

COMMUNITY LAND SUMMIT

PROTECTING THE COMMONS FOR A SHARED FUTURE

COMMUNITY LAND SUMMIT

COMMUNITY LAND ACT @ 10: FROM LEGAL RECOGNITION TO, FUNCTIONAL GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENT PASTORALISM.

Reflecting on 10 Years of the Community Land Act:
Achievements, Struggles, Lessons and the Road Ahead for Community Land Rights and Pastoralism

SPORTSMANS ARMS HOTEL,
NANYUKI
LAIKIPIA COUNTY

23 rd - 27 th
NOVEMBER
2026

6TH EDITION

www.communitylandsummit.org

1. Background

The 6th Community Land Summit will provide a platform for communities, government institutions, formal and traditional land governance institutions, pastoralist leaders, women, civil society organizations, development partners and other land-sector actors to reflect critically on ten years of implementation of Kenya's Community Land Act (CLA), 2016, the milestones reached and the persistent challenges communities face in securing land tenure rights.

The Summit takes place as the world turns its attention to rangelands and pastoralism. 2026 is the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP), which has highlighted the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and called for policies that secure pastoralists' access to land and natural resources, support mobility and strengthen customary and inclusive governance. The Summit will also share and unpack the key outcomes of UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, including discussions and commitments on land tenure, rangelands, pastoralists, Indigenous Peoples, gender and land restoration. The official COP17 documentation includes dedicated materials on land tenure, gender, rangelands and pastoralists, as well as declarations from Indigenous Peoples and local communities. A particular focus will be the Ulaanbaatar Declaration of Global Pastoralists and Indigenous Pastoralists, which offers an important opportunity to connect global pastoralist demands with Kenya's community land agenda. As the IYRP comes to a close, the question is then what?
The Summit is intended to help answer it by moving from IYRP 2026 to a Pastoralism Action Agenda for Kenya.

The CLA was enacted to give effect to Article 63 of the Constitution and to recognize, protect and register community land rights. It recognizes customary land rights and provides for community ownership, governance and management of community land. It also contains specific provisions on grazing rights and requires that the customs and practices of pastoral communities be taken into consideration when registering community lands.

Ten years on, the country has made important progress in establishing a legal framework for registration of community land rights, through appropriate structures across the counties.

However, implementation remains uneven, with many communities still awaiting registration, experiencing prolonged adjudication and boundary processes, or struggling to translate legal recognition into effective control, governance and protection of their land and natural resources.
The Summit builds on five years of Community Land Summits. These began in Nanyuki in 2021 with a review of the first five years of the Act, widened into a regional Indigenous Peoples' land summit in 2022, and went on to examine gender and youth (Maralal, 2023), carbon markets (Isiolo, 2024) and mobile livelihoods and pastoral policy (Nairobi, 2025). Slow and uneven registration has been the constant concern across all of them. At the 2025 Summit, the National Land Commission reported that fewer than 15% of former group ranches had registered, and government described expediting registration as a presidential directive.

2. Rationale: for the 10-Year Anniversary

Past editions of the Community Land Summit have been delivered as a single, multi-day conference bringing together several hundred delegates. For the 10-year anniversary, the 2026 edition will be delivered differently, in two distinct but connected parts, producing sharper, more tangible outcomes.

First, we will be focused on technical and policy gathering of 50 key community representatives and stakeholders, structured as a two-day working session. Its purpose is to produce a rigorous, evidence-based assessment of the CLA's first ten years and a concrete set of priority reforms for the next decade, informed by the realities of pastoralism, green investments and carbon markets, benefit sharing, biodiversity, conservation, climate finance, and community rights and governance more broadly.

Secondly, we will have a one-day community celebration, marking the 10-year anniversary itself through showcasing of success of community land registration. It is deliberately celebratory and community-centred, to reflect on achievements in a public and accessible way, and to look ahead to the next ten years.

