



FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

2 Ahmadu Commassie Road, Wadata Makurdi, P.O Box 21 Makurdi. www.fjdp.org. Tel: +23424343647; +2348156141890

SITUATION DASHBOARD

ON CONFLICTS AND ETHNIC TENSIONS BETWEEN PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS FOR THE PERIOD

ISSUE: 3 (01ST FEBRUARY, 2020 TO 28TH FEBRUARY, 2020)

HIGHLIGHT

There continues to be relative peace in more communities in the LGAs monitored within the reporting period, while few communities have pockets of violence and others have unstable peace. Below is the stability rating of the monitored LGAs:

Awe	
Doma	
Obi	
Ohimini	
Agatu	
Otukpo	
Guma	
Gwer-West	
Makurdi	
Ukum	
Logo	
Katsina-Ala	

Key¹: Durable Peace  Stable Peace  Unstable Peace  Conflict 

¹ USIP typology of peace www.usip.org

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The report presented reflects the current situation of co-existence between pastoralists and farmers in Awe, Obi and Doma Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Nasarawa State; Ohimini, Agatu, Gwer-West, Guma and Makurdi LGAs as well as Katsina-Ala, Ukum and Logo LGAs all of Benue State.

INTRODUCTION

This situation dashboard was birthed out of the need to generate evidence-based information on the conflict between pastoralists and farmers; and to provide basis for tracking the timeline and (de)escalation patterns of violence so that peacebuilding interventions can be planned and carried out. It is an output of a project *Dousing Ethnic Tensions and Violent Conflicts Between Pastoralists and Farmers in the Benue Valley* implemented by FJDP with support from Misereor, Germany. It is part of a wide range of activities including advocacy, research and media engagements designed to improve peaceful co-existence between pastoralists and farmers. The dashboard shall be issued monthly in periods of stable peace and twice every month in times of unstable peace. It is intended to reach as many stakeholders who have a responsibility or capacity to douse tensions between pastoralists and farmers as possible.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Economic Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers

The situation in Awe, Doma and Obi LGAs remained stable as it was in January 2020. Farmers and pastoralist were seen attending same local markets freely and patronizing one another without any form of exploitation. The markets monitored are the five (5) days interval local markets in Awe, and Thursday weekly market in Obi and Doma LGA. In these locations too, female pastoralists were seen selling dairy products such as Nunu, Fura, Dambu, and the male pastoralists were seen selling both farm produce such as yam, millet and vegetables as well as livestock like chicken, goats and cattle. It was observed that for farmers both their men and women sold their farm produce without any hesitation or grudges to pastoralists and others alike; the farmers sold farm produce such as vegetable, yam and other perishable farm produce.

In Otukpo, farmers and pastoralist are attending local markets and patronizing the products of one another. Monitored local markets such as Allan, Otobi and Otukpo Icho weekly markets, pastoralist women were observed to be selling dairy products called Nunu, Fura, Dambu as well as livestock especially sheep, goats and cattle. The farmers were observed buying livestock from pastoralists in significant numbers while some bought dairy products especially Nunu. Similarly, Women from farming communities were observed to be selling farm produce such as Yam, sorghum, vegetable, and household items especially condiments. The bargain was balanced and no exploitative pricing was noted on either side.

However in Agatu and Ohimini LGAs there is no economic activity involving pastoralists and farmers. Since peace was restored to the area after 2013 to 2017 conflict between pastoralists and farmers, pastoralists no longer settle in any community in Agatu. In Ohimini, the pastoralists who graze into Ojali are from Otukpo and the farmers don't have any mutual economic activity. In Guma pastoralists cohabit in communities such as Kwata (near Agasha), Gbajimba, Yogbo, Udei and parts of Tyulen. Pastoralists also visit markets on normal market days as usual to buy and sell basic household food items especially groundnut oil, sorghum and maize. They also sell to local farmers Nunu and other dairy products. It was observed that patronage of the products from pastoralists is very high by the farmers. In Gwer West, pastoralists are only settled in Sengeev, Tongov, Tse-Bukem, Gbaji, Gidan Pepa, New Nigeria and Anguhar. These locations adjoin Makurdi and Agatu LGAs. Thus, few of the pastoralists settled in Gwer West patronize Agagbe, Gbaji, Abian and Anguhar markets in Gwer West while majority of them travel by boat to buy and sell in Wadata (Makurdi LGA) or Odugbeho and Obagaji (both in Agatu LGA). The pastoralists in Gwer west sell live cows to butchers who come from Naka and Agagbe. The economic relationship between the pastoralists and the butchers was stable until an [incident](#)² of assault occurred in Tse Agitse village, Gbaange Tongov Council Ward of Gwer West LGA. The incident has generated apprehension on possible reprisal although no express threat of reprisal has been issued.

