



Side event

# From margins to mainstream: The role of pastoralism in food systems transformation

We will draw on key SPARC evidence from Mali on how investing in pastoralism can support livelihoods, food security, climate mitigation, adaptation, peace, and economic stability in West Africa.

Event date and time

[Supporting livelihoods and markets](#) [Understanding land and conflict](#) [Working in a changing climate](#) [Gender equality and social inclusion](#) [Africa](#) [Burkina Faso](#) [Chad](#) [Mali](#) [Mauritania](#) [Niger](#) [Nigeria](#) [Somalia](#)

The vital role pastoralism plays in the transformation of food systems will be top of the agenda when SPARC researchers lead a side event on: **‘From margins to mainstream: The role of pastoralism in food systems transformation’ on Thursday, September 4 at the ‘Africa Food Systems Forum 2025’.**

Heads of state, governments, the private sector, farmers, donors, investors, Non-Governmental Organisations, and fintech experts will gather for the conference, which runs from Sunday, August 31 to Friday, September 5 in Dakar, Senegal.

Baba Ba, a SPARC researcher at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), will present SPARC research from [Mali](#) to demonstrate how [strengthening pastoralist systems](#) in West Africa can offer an opportunity to simultaneously address livelihoods and food security efforts, climate mitigation, adaptation, peace, and economic stability in the region. The event will be in both English and French, with translation.

The side event will be jointly led by SPARC member organisation ILRI, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (SNV – Netherlands Development Organisation). It will build on a similar event held at the UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake ([UNFSS+4](#)) in Addis Ababa, in July 2025, organised by the UNFSS Coalition on Pastoralism as a Sustainable Food System.

The inclusion of livestock in the [Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme \(CAADP\) 2026–2035 Strategy and Action Plan](#) and the [Kampala CAADP Declaration on Building Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems in Africa](#) are welcome steps towards greater policy recognition. [The Nouakchott+10 Forum](#) declaration further identified priority actions. These included: integrating pastoralism into public policy, improving animal health and infrastructure, enabling cross-border trade, and strengthening social resilience.

This formal recognition provides an opportunity for policymakers, funders, the private

sector, farmers and pastoralists, researchers and civil society to partner together to transform food systems across Africa. Drawing on key SPARC evidence from Mali, Baba will:

- Make the case for investing in pastoralist food systems.
- Showcase innovations in West African livestock systems and opportunities for youth and women to contribute, and;
- Examine the policy and financing shifts required.

Participants will leave the session with:

- A more nuanced understanding of the critical importance of pastoralism and mobility as a critical food system in West Africa.
- Practical recommendations to improve financing and policies to make West Africa's livestock and pastoralist system more resilient and inclusive for the Africa Food Systems Forum communiqué.
- Innovative approaches for enhanced youth and gender participation and recommendations for scaling.
- Offer concrete recommendations for the Africa Food Systems Summit 2025 and the [UN International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026](#).

Astou Diao Camara, Director of Le Bureau d'analyses macro-économiques (BAME) will moderate the event. Speakers include Dr. Abdoulaye Mouhamadou, Executive Secretary of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Amadi Coulibaly, from SNV Burkina Faso and Peaceful Cross-Border Pastoral Mobility and Social Stability in the Sahel (MOPSS), Mare Ena Derenoncourt, from the Alliance for Biodiversity and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Patrice A. Peftipe, Programme Director, Ibra Toure, Regional Director for the Sahel, at the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), Dr. Huyam Salih, Director at the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), Baghore Bathily, Director of Senegalese dairy company La Laiterie du Berger, Blamah Jallo, West and Central Africa Regional Technical Coordinator of Réseau Bilitat Maroobé (RBM)/ the Transhumance Association Network, Siboniso Moyo, Deputy Director General Partnerships and Impact at ILRI and Bernard Hien, Regional Director of the West and Central Africa Division at IFAD.

**The event will take place from 8.30am to 10.00am local time/ GMT on Thursday, September 4, 2025 in the Oval Room.**

**Register for the summit [here](#).**

---

**Source URL:**

<https://www.sparc-knowledge.org/news-blogs/events/margins-mainstream-role-pastoralism-food-systems-transformation-4-september-2025>