3. Part 1: Technical and Policy Reflection

Format and participants

A three-day technical gathering of approximately 50 participants: a deliberately small, diverse group of key community representatives (including CLMC leaders from communities at different stages of registration), the National Land Commission, the Ministry of Lands and relevant county governments, legal and technical experts, development partners, and civil society and pastoralist networks. The smaller format is intended to allow genuine working sessions rather than plenary presentations, with each session producing a concrete written output.

The three days are organised around three linked conversations.

Focus 1: The Community Land Act at 10 — Successes and Bottlenecks

A facilitated review of where implementation stands after ten years. On the achievements side, the session will draw out concrete, named examples rather than aggregate statistics alone: Ilngwesi, the first community land to transition from a former group ranch, and Kamuthe, the first to transition from former Trust land; Laikipia, the first county to secure all of its community lands, where post-registration activity is already under way, including land use planning in 6 community lands and benefit-sharing agreements in 11; and counties where registration is ongoing (Samburu, Turkana, Narok, Kajiado) or has not yet begun (Marsabit, Isiolo and others). A lead analyst, to be engaged to drive the conversation, will anchor the discussion with a critical 10-year analysis of implementation.

On the bottlenecks side, the session will work through the structural reasons registration has been slow: resource conflicts and disputes, including fraud allegations in CLMC elections and overlapping private claims; power dynamics and political contestation around community membership, boundaries and governance structures; structural and legal gaps, including unclear community boundaries that cross administrative lines; and limited funding and weak public awareness, which have left the registration process dependent on development partner support.

Focus 2: The Community Land Summit at 6 — Five Editions, What Has Changed

A reflection on the Summit itself: what each of the five past editions recommended, and what difference, if any, it made. This session is as much about the Summit's own accountability as it is about the CLA.

Edition	Focus	Key Ask	What to assess in 2026
2021, Nanyuki	First five years of the CLA	That the Summit become an annual event	Whether annual engagement has actually sustained pressure on registration.
2022, Nanyuki	Regional East African Indigenous Peoples' land summit	FPIC, and an end to conservation evictions and CSR framed as compensation	Whether FPIC is now a working practice or still a stated principle that is either community driven or imposed by proponents.
2023, Maralal	Gender and youth in land governance	Enforcement of the two-thirds gender rule in CLMCs	Whether women's, youth and SIGs representation has moved from numbers to meaningful influence.
2024, Isiolo	Carbon markets and collective bargaining	Communities as co-investors, not beneficiaries, in carbon deals	Whether any community has secured a public, audited carbon contract.
2025, Nairobi	Mobile livelihoods and pastoral policy	A Regional Pastoralist and Indigenous Peoples' Coordination Platform	Whether the platform exists and has met?

The intended output is not a narrative history but a short scorecard: for each edition, what was asked for, and whether it happened and how they will inform the existence and mode of organizing the community land summit going forward.

Secure tenure therefore determines: ***who has legitimate authority over community land, who makes decisions about its use, who benefits from natural resources and investments, how communities negotiate with investors and government, how grazing and mobility are protected, how women, youth and other community members participate in decision-making, how communities respond to climate change and drought and how future generations inherit and exercise their rights.***

Focus 3: Unpacking the Community Land Mass Registration Masterplan (2026–2031)

The Ministry of Lands, through the State Department for ASALs and Regional Development, has published a Community Land Mass Registration Masterplan (2026–2031), arising from the 4th Pastoralist Leadership Summit. This session will unpack the Masterplan to a level that is genuinely useful and understandable to the communities IMPACT serves, rather than assuming familiarity with its technical language.

Key points to walk through include: the Masterplan targets 348 communities across 24 counties for registration over five years, against a baseline of only 64 communities registered (48 former group ranches and 16 former Trust lands) a decade after the CLA was enacted; the total estimated cost is KES 2,217,804,000, approximately KES 6.37 million per community, to be financed through a mix of Exchequer, county contributions (Expertise and perdiem), development partner grants and in-kind community contributions; registration is staggered by community readiness, with annual targets rising from 50 communities in 2026 to 83 in 2030; and the Masterplan proposes fit-for-purpose tools to cut costs and speed up delivery, including trained community para-surveyors, satellite and drone imagery for large rangelands, natural boundary features, clustered block adjudication, and full digital integration into the Ardhi Sasa national land system.

