



FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

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SITUATION DASHBOARD

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

ISSUE: 1 (1ST JANUARY, 2020 TO 15TH JANUARY, 2020)

HIGHLIGHT

There has been relative peace in all the LGAs monitored. The stability rating of monitored LGAs is as follows:

Awe	
Doma	
Obi	
Guma	
Gwer-West	
Makurdi	
Buruku	
Kwande	
Tarka	

Key¹: Durable Peace  Stable Peace  Unstable Peace  Conflict 

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

¹ USIP typology of peace www.usip.org

This report reflects the situation of co-existence between pastoralists and farmers in Doma, Obi and Awe Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Nasarawa State; Gwer-West, Guma and Makurdi LGAs as well as Kwande, Buruku and Tarka LGAs all in 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

In Awe, Doma and Obi LGAs, farmers and pastoralist are attending local markets and patronizing the products of one another. Monitored local markets such as Awe weekly markets, Obi and Doma periodic 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.

In Tarka LGA of Benue State, pastoralists are not settled within communities. The pastoralists currently graze into communities adjoining Binev in Buruku such as Awenabo, Avande, Kontien, Konkyya and Aboho. They however do not reach Wanune, Tarhembe, Tior-Tyu and other commercial markets but instead patronize the Buruku and River-side markets. In Kwande LGA of Benue State, few pastoralists are settled in Yaav, Moon and other hinterland communities close to Nigeria's international border with Cameroon and attend the Jato-Aka markets. They were observed to be buying and selling livestock especially live cattles, goats and other hand-made fiber hats and hand fans. They were also

observed to be buying foodstuff especially sorghum and maize grains from farmers. No incidents of conflicts were observed.

In Buruku, pastoralists are settled in communities bordering Logo LGA around Binev area and along the coast of the Katsina-Ala river. They were observed to be selling Nunu and other dairy products to local farmers at the coast while buying foodstuffs from local farmers. Open grazing was observed in Binev Area by pastoralists reported by community members to have come from Tombo, Alu and other locations in Logo LGA of Benue State.

There are pastoralists settled in significant numbers in Kwata (near Agasha), Gbajimba, Yogbo, Udei and parts of Tyulen, community. Pastoralists visit markets on market days to buy and sell basic household food items especially groundnut oil, sorghum and maize. They also sell to local farmers Nunu and some dairy products. It was however observed that patronage of the products from pastoralists is low as most households have boycotted beef and other dairy products. In Gwer West, pastoralists are only settled in Sengev, 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 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 and herders 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, Anter and Apir. Within these communities, pastoralists set up small business facilities for buying and selling with members of hosting communities.

The involvement of pastoralists and farmers in market unions and cooperatives is low in all locations except Makurdi. Across the two states, 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.

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

In Nasarawa and Benue states, pastoralists and farmers have developed easy-to-identify names and slogans for each other. The farmers in both states 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.

In both states, 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 can cause. However, the pastoralists in communities across the states 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 Obi and Agwatashi towns in Nasarawa state, as well as Moon, Yaav, Gbaji and Orkpe communities in Benue State.

Pastoralists were reported to participate actively in socio-cultural activities of hosting communities especially marriages, burials, 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.

Inter-marriages are very rare among pastoralists and farmers. Survey shows that few inter-marriages recorded (one in Gwer West and two in Guma LGAs of Benue State) were between young women from hosting communities and pastoralist men. These women were confirmed to have a history of previously living in northern Nigeria, or understanding either or both of Hausa language and Fulfulde.

In Nasarawa state, children of pastoralists and farmers attend Islamic worship and teaching centres. This is because a significant population of farming families and pastoralists are Muslims. It was observed that population of pastoralist children in conventional schools was very low compared to children of farmers (estimated ratio of 1:35) while their population in Islamic teaching centres and Arabic schools was far higher than those from farming households (estimated ratio of 40:1). In Benue state, farming population are predominantly Christians and traditional religious worshippers. Thus, there is very limited visibility of children from farming households in Islamic worship or teaching centres.

In Benue state, 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 Benue state, 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

Monitoring visits to Doma, Obi and Awe LGAs of Nasarwa state revealed that the various leaders of the pastoralists and farmers were properly integrated into the decisions made in the communities. In all LGAs leaders of farmers associations and herders association were giving strategic positions during the elections of new community leaders and newly inaugurated local security guards and vigilante.

In Benue state all LGAs monitored revealed 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.

Monitoring in Nasarawa state showed that various government sensitization programmes through radio and television targeted issues affecting both farmers and pastoralists. Aid and assistance was provided by the Nasarawa state government and other NGOs to the displaced populations in various camps where farmers and pastoralist were seeking refuge.

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 was deliberately provided for the pastoralists.

Justice for Pastoralists and Farmers

Although, conflict incidence were not recorded within the communities monitored in the reporting period, population of pastoralists and farmers across Benue and Nasarawa states indicated that they trusted community peace building and dispute resolution structures highly and will resort to them in cases of conflict incidents. Farmers in particular expressed concerns over extortion associated with litigation.

Security Situation in Communities Hosting Pastoralists and Farmers

The police divisions in all LGAs monitored are active and responding to crime and insecurity. Also, check-points have been setup along roads and highways leading to all the LGAs monitored. These check-points are manned by the police, joint security special forces

and the military. Furthermore, operation whirl stroke launched by the defense headquarters has established military bases in Makurdi, Naka, Otukpo, Gbajimba, Obagaji, Obi, Awe, Doma and Keana.

METHODOLOGY

This situation dashboard is an outcome of evidence based data gathering within communities that constitute flashpoint of violence and conflicts between pastoralists and farmers. Across Doma, Obi and Awe LGAs of Nasarawa State; and Gwer-West, Guma and Makurdi LGAs as well as Kwande, Buruku and Tarka LGAs in Benue State a total of three Data Gathering Assistants (DGAs) devoted 10 days to monitor the level of peaceful coexistence between pastoralists and farmers using a Peace Tracking Index (PETI) tool. The tool analyzed a series of economic, social, political, justice and security indicators to analyze and draw conclusions. The findings reflect a significant reality of the situation within the LGAs in the first half of January 2020.

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17th January, 2020*