
Advocacy toolkit case studies

PROTECTING LAND RIGHTS IN NIGER

THEME:	Land and property
ADVOCACY APPROACHES:	Educating community members Government officials: educating Government officials: meeting with Legal mechanisms Research and analysis

Tearfund partner JEMED (Jeunesse en Mission Entraide et Développement – Youth With A Mission Mutual Aid and Development) is committed to Niger’s many pastoralist communities. When the Niger parliament announced its intention to create a law that would impact the livelihoods of nomadic herders, JEMED decided to take action.

They knew that they would have to do some research to understand the provisions of the law and what it would mean if the law was passed. So, with Tearfund’s help, they accessed free legal advice to help them with their research. This led them to discover that the consequences of the new law would be to severely restrict the land rights of nomadic communities. It also enabled them to identify ways to improve the drafting of the law.

Once they had this information, which the research had revealed, JEMED held community meetings to raise awareness among pastoralists about their land rights and about the government’s responsibilities towards them. They also met with local and national government officials to explain the problems with the proposed law, and to make recommendations on how it could be improved.

Initially, their recommendations were accepted. However, later, the government threatened to pass the law without the recommendations being adopted. Again, JEMED spoke out and engaged in crucial dialogue. This time, they highlighted the need for pastoralist communities to be consulted, so that their needs and rights could be considered first-hand. A consultation followed, facilitated in part by JEMED, which led to the government stopping the law proceeding.