For pastoralist and mobile communities specifically, the session should press on what the Masterplan does and does not say about protecting mobility during mass registration, how boundary demarcation will handle shared commons - grazing areas, dry-season reserves and livestock routes and other natural resources, and what role Community Land Management Committees and customary institutions will play in the coordination structure the Masterplan proposes (a national Multi-Agency Working Group, Regional Coordination Hubs, County Implementation Units and Community Level Coordination Units). The session should end with a plain-language summary communities and partners can actually use.

Expected Outputs

- A Review of 10 years of community land registration Report on implementation, combining national data, government records and community-level evidence.

  "A forward-looking report, "Beyond Registration: A Decade of Community Land Rights in Kenya," assessing progress and lessons from ten years of implementing the Community Land Act, 2016, and identifying priorities for the next decade. The report will integrate national data, government records, and community-level evidence to examine policy coherence across multisectoral frameworks affecting pastoralist communities, identify enabling and constraining legal, policy, and institutional factors, and recommend strategic reforms to strengthen community land tenure security, governance, and pastoralist livelihoods."

- A CLS@6 scorecard tracking what past Summit recommendations have and have not achieved.

- A plain-language briefing on the Community Land Mass Registration Masterplan for community use.

4. PART 2: Community Celebration

A one-day event, marking the 10-year anniversary of the Community Land Act. This session is open, celebratory and community-centred: a showcase of what secure community land tenure has actually made possible, told through real examples rather than in the abstract.

A celebration of successes

The day will showcase the tangible benefits that have followed community land registration, organised around four themes.

i. Planning and knowledge tools. Land Use Management Plans and biocultural maps developed by registered communities, and what these tools and systems now allow communities to do that they could not do before. Tenure security in practice: the Ngaremara case. The successful defence of Ngaremara community land against encroachment by the Kenyan Army, achieved using the community's own biocultural map as evidence. The session should draw out the central lesson directly: that defence would have rested on a far stronger footing had Ngaremara's community land already been formally registered, underlining why registration itself remains urgent.
ii. Post-registration community investment. Concrete income streams that registration has opened up, including carbon offset agreements; Isiolo court ruling on carbon investments on unregistered community land being unlawful, community-owned lodges, and the Ilngwesi community's successfully negotiated investor benefit-sharing agreement.
iii. Direct financing and self-organisation. Evidence that where communities have organised themselves, through CLMCs and related governance structures, they have gained the institutional capacity to manage resources and access financing directly, rather than only through intermediaries; Kipok direct financing to communities in Laikipia and Isiolo Counties.
iv. Extractives and just transition. Community voices being heard on the Lake Turkana Wind power on the 16th of October the Court ruled that....
v. Forging the way forward post-10 years; Communities showcase their aspiration post registration of their community lands.

5. Launch of the Community Land Mass Registration Plan

In the final session, the Goverment together with other partners will have a ceremonial launch of the Master plan, preceeded by speeches and contributions from various actors.



Who Will Take Part

Part 1 (Technical Gathering, 50 participants)
Key community and CLMC representatives from communities at different stages of registration; the National Land Commission; the Ministry of Lands and relevant county government departments; a lead analyst engaged to anchor the 10-year assessment; legal and technical land governance experts; development partners working in the land sector; and pastoralist, Indigenous Peoples' and civil society networks.

Part 2 (Community Celebration, 200)

Community Land Management Committees; women leaders and women CLMC members; youth representatives; elders and customary institutions; Community Land Registrars and county land officials; National Government agencies – NLC&ASALs; development partners; civil society and community-based organizations; and media.

6. Venue, Timing and Planning

Time: 23rd – 27th November 2026.

Venue: Sportmans Arms Hotel, Nanyuki, Laikipia County.

Secure the land. Strengthen community governance. Protect pastoral mobility. Inclusive governance. Investment in pastoralism.





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