The economic interrelationship between pastoralists and farmers in Makurdi is very high. In North bank Area, pastoralists dominate the cattle market as traders and the market is highly patronized by farmers especially those in need of cattle for festivities. Strong economic relationships were also observed in Wadata, Fiidi, Wurukum and High Level markets. Beside these organized markets, pastoralists are settled in satellite communities such as Lower Benue River Basin Base, Air Force Base, Tyohemba, Orkpe, Mobile Barracks, Antee and Apir. Within these communities, pastoralists set up small business facilities for buying and selling with members of hosting communities.

In Katsina-Ala, Ukum and Logo LGAs farmers and pastoralist are partially attending local markets such as Anyiin, Ugba, Tomanyiin weekly markets patronizing the products of one another, most especially in Katsina-Ala, but for Ukum and Logo, it is observed that the women of the pastoralist who usually brings local products for sell as at November, December 2019 has stopped, they no longer sell Nunu in the local markets and in clear terms as observed, their women have stop attending local markets. The men attend and buy the products of their need such as, yam, garri, salt, sugar etc. Security operations launched in parts of the LGA by the military and the police have reduced late hour economic activities between pastoralists and farmer populations.

² SURVIVOR REPORT: On Saturday 29th Feb, 2020 at about 12:00pm, armed herdsmen ambushed Tse-Agitse village in Mbakyondu community, Gbaange/Tongov Council ward, Gwer-West LGA Benue state inflicting severe injuries on Mr. linus Aba Tyav, (40yrs old) and Barnabas Ngutswen (30yrs old). The survivors are receiving medical attention at Asanyi Clinic Naka, Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State.

The bargain was balanced and no exploitative pricing was noted on either side as farmers also buy pastoralists cattle, sheep and goats. In Katsina-Ala pastoralist who are considered indigenous pastoralist by their period of stay in Katsina-Ala, who are cattle sellers at the cattle market maintains that “There is relative peace for now and our business activities have improved as compare to the heat period of conflicts between pastoralist and farmers, we sell and buy among ourselves”. The pastoralist here reside in Hausa community residential area within these community, pastoralist set up small business facilities for buying and selling with members of hosting communities.

On market unions and cooperative we had varied opinions; like in Awe Sohon Gari area some respondents say both farmer and pastoralists belong to same unions (rice farmers associaton) and benefit form loans due to the fact that pastoralists also partake in farming activities in the area, in Doma and Obi LGAs, a similar scenario repeated where pastoralists also engage in crops farming but are in far lesser numbers compared to Awe LGA as such they don’t belong to same cooperatives, and all have access to loans and are provided support on breeds, farm equipment and vaccination from government and NGOs so as to engender a transparent and peaceful coexistence in the market and community. However, pastoralists complain that farmers tend to benefit more from such support since more of it comes for farm produce than for livestock.

The involvement of pastoralists and farmers in market unions and cooperatives is low in all locations except Makurdi LGA of Benue state. Most of the cooperatives and unions are set up along the genres of products sold. This means, there are separate unions and cooperatives for yam sellers, grains sellers, livestock sellers etc. This has made large numbers of pastoralists to belong to exclusive cooperatives, majority of which are unions and cooperatives of dairy product sellers and livestock settlers. However, it was observed that local NGOs and Micro finance institutions provide equal opportunities for pastoralists and farmers to benefit from their savings and lending schemes. One of these prominent institutions is LAPO Micro Finance Ltd.

