



Safeguarding pastoral livelihoods and ecosystems in the Sahel

The Peaceful Pastoral Cross-Border Mobility and Social Stability Programme, Phase II (MOPSS-II) contributes to strengthening pastoralist livelihoods. It works with communities, government authorities, and local organisations to improve herders' access to water and pasture, build diversified income sources, and reduce conflicts with settled farmers. Our joint support enhances herders' resilience to climate change and advances cooperation and social cohesion in the region.

Challenge and opportunity

Livestock support over [110 million people across Africa's drylands, yet an estimated 80% of pastoralists in Sub-Saharan Africa live below the poverty line](#). Where herders once travelled seasonally with their animals in search of water and vegetation, many countries now restrict their movement across borders. Climate change has made rainfall and food availability increasingly uncertain. Changing political and security conditions in parts of the Sahel have further affected livelihoods and led to conflicts with settled farmers. MOPSS-II is working with local organisations, government authorities, and communities to address these challenges through coordinated economic, political, and social action across seven countries.

Our approach

The programme focuses on conflict mitigation, youth employment, climate adaptation, gender equity, and social inclusion. In collaboration with our local partners, we are:

- Establishing committees to foster dialogue and mediate between herders, farmers, internally displaced people, and host communities. Young peace ambassadors are organising workshops, discussion forums, and sports competitions to promote amity and conflict resolution.

- Helping authorities better manage herders' routes and access to resources by documenting pastoral movement patterns, available resources in the region, and stakeholders' needs and perceptions.
- Delivering training programmes aligned with markets to help pastoralists, especially women and young people, gain employment and set up businesses. They are learning animal rearing and milk processing as well as diversifying into skills like soap making and hydroponic farming.
- Using land restoration, forage production, and biodigesters (which reduce firewood use and provide fertilisers) to mitigate the environmental impacts of pastoral activities.

MOPSS-II advances the following SDGs:



Project snapshot



Project

Peaceful Pastoral Cross-Border
Mobility and Social Stability
in the Sahel, Phase-II



Countries

Burkina Faso, Benin, Ghana,
Ivory Coast, Mali,
Niger, and Togo



Duration

2023-2029



Value

EUR 20 million

Funding partners

Swedish International Development Cooperation
Agency, Swiss Agency for Development and
Cooperation, and Danish International Development
Agency

Implementation partners

SNV (lead), Billital Maroobé Network,
Association for the Promotion of Livestock Farming
in the Sahel and Savannah, and local authorities,
among others

Building momentum

The first phase of MOPSS supported the creation of 13 pastoral boreholes, providing water to 1.25 million cattle and 500,000 sheep. It also helped municipal authorities mobilise FCFA 1.2 billion (~EUR 1.8 million) for the sustainable management of resources. The programme's [second phase](#) is building upon these achievements to strengthen pastoral livelihoods and ecosystems.

- Five pastoral boreholes have been set up, providing water to 154,000 animals and benefitting more than 2,700 households.
- Local committees' mediation of conflicts has resulted in the amicable resolution of 81% of cases, an increase of 28 percentage points from 2024.
- Over 300 young people have established agropastoral businesses, such as milk processing, with an average annual turnover of FCFA 800,000 (~EUR 1,220).
- A veterinary clinic in Ghana has provided treatment to over 57,000 cattle, paving the way for a regional network of mobile clinics for livestock.
- 100 hectares of degraded land in Niger have been restored, making it a refuge for herds and benefitting over 1,000 pastoralists.

Looking ahead

The programme will benefit 240,000 people (two-fifths women and one-third young people) through improved mobility, food security, and incomes. Our partners' collective efforts will enable young pastoralists to pursue their traditional vocation by making animal rearing climate-resilient, profitable, and secure. Local committees' conflict-resolution measures will foster peaceful coexistence between settled and pastoral households across the region.

About SNV

SNV is a global development partner rooted in and working across Africa and Asia. With 60 years of experience and over 90% of our team coming from and working within the countries where we operate, our mission is to strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform agri-food, energy and water systems to enable sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

Contact SNV's MOPSS-II project team

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