



No Tribe in Crime

Changing Pastoralism and Conflict in Nigeria's Middle Belt.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper was written by Chitra Nagarajan who also conducted the research interviews that inform its analysis with the invaluable assistance of Ibrahim Hassan and Phebe Banu. Lisa Inks and Danjuma Saidu provided advice, guidance and support throughout the research process. The team also thanks and acknowledges the contributions of all those who took part in the research.

1.0 Executive summary

Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns of the danger of a single story. If we hear only a single story about another person or people, we risk a critical misunderstanding. The herder-farmer violent conflict in the Middle Belt is often presented as a problem of the cultural and economic lifestyle of a certain group. This inaccurate representation of the dynamics of the conflict has often exacerbated the conflict. This study was commissioned to try and change this by getting a deeper understanding of the dynamics among pastoralist groups and between pastoralists and farmers in areas that have experienced significant levels of violent conflict.

This ethnographic study provides detailed accounts of internal socio-cultural dynamics within and between the main pastoral groups and farmers in areas that have experienced significant violence in five states of Nigeria's North East, North West and the Middle Belt. It examines how these dynamics affect and are affected by conflict and presents the groupings with which pastoralists self-identify, the key challenges they face and how they have adapted to these new realities. A closer look at intra-pastoralist relations, how different groups interact and the contours of conflict dynamics between them presents an interesting picture of an evolving culture responding to disparate survival needs that threaten its very existence. Relations between farmers and pastoralists, and the dynamics of conflict reveals limitations in policy responses that have had unintended consequences.

1.1 Summary of findings

The notion of “sudden influx” of herders from other parts of West Africa is implausible and may not be the driver of conflict in these areas. This study found that Pastoralist migrations are slow and predictable to avoid sickening of animals. Pastoralists have a particular zone of migration as cattle adapt to the ecology of the areas in which they live. If pastoralists move to a new area suddenly, it is likely that many of their cattle will sicken and die due to diseases present in the area and different types of pasture both of which they have not had the time to adapt to. Movement to a new area altogether is done slowly from location to location over the years so cows can slowly adapt to changing ecology. It can take 10 to 15 years to permanently migrate to a completely new location.

Even though considered one community by many people, (including policy makers), pastoralists are highly Pluralist (diverse). Pluralism within this community manifests itself through the existence of multiple roles, identities, norms, values and beliefs, which come along with disparate survival demands threatening the internal cohesion of pastoralist communities. For example, a given way of dressing and prayer may be highly legitimate and meaningful to Rindobe and deeply illegitimate and even irreligious to Jodibe.

This study found that decentralized decision-making within the Rindobe actually contributes to conflict. Rindobe, the pastoralists that migrate, are comprised of highly autonomous families, where each family uses a specific type of specialized communication to process a family specific decision, creating inter-group tensions, suspicions and sometimes conflicts. This devolved decision structure with no central coordination, has limited collective consensus, slows creation of collective meaning and disrupts continuation of communication, especially around issues that cause and drive violent conflicts.

A decrease in negotiation around permission of passage between the Rindobe and Jodibe tribal leaders and herders contributes to conflict. Even though Migratory groups of pastoralists interact with the *ardo* – or nomadic leader - of locations through which they are passing, increasingly herders do not inform the local *ardo* of their presence or movement and that is where problems have arisen, especially if they are passing through quickly in transit. For example, to inform them of their presence, to request permission to stay in the location for some time and to ask for advice. This is because of increased stereotypes between Rindobe and Jodibe and fear by migratory pastoralists that they will be turned down or met with hostility, so they've adopted more of a 'get in and out quickly' approach.

1.2 Introduction

Recent years have seen recurrent violence in many locations across northern Nigeria that are resource based, aggravated by ethnic and religious identities and driven by political and electoral contestation. Although conflict dynamics and root causes can be more complex and deeper, this violence is frequently spoken of as being caused by conflict between farmers and pastoralists. Incomplete, inaccurate and biased narratives in Nigerian and outside circles abound. This representation flattens the complexities of the conflict and often misrepresents its causes, manifestations and impacts. Subsequent policy and programming responses are often inadequate and conflict insensitive. They can fuel and exacerbate conflict and trigger violence.

While much is written and said about this conflict, there is limited evidence-based research on Nigerian pastoralist groups, often demonised but little understood. The purpose of this study is to develop deeper understanding of the dynamics among pastoralist groups and between pastoralists and farmers in areas that have experienced significant violence and examine how these dynamics affect and are affected by conflict. Findings will be presented to donors and development agencies, politicians, government officials and media practitioners to engage them in discussion on best ways to address conflict.

