# Conference Brief






The Afar region, an origin of human kind, is not only endowed with plenty of untapped natural resources but also home for vibrant cultural heritages. The role of applied research is unlocking these potentials to ensure development.

Dr. Mohammed Usman, President, Samara University

## Executive Summary

This second international conference is organized in view of sketching pathways to pastoralist and agro-pastoralist community development. The conference papers can roughly be categorized into the following six sub-themes for ease of quick identification:-

1. Tourism and Hospitality
2. Mineral Exploration and Emerging Technologies
3. Medicine and Human Health
4. Animal Healthcare and Breeding
5. Alternative Strategies for Pastoralist Development
6. Transitional Justice and Women Rights

In terms of research methods employed papers presented on the conference encompasses from purely quantitative to purely qualitative with some exceptions that made use

of mixed method. Some are experimental with a few studies which employed quasi experimental design.

**3 key action areas of the 2nd International Conference**

1. **Ensuring sustainability of pastoral and agro-pastoral systems;**
2. **Adopting innovative approaches in water resource development and management;**
3. **Preserving cultural heritages and natural attraction sites to catalyze development**

## Introduction

Samara University has successfully organized and colorfully managed its second international conference on the theme ***Leveraging Applies Knowledge for Transformative Change in Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Communities***, 22-23 February 2025, at its Main Campus. Researchers from Canada, Hong Kong, Italy and Kenya were among the participants along with academics from Ethiopian higher education institutions. The conference was attended by scholars from universities, federal and regional government institutions and non-for-profit organizations. Twenty-four multi-disciplinary research papers were presented at plenary and concurrent sessions. The Conference was officially opened by H.E Sileshi Girma, State Minster, Ministry of Tourism, & Samara University Board Chairperson. H.E Dr. Negeri Lencho, MP, Chair, Technology and Human Resource Development Standing Committee, HPR, made a keynote address.




H.E Dr. Negeri Lencho, MP, delivering keynote speech

## Conclusion

Challenging the legacy of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist community underdevelopment, promoting asset based community development approach, fostering community engagement in programs and projects undertaken in pastoralist and agro-pastoralist contexts and ultimately working towards durable solutions for persisting challenges that characterize pastoral and agro-pastoral context. Sector specifically, the papers addressed such important themes as promoting, pastoral and agro-pastoral area tourism, access to modern animal breeding and veterinary services, ensuring community wellbeing and improving livelihood, pastoral areas food security, and animal feed formulation using locally available ingredients. .




Mr. Warren L. Creates, Founder President of the Can-Go Afar Foundation, addressing conference participants

## The Way Forward

The second international conference under the theme *Leveraging Applies Knowledge for Transformative Change in Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Communities has adopted the following nine areas of policy implication and corresponding intervention.*

1. Establishing Destination Management Organization (DMO) that unifies such stakeholders in tourism as clan leaders, local cooperatives, private investors, states and the national government;
2. Harnessing economic and social benefits of tourism as an instrument of promoting internal cohesion and cultural exchange between local communities and the rest of the world;
3. Conducting the ground water potential zoning to increase the reliability of ground water potential

mapping to tackle the problem of water supply uncertainties that persistently prevails in pastoralist areas;

4. Scaling locally made and tested animal feed usage for a better productivity, availability and cost effectiveness;
5. Diversifying mechanisms of income generation among pastoral communities in view of catalyzing social upward mobility and wellbeing;
6. Strengthening research on animal health and breeding to enhance sustainability, productivity and economic return to pastoralists;
7. Rethinking of a more meaningful and pragmatic partnership between universities and government sector offices/non-governmental agencies in order to take research findings into policy makers attention and action;
8. Emphasizing on human and animal healthcare researches in order to mitigating two-way adverse effects of contagious ailments;
9. Advocating community engagement and soliciting bottom-up inputs to promote sense of ownership and ensuring sustainability of programs and projects;

Partnership with the local community, government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and the private sector is instrumental for universities to undertake contextually sound, policy influencing and impactful implementation researches



**Participants of the 2nd International Conference on *Leveraging Applied Knowledge for Transformative Change in Pastoral & Agro-Pastoral Communities***
Photo credit: SU Public Relations Office

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This Conference Brief was produced as part 2nd International Conference under the theme: ***Leveraging Applied Knowledge for Transformative Change in Pastoral & Agro-Pastoral Communities*** which was held from February 22-23/2025 at Samara University main campus. Printing of the full conference proceedings is well underway

Special thanks go to Alemayehu Debebe (PhD) for designing and production of this Conference Brief. Conference organizers are also indebted to Mr. Adem Ali, Vice President for Research and Community Service and Dr. Oumer for their kind follow up and support.

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