The involvement of pastoralist in market unions and cooperative is low in all locations except cattle market in Katsina-Ala which is purely their market. However, it was observed that local NGOs and micro finance institutions provide equal opportunities for pastoralists and farmers to benefit from their savings and lending schemes. One of these prominent institutions is LAPO micro finance Ltd.

They all have equal access to utilize economic opportunities in the various communities visited. As such everybody traded in an open market regardless of the basis of their economic orientation as pastoralists or farmers.

One common phenomenon is the equal access granted to both pastoralists and farmers to access and utilize economic opportunities. It is noteworthy to state that no case of denial, extortion or exploitation of traders on basis of their economic orientation as pastoralists or farmers was observed in all monitored locations.

Socio-cultural Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers

Pastoralist and farmers were observed to not call or give each other stereotype names that are derogatory aside names that express friendliness or joke such as Tiv-jo, Sarkin Noma, Agwei-jo, Kado, Onoho among others which does not bring about any rancor.

In Agatu, Ohimini and Otukpo LGAs pastoralists and farmers have not developed easy-to-identify names and slogans for each other. The farmers refer to the pastoralists as ‘*Ogbena*’ cattle herders while the pastoralists refer to local farmers as Idoma.

In Guma, Gwer-West and Makurdi LGAs, pastoralists and farmers have continued to use the easy-to-identify names and slogans for each other as it was in January. The farmers in both LGAs refer to the pastoralists as ‘Agwei’ or ‘Angwei’ while the pastoralists refer to local farmers in a comic way of pronouncing their ethnic names. In the Tiv-speaking area of Benue state for example, they refer to farmers as ‘Tivi-njo’ or ‘Munchi’. However, these names are called without the intention to mock, stereotype or trigger hate or derogate them.

In Katsina-Ala, Ukum and Logo LGAs, pastoralist and farmers have a considerable long term relationship which some historians trace Tiv and pastoralist to be brothers. The pastoralist refers to the Tiv people as ‘munchi or Tivi-njo’ why the farmers refers to the pastoralist as ‘mbaagbidekpoo’ (people who flogs with sticks) or ‘Agwoi’, these names are called without the intention to mock, stereotype or trigger hate.

In Awe, Doma and Obi LGAs communities visited in Nasarawa state, it was generally observed that pastoralists and farmers lived separately; even when residing in the same area, pastoralists and farmers settle in opposite locations for distinction. Some respondents revealed that pastoralists always stay in best parts of the community, so they don’t find themselves in places where they are unsafe.

The communities in Otukpo; Otukpo Icho, Asa , Akwete- Omebe Akpa allocate spaces on the outskirts of villages and towns for establishment of pastoralist settlements. This often is to minimize the risk of pollution that cattle dung and feeds can cause. However, the pastoralists in Agatu and Ohimini LGAs do not have locations for settlement of pastoralists hence their non-residency there.

In all the LGAs monitored, communities allocate spaces on the outskirts of villages and towns for establishment of pastoralist settlements. This often is to minimize the risk of pollution that cattle dung and feeds usually cause. However, the pastoralists in communities across the LGAs often turn down these spaces and instead, opt to stay closer to the communities hosting them. This is because they feel isolated and unsafe staying far away from the hosting community. This was observed in communities around Gbaji and Orkpe communities in Gwer West and Makurdi LGAs.

Pastoralists and farmers actively participate in each other’s socio-cultural activities though more of the pastoralists do so especially in Akanga area of Obi and in Sohon Gari part of Awe communities, while in Doma area there was little of such socio-cultural participation, the activities includes marriages, burials and naming ceremonies and other social events.

In Otukpo LGA, pastoralists were reported to participate in some socio-cultural activities of hosting communities especially naming ceremonies. Farmers reciprocate by attending pastoralists naming ceremonies.

Pastoralists were reported to participate actively in socio-cultural activities of hosting communities especially marriages, burial, naming ceremonies, folk-singing and dance fiestas. Furthermore, the pastoralists rarely organize socio-cultural activities; and where they do, farmers do not significantly participate in socio-cultural activities of pastoralists. This is largely rooted in limited understanding of their cultures and social practices by farmers.