After an overview of methodology used, this paper presents the study's findings in three chapters. The first findings chapter starts by describing pastoralism in Nigeria today. It outlines the groupings with which pastoralists self-identified, the key challenges they face and how they have adapted to these new realities. The second chapter looks at intra-pastoralist relations, how different groups interact and the contours of conflict dynamics between them. The third chapter examines relations between farmers and pastoralists, giving context, observing dynamics of conflict and violence and noting policy responses that have had unintended consequences. The paper ends with presenting its conclusions and recommendations for action by government, donors and practitioners.

1.3 Methodology

This qualitative study uses symbolic interactionist and grounded theory approaches¹ and seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1. What are the different pastoralist groups with which people self-define? Where do these groups originate and how have their movements changed in the last five years?**

¹Symbolic interactionism is an approach which centres the viewpoint of those who participate in the research whereas grounded theory is a process whereby the data gathered is used as the basis for theoretical concepts that are subsequently discovered.

2. **What are the views and conflict narratives these different groups have about themselves, other pastoralist groups, and external groups, such as groups of farmers? To what extent do external narratives (from external groups, from media, from national policymakers, etc.) affect this?**
3. **How do these perceptions affect conflict dynamics within pastoralist groups and between pastoralists and other groups?**
4. **What are the gender dynamics around intra pastoralist relations and how does gender impact relations with other non-pastoralist groups?**

1.4 Overarching Principles

Conflict sensitivity and awareness of and sensitivity to gender dynamics were guiding principles for the research. These concepts are seen as mutually constitutive and reinforcing i.e. conflict sensitivity has to integrate awareness of gender dynamics and gender analysis has to be sensitive to conflict dynamics.

Given the subject matter is highly sensitive and contested, ensuring conflict sensitivity is crucial. Talking about conflict dynamics and trends, particularly in communities affected by conflict, may in itself exacerbate and create tensions. The study was designed and implemented to mitigate its negative impacts and increase its positive impacts on conflict dynamics. For example, given the risks of group discussions creating or exacerbating conflict dynamics, the research team only conducted one-on-one interviews. Research tools were designed and delivered in conflict sensitive ways to not only 'do no harm' but actually 'do more good' including through integrating appreciative inquiry.² This research paper does not use conflict insensitive language, for example by calling groups by names they do not wish to be known, and it presents findings in ways that are as sensitive as possible to conflict dynamics. We commit to ensuring dissemination and influencing processes following publication will also be conflict sensitive.

Awareness of and sensitivity to gender dynamics is integral to this study, particularly as writing and analysis around farmer-pastoralist conflict tends to under-examine gender dynamics or to perpetuate narratives that owe their basis to gendered stereotypes rather than to evidence. Women took active roles as respondents and researchers in this study. Tools and research methodologies were designed to elicit findings around the ways gender impacts all research questions as well as to answer the question specifically around gender. Data collection was done in ways sensitive to gender dynamics in research communities and to encourage women to be respondents and speak openly and honestly. This paper examines the gender dynamics around intra-pastoralist relations, highlights different perceptions and realities when it comes to conflict dynamics and trends and analyses ways gender norms and narratives drive conflict and peace.

A robust ethical approach was followed, with systems put in place to ensure the highest standards were adhered to at all times. These standards include ensuring respondents were clear about research aims and the risks and benefits of involvement. Respondents received adequate support during the research process to be able to participate fully and gave informed consent. Information was treated sensitively and confidentially and anonymity preserved. No names are used in this report. Speakers

²This approach focuses on the positive, valuing what currently exists and envisioning what might be. The study aims to uncover positive experiences and connectors where communities have pulled together and shown leadership and cohesion in addressing conflict causes and dynamics. Participants were encouraged to dwell on these positive aspects at the start and end of interviews so they do not leave thinking about the amount of tension, conflict and violence in their community and the impact of this on them.

are identified using only their gender, livelihood group, ethnic group and location. The team established a referral system to be used in the eventuality of any disclosure of gender-based violence or child protection concerns. No such information was received.

1.5 Research Methods

Researchers conducted interviews in five states (Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba) and in Abuja, the nation’s capital, in March and April 2019. Research locations are shown in Table 1 below. The research team conducted interviews in each location, sometimes interviewing respondents from other locations there, in state capitals and Abuja.

The team chose these locations to ensure geographical spread and on the basis of current dynamics and past experiences of farmer/ pastoralist conflict. Other considerations included ensuring representation of different types of pastoralist practices and issues of access, safety and security.

In some areas, pastoralists had left communities due to conflict. We interviewed them in places where they are now present. For example, in Bassa LGA in Plateau state, we spoke with pastoralists who used to be in Miango in Rukuba where they now lived and we met pastoralists who had left Benue in Nasarawa.

Table 1: Research Locations

LGA	Communities
Benue	
1. Logo	Anyii
2. Makurdi	Sabon Gida Agan
Kaduna	
1. Kachia	Laduga
2. Sanga	Gwadei, Ungwanungu and Mayir
Nasarawa	
1. Awe	Angwan Akote
