land use plans together with regional, county or zonal plans as appropriate.
4. Fund the piloting of different planning and management initiatives that contribute to the collection and sharing of good practice in order to influence better planning processes.
5. Fund the development of improved knowledge management systems that contain up-to-date and appropriate information for development planning in drylands - accessible and updated on a regular basis.
6. Use funding to leverage coordination and collaboration between different groups of development actors in order to develop better development planning and implementation.

#### **For NGOs and Development Agencies**

1. Improve and develop processes and interventions that take a systems approach to development and environmental management such as 'resilience-building'.
2. Build the capacity of staff in order that they better understand dryland systems and are able to plan and develop appropriate activities that support them. Skills such as confliction resolution, facilitating negotiation and consensus-building, and participatory research and planning are important.



3. Plan and implement programmes and activities at a scale appropriate for drylands, this should follow the ‘nested’ governance and management systems that exist in drylands/rangelands.
4. Pilot different planning and management initiatives that contribute to the collection and sharing of good practices in order to influence better planning processes at government and community levels.
5. Assist governments in building the capacity of their staff in land administration, land use planning, integrated development planning, institution building and participatory approaches.
6. Improve collaboration and coordination of activities and information sharing with other NGOs, governments and communities.

#### **For Research Organisations**

1. Work with other research organisations, governments, NGOs, and communities to develop appropriate and context specific planning processes that support sustainable development in the lowlands. This includes assisting them to better understand the particular characteristics and requirements of drylands, and how best planning processes can reflect and account for these.
2. Improve collaboration and coordination of activities and information sharing with other research organisations, NGOs, governments and communities through for example participating in platforms, technical working groups and committees that are established for this purpose.
3. Pilot different planning and management initiatives that contribute to the collection and sharing of good practice in order to influence better planning processes at government and community levels in conjunction with NGOs and local government.
4. Assist governments to develop improved knowledge management systems that contain up-to-date and appropriate information for development planning in drylands, which is accessible and updated on a regular basis.

#### **For Community Representatives and Organisations**

1. Work with other organisations to lobby and advocate for an improved policy and legislative environment for more sustainable and participatory development planning in drylands. This includes better land policies and legislation that provide stronger security of rights to land and resources for dryland users.
2. Encourage and assist communities to mobilise in order to improve their planning processes, and to contribute to government led ones. Communities’ awareness of the benefits of doing so will need to be improved, and their skills and capacities supported. Unless communities commit to such processes, they are unlikely to be of any significant value.
3. Assist communities to consider and agree their vision for the future, in order to be better prepared when opportunities arise to contribute to development planning processes.
4. Develop partnerships with other actors including government, NGOs (both development and conservation NGOs), and commercial companies. All can offer different resources, support, and capacity assistance – and taking a more strategic and planned approach to working with them can be advantageous.



Humanitarian Aid  
and Civil Protection

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A copy of this brief and other information on REGLAP can be found on:

[www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/reglap](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/reglap)