Before the conflict between pastoralist and farmer, Tiv people and the pastoralist do attend cultural festivities of both parties such as Biki, Suna, kwase kenmen burials etc. these activities were common in Logo LGA in particular, Ayilamo, Ukemberegya/Tswarev until in 2011 up till date when the conflict between pastoralist and farmers started. It is observed that currently there is no socio-cultural inter-relationship between pastoralist and farmers. Pastoralists now stay in Logo LGA where especially, farmers fled in fear thereby dominating in numbers. Even in Katsina-Ala where pastoralist had freely stayed with the farmers for a long period of time within the Hausa community, socio-cultural inter-relationship between pastoralist and farmers is said to be personal which is considerably very low. The same situation is at Katsina-Ala and Ukum LGAs.

There were some inter-marriages in Awe LGA, but rarely in Obi and Doma LGAs among pastoralists and farmers. The inter-marriages happen mostly in communities where famers and pastoralists share same religious beliefs.

Inter-marriages are very rare among pastoralists and farmers in recent times Apart from the earlier Survey which shows the few inter-marriages recorded (one in Gwer West and two in Guma LGAs, there has not been new cases of inter-marriage recorded.

In communities visited in Nasarawa state, most children of pastoralists and farmers attend Islamic worship and teaching centers together, while quite a number of them attend same schools in communities like Akanga, Shohon Gari and Sabon Gari communities, while they generally attended same health care facilities regardless of religion or culture. There was some use of traditional dressings and fashion between pastoralists and farmers mostly in communities like Agwatashi and Akanga.

In the communities monitored, there has been increased use of local dressings and fashion by pastoralists. However, the adoption of fashion associated with pastoralists among farmers is low. In all the cultural and career day dressings of children across schools in LGAs, no child from farming household dressed as a pastoralist. Farmers who dress like pastoralists are often called stereotyping names such as ‘Or-fulani’.

Political Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers

In Awe LGA farmers and pastoralists were involved in decision making in the community to a large extent, in Doma and Obi LGAs of Nasarawa state farmers and pastoralists were involved in decisions but not as much as was in Awe LGA.

Monitoring visits to Otukpo, Akpa, Asa of Otukpo LGAs revealed that the various leaders of the pastoralists and farmers were properly integrated into the decisions made in the communities. In Otukpo there was minimal involvement of pastoralist in decision making compared to farmers. Pastoralists were part of community police structures. In Agatu and Ohimini their involvement in decision making is non-existence, as pastoralists are not allowed to settle in these communities.

In the LGAs monitored, it was observed that there was minimal involvement of pastoralist in decision making compared to farmers. Pastoralists were part of community police structures particularly in Makurdi LGA, while in other LGAs their involvement in decision making was limited to participation in security dialogues and meetings. In Katsina-Ala LGA, pastoralists are not involved in decision making processes.

In Nasarawa state farmers and pastoralists do not carry out joint civic activities like sanitization, since they rarely live within the community together, as such everyone carry's out their civic activities separately, though this cannot be attributed to lack of peaceful coexistence between them.

It was however observed that in the International Cattle Market Community area of North Bank, Makurdi LGA Pastoralists and Farmers were seen carrying out joint civic activities like sanitation together.

Generally across the LGAs in Nasarawa state, programmes and distribution of aid targeted both farmers and pastoralists, but a pastoralist in Awe LGA stated that pastoralists have not been benefitting from such programmes and aid because it does not get to them whom such palliative measures are meant for.

In Benue state there has been minimal support for the pastoralists, while farmers received significant support from the Benue state government and NGOs. The distribution of aid, relief and assistance, highly targeted the farmers while little or no assistance did not target the pastoralists. A Chief in Enungba said the assistance to pastoralists is non-existence as after crisis the pastoralists disappear from the communities.

In all the LGAs monitored, there has been minimal support for the pastoralists, while farmers received significant support from the Benue state government and NGOs. The distribution of aid, relief and assistance, highly targeted the farmers while little or no assistance was deliberately provided for the pastoralists.

