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Report on the CELEP webinar “PARTICIPATORY RANGELANDS MANAGEMENT” 14 October 2020

On 14 October 2020, RECONCILE, the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF), the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI, representing the Rangelands Initiative of the International Land Coalition) and Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Belgium (VSFB) representing CELEP, teamed up to organise a webinar on “Participatory Rangelands Management” (PRM). The aim of the webinar was to present experiences and draw lessons on the modalities under which PRM is applied in Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia, in order to better understand how it could also be applied elsewhere.

If you would like to watch the webinar again, you can download it [here](#).

The webinar was facilitated by Ken Otieno (Executive Director, RECONCILE; Technical Coordinator, Rangelands Initiative Africa Component; & Regional Focal Point, CELEP) and the speakers included:

- Fiona Flintan, Senior Scientist–Rangelands Governance at ILRI
- Irene Aloo, Programme Manager PRM Programme at RECONCILE, Kenya
- Zakaria Faustin, Executive Director, TNRF, Tanzania.

What is Participatory Rangelands Management?

The webinar was introduced by a [video](#) explaining what Participatory Rangelands Management (PRM) is and how this approach had been developed.

Fiona Flintan [presented the historical process of how PRM was developed](#), explaining the context in which PRM was first piloted and the various steps in its upscaling: in the 1990s, there were discussions on how to secure pastoralists’ rights to communal lands in Ethiopia, where there was no legal recognition of those rights; in this context, the idea behind PRM was to adapt the principles of Participatory Forest Management to rangeland resources.

She then gave a brief explanation of the three stages in a PRM project:

1. Investigation: assessment of rangeland resources, how they are used – also in case of natural catastrophes – by whom and when; this process must be led by the communities, with the possible support of NGOs, as the communities need to recognise the benefits of this practice for themselves.
2. Negotiation: decision on how to take forward what has been previously assessed. Through discussion by all stakeholders, an analysis is made of the strengths of existing rangelands institutions and whether there is need for new ones.

3. Implementation: development of management and evaluation procedures, definition of the new roles of the various stakeholders involved, understanding of what new knowledge and tools are needed to implement the PRM plan.

After a study of PRM plans implemented up to now, a series of challenges specific to the Ethiopian context were identified: i) the lack of policy and legislation on rangelands management prevents governments from taking up the approach and institutionalising it; ii) because there are no strong guidelines for piloting and scaling up PRM, monitoring of the impacts and “proof” of the concept is weak; iii) the whole process requires time and resources and its impacts tend to be in the long rather than the short term; donors and communities therefore do not want to invest in it; iv) investment in improving the productivity of the rangelands at scale is lacking. Fiona ended her presentation by explaining why Kenya and Tanzania were chosen to pilot PRM, explaining how CELEP also got involved and how finally the current project was designed and set up.

PRM projects in Kenya and Tanzania

Zakaria Faustin presented the experience of [PRM implementation in Tanzania](#), where the PRM procedure was used to coordinate all stakeholders involved in an effort to internalise the practice and to elaborate national guidelines on managing marginal lands.

The pilot project is implemented across six clusters of connected rangelands: on the basis of existing laws, rangeland users were involved in the definition and identification of rangeland units; rangeland livestock associations were then established to manage these units. These institutions are legally recognised and are awarded certificates of land tenure by the government. Local universities are also involved in the project so that students become acquainted with PRM practices. At the moment, there are four clusters with fully implemented PRM. The involved actors are currently working on defining PRM guidelines.

One of the positive aspects of the project is the involvement of women throughout the whole process, including decision-making and monitoring and evaluation. A notable outcome is that the government is now using PRM to tackle issues of rangeland management elsewhere in Tanzania, for instance, in Kiteto District.

Irene Aloo talked about the [PRM experience in Kenya](#), notably in Baringo County. Here, PRM was implemented in four sub-counties on areas jointly identified by the county government and the local communities. In the course of project implementation, local and national guidelines were developed.

Together with the standard procedure of PRM planning, a Community Rangeland Investment Fund was set up to support community projects and initiatives for improving rangelands. Conflict management and peace building were also integrated in PRM practice.

