

News

Preparing for dryland scenarios of the future

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Drylands Transform, the project led by SLU in Karamoja region (Uganda and Kenya), has been going on since end of 2020 and is now starting the fourth and last year. In synthesizing, presenting and discussing results and possible ways forward together with the local communities, the project team is also facilitating scenario workshops.

A scenario workshop is a meeting organized using a participatory approach where local actors, from within each of the four sites where DT project operates, meet to discuss the local challenges and anticipate future success and failures. Scenario workshops also involve descriptions of potential future challenges that emphasize interrelations between events (droughts, short-rains, conflicts, etc) and discuss different future pathways and solutions to the challenges in a collectively decision-making process.

The scenario workshops were conducted as scenario group discussions with separate men groups, women groups and youth groups from the four drylands transform demonstration and learning sites in the Karamoja cluster: Uganda (Moroto and Napak Districts) and Kenya (Turkana and West Pokot Counties).

The first scenario workshops were held in November 2023 within the Karamoja cluster and went well. The local workshops were meant for learning purposes, especially on what different social

groups (elders, women and youth) point out as key challenges on land, migration, health, livestock, security, etc. After discussing challenges, groups managed to share potential solutions they propose to make the situation better for the future. For example, the youth groups pointed out common challenges such as limited opportunities, reduction in rangeland resources (water/pasture) and insecurity. There is increased tree cutting for charcoal and firewood, and further land selling and encroachment that threatens future land availability.



Women have gathered under a tree to discuss the past, current and future of their area. Photo: Philemon Ng'asike

Youth groups also discussed different kinds of futures. The youth from Moroto requested for aid support as an alternative to deforestation/tree cutting for charcoal and firewood. They also need peace for shared grazing spaces in the dry seasons and controlled land selling which will result to future displacement by land buyers from other regions of Uganda. Turkana youth in Kenya had their migration routes towards Uganda, where dry season grazing areas and water dams are found. However they did not see this as sustainable due to insecurity and military operations. Presently, Turkana youth wish for pasture enterprises, skilled trainings and mining tools as an alternative to mobility. The youth from Chepareria are seeking for aid support, skilled trainings and employment opportunities in order to stay away from crime and petty theft.

In all the four sites youth seek for opportunities for business, training and employment because climate change has reduced land productivity, increased water scarcity, and reduced pasture availability. Hence overreliance on livestock is a too risky strategy in the next 30 years. Instead, knowledge for value addition, skilled technologies and trainings bring hope for a better future for employment among youth associations, business groups and women in pasture enterprises, rangeland value addition, mining and livestock trading.

The women of Napak District wish for schools and health facilities within their vicinity for a better future of their children. Due to socio-economic stresses at household and community level, petty theft and illegal land selling is presenting complex challenges regarding land tenure. Women also want individual land access rather than group ownership to control access and use over the land they own.

The work in Drylands Transform with scenario workshops will continue with more rounds of discussions aiming for policy-relevant pathways towards a sustainable dryland transformation.

Facts:



Drylands Transform

Drylands Transform (DT) is a research project led by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in partnership with an interdisciplinary team from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Linnaeus University, Makerere University, Umeå University, University of Gothenburg, University of Nairobi, and World Agroforestry (ICRAF).

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