Also in Katsina-Ala LGA, it is revealed that the pastoralist who are considered indigenous pastoralist living within the Hausa community actively participate in political process and they are registered party (card carrying) members with permanent voters card of the polling units within the

Hausa community, but they revealed that political benefits are not been given to them as a community.

Justice for Pastoralists and Farmers

There was no conflict incidence recorded within the communities monitored in Nasarawa state within the reporting period, pastoralists and farmers mostly indicated that the traditional ruler's palace is usually the last point of call for dispute resolution and that there is rarely any case taken there that are not being resolved peacefully through mediation and dialogue, as such there is a general trust in justice structures available; to the point that cases are called out of court and police station to be resolved at the palace across the communities.

Even though, conflict incidence were not recorded within the communities monitored in the reporting period, population of pastoralists in Otukpo LGA of Benue state indicated that they trusted community peace building and dispute resolution structures highly and will resort to them in cases of conflict incidents. In Agatu LGA any pastoralist sighted in any community is arrested by combine team of Benue State Livestock Guards (BSLG) and joint security task force.

Furthermore, population of pastoralists and farmers across the LGAs indicated that they trusted community peace building and alternative dispute resolution(ADR) structures highly and will resort to them in cases of conflict incidents. Farmers in particular expressed concerns over extortion associated with litigation. However respect for the rule of law is minimal as it is observed that pastoralists still go about with their normal open grazing activities despite prohibition by the Benue State Government.

As for Logo LGA in particular, Awashua, Ukembereagya/tswarev, Ayilmo, the justice system is weak as at the point of filling this information, having observed that the security agents available do take some money from the pastoralists and render unfair judgment against the farmers. The population of pastoralists within these areas has increased, and they graze on the little farms some people did when a there was a short lived peace. The pastoralists are not observing the anti-open grazing law within the listed communities. That when a farmer went for fishing or farming with food the pastoralists will carry the food away without touching the farmer, there in the bush. For Katsina-Ala and Ukum the justice system is very okay, as said by both pastoralist and farmers and both party recommend the DPO for his good work, for protecting lives and properties.

Security Situation in Communities Hosting Pastoralists and Farmers

The police divisions in all LGAs monitored are active and responding to crime and insecurity; in Akanga community of Obi LGA gunshots were heard some few days before the interview and the police responded actively with some few arrests made, but it was said to be armed robbers on the highway, while in Angwan Dawaki of Doma LGA gunshots were heard and about five (5) pastoralist were said to be arrested. During market days police and vigilante check points are seen along roads

and highways leading to all the communities in the various LGAs monitored, and the ‘Operation Puff Adder’ is also visibly in full force.

The police divisions in all LGAs monitored are active and responding to crime and insecurity. In Agatu, there are heavy presence of Joint task force of Air Force, Army, Anti-Riot Police and Civil Defense in check-points from Obagaji-Egba-Ail-Akwu and Okololo axis. A first time visitor will perceive fresh conflict in the area. Furthermore, ‘Operation Whirl Stroke’ launched by the defense headquarters has established military bases in Otukpo, Agatu, Makurdi, Naka, and Gbajimba.

Security situation in Logo LGA is fragile considering the influx of pastoralist in the communities and the already chequered peace between the two groups as well as insincerity on the part of authorities.

Concerns by Farmers

In all the LGAs monitored it is observed that in recent times pastoralists will decline their participation in Vigilante group and peace committee meetings when invited and it is a call for concerns by farmers, also destruction of farm crops by the pastoralists is on the rise, it was revealed that farm crops such as cassava, yam seedlings, sesame seed, and corn among others are been destroyed by pastoralists cattle.

This report is representing the views of traditional rulers, community leaders, youths, police divisional offices, vigilante groups; Benue State Livestock Guards units among other randomly selected individuals in the flashpoint LGAs.

REPORTORIAL TEAM

Fr. Remigius Ihyula

Valentine Kwaghchimin

Tor, Timothy Faor

Adewori Samson

Edache Eddie Onjefu

Gundu Tesem

Titus Ter

©*Foundation for Justice, Development and Peace, Makurdi*
1st March, 2020.