Overall, the PRM work had a positive impact by improving livelihood and land productivity, by enhancing women’s participation in rangeland management and by pacifying areas affected

by conflicts. In this regard, impact analysis has shown that communities are coming back to deserted land, that both crop farming and livestock production have increased, that the level of school attendance has risen, and that the community and county government officers are collaborating to ensure that peace is maintained. It is particularly interesting to note that national and county governments have supported the whole PRM implementation process. In fact, in 2016, the government enacted the Community Land Act, which provides for legal recognition of community lands and, in 2019, the County Spatial Planning Toolkit for Pastoral Areas was integrated with PRM practices.

Main points from Question & Answer session

Please find [here](#) a report of the webinar's entire Q&A session.

- Technical aspects of PRM implementation and adaptability

PRM can work in any pastoral area; each of the steps is simple and not completely new in most cases. It is the process itself that is new and holds the steps together: these steps can be adapted to any pastoral local context, even to the most complex ones such as South Sudan and Afghanistan, and help solve issues related to rangeland management.

Regarding the timing, a PRM programme should last for at least five years to allow enough time for communities to build their capacity and be able to continue the work once the programme ends. In terms of coverage, ideally a rangeland unit should be as big as the area in which communities can access the resources needed for an effective and well-functioning pastoralist system in a normal year, including wet- and dry-season grazing areas. In those cases where such an area is very large, there may be the need to work at the sub-unit level on areas that are smaller and closer to the community; this is essential to get them directly involved – the larger the rangeland area, the less the connection between pastoralists and rangeland management unit.

As for land-tenure rights, PRM is based on customary rights, meaning that land is owned by the entire community and used according to individual necessities. In Tanzania, these rights are legally recognised by a Certificate of Customary Rights of Occupancy (CCRO); this certificate is awarded by the government to livestock associations that are put in place as part of the implementation of PRM projects and have the legal capacity to represent all pastoralists in the community.

- Challenges to PRM implementation

The main challenges encountered in Kenya derived from the fact that the whole process was put in place in a context where there has never been any priori engagement of this kind, which means that expectations were high and there was need for alignment within the legal framework, whilst the project in Tanzania was building on a sister project. On the other hand, the Tanzanian association has challenges in accessing resources to implement rangeland investment projects within their rangeland management plans.

Another important challenge is that of unclear land rights, mostly in terms of sustainability: in this case, the use of a rangeland can be changed or transferred to other land users anytime. However, PRM can help by supporting the adoption of a legal framework that clearly defines land rights, as in the experience from Ethiopia presented by Fiona Flintan. It must also be noted that PRM will never be sustainable in the long term as long as it is not legally recognised and supported. In this regard, there is evidence in Tanzania of government incorporating the process into its own documents, guidelines and strategies. The review of PRM in Ethiopia showed a number of key benefits. This review can be found at: <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/106017>

Regarding the relationship between pastoralist and crop farming livelihood systems, most of the targeted communities are composed of pastoralists who also practise crop farming. Both livelihood systems – and their productivity – were taken into consideration while developing PRM projects in Tanzania and Kenya. The Tanzanian case benefitted by the Joint Village Land Use Planning, which is based on shared resources. Finally, the sharing of resources between pastoralists and crop farmers is an integral part of PRM.

- *The role of NGOs and research and academic institutions*

NGOs should act as facilitators for the implementation of PRM programmes, by supporting capacity building and by advocating for a more enabling environment. However, it is important the NGOs do not lead PRM themselves; this should be in the hands of the communities. The involvement of academics and research institutions can be of great help. In the case of Kenya, ILRI is coordinating the policy engagement process, but there is space for future engagement of Kenyan universities in the piloting of PRM. In Tanzania, some academic institutions are part of a national technical working group and are committed to realign their syllabus by incorporating PRM practices. At the moment, there are several bachelor and master students doing their final-year projects in PRM clusters.

- *Other topics*

Women's participation makes an important contribution to the implementation of PRM: firstly, women influence traditional leaders to allocate grazing land for calves close to their home; secondly, they form women's groups that deal with gender issues within the pastoral context; finally, they are members of the rangeland associations either as part of a committee or in the board itself.

PRM and STDM (Social Tenure Domain Model) are two different methodologies, but they can complement each other: STDM is technology-based and can build the spatial component of PRM.

Monitoring: In Tanzania, the activities being implemented under the PRM are monitored by a rangeland committee, which operates under the board of the livestock association in each cluster. Inside each association, there is also a conflict resolution committee.