

FOR PASTORALISM AGAINST HUNGER

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STATE, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS



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PASTORALISM, AN ADAPTED METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT

Pastoralism is a livestock system that relies on high mobility of herds¹. This mobility allows for the exploitation of fodder resources that vary both quantity and quality. It also provides a quick response to various vulnerability factors, such as conflicts, diseases, or market access, which are not directly related to climate. Pastoral areas cover over 38% of the territory of countries in the western Sahel region, such as Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad, and Burkina Faso. When including Saharan ecosystems, this percentage rises to 78%¹.

In the Sahelian zone, approximately 20 million people, 75% of whom practice transhumance each year, travel the region in search of pasture and water for their livestock².

Beyond its vital role in preserving ecosystems and conserving biodiversity, pastoralism adds significant value to the economies of these countries. Transhumant herding, in particular, demonstrates

higher productivity in terms of milk production, as well as animal fertility and growth, compared to sedentary livestock systems¹. Furthermore, pastoralism transcends its basic production function and serves as a fundamental pillar of the cultural identity for certain communities. In the Sahelian region, around 50 million individuals belong to lineage societies and pastoral chiefdoms, where social and cultural values remain deeply rooted³.

However, in the region, pastoralism faces several challenges, including (i) climate change (irregular rainfall patterns, ecosystem destruction, etc.); (ii) rising insecurity and its spread throughout the region; (iii) constraints on mobility across areas that were once interconnected by transhumance; and (iv) the expansion of land used for crop production, housing, mining operations, and areas rendered inaccessible for various other reasons.

¹ Bonnet Bernard, 2013. « Vulnérabilité pastorale et politiques publiques de sécurisation de la mobilité pastorale au Sahel. » Mondes en développement, 164, 71-91

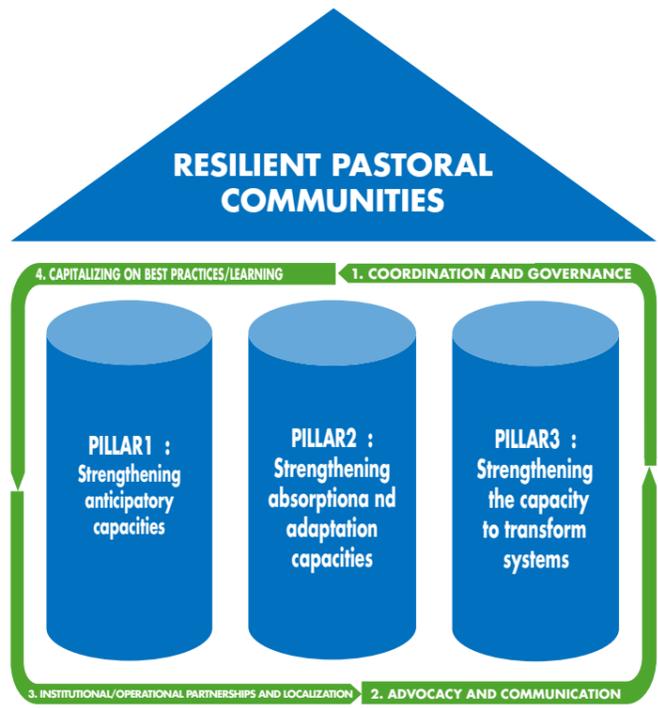
² World bank, 2020. "In Search of Greener Pastures: on the Road with Sahel's Pastoralists"

³ Hesse Ced, Catley Andy, 2023. « Le pastoralisme en Afrique : brève introduction », Feed the Future, Université Tufts

OUR ACTIONS

Action Against Hunger's initiatives to support pastoralism in West Africa are part of a strategic programming focused on several key areas:

- Establishing pastoral monitoring and early warning systems
- Direct assistance: immediate aid to populations and their livestock
- Sustainable management of natural resources
- Regeneration of desertified lands and increased fodder production through Holistic Management of grazing areas
- Infrastructure development
- Improvement of pastoral practices
- Capacity building and skill development
- Advocacy actions for favourable policies



Action pillars to strengthen the resilience of pastoral communities in the Sahel



PILLARS TO PROMOTE THE RESILIENCE OF PASTORAL COMMUNITIES

Action Against Hunger supports pastoral communities in several countries across West and Central Africa, addressing complex challenges such as food insecurity, conflicts related to access to natural resources, the impacts of climate change, and a fragile security situation, in addition to contributing to the production of information on pastoralism. These interventions aim to enhance the resilience and food security of these communities through an integrated approach that encompasses direct assistance, capacity building, and advocacy actions.

- ### 1 STRENGTHENING ANTICIPATORY CAPACITIES

Monitoring to anticipate crises

 - The pastoral monitoring and early warning program for the Sahel region (PEWS): sigsahel.info
 - Monitoring multisectoral indicators among vulnerable populations
 - Data collection and analysis, and dissemination of information through the publication of bulletins, community radio, and "geo-navigation" of agro-pastoralists
 - Advocacy with donors for rapid responses
 - Participation in the Cadre Harmonisé
- ### 2 STRENGTHENING ABSORPTION AND ADAPTATION CAPACITIES

 - Rapid response mechanisms for crises: cash transfer interventions
 - Strengthening social protection systems
 - Livestock capitalisation initiatives
 - Strengthening livelihoods
 - Access to basic services: improving the mobility of people and services within the pastoral zone over time and within the community
- ### 3 STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES TO TRANSFORM SYSTEMS

 - Strengthening communities for sustainable resource management: (i) regenerative agricultural and livestock practices for degraded soils, (ii) natural resource management, (iii) nutrition, (iv) animal hygiene and health, (v) transformation of agro-pastoral conflicts
 - Development of infrastructure (rehabilitation of wells, ponds, etc.). Diversification of agricultural and livestock activities: diversifying systems and integrating vertical and horizontal approaches
 - Capacity building and skill development at the household, family, and community levels
 - Promotion of a gender approach
 - Diversifying conflict management mechanisms: intra- and inter-community dialogue, inclusive governance, strengthening mediation mechanisms, establishing multi-stakeholder platforms and information sharing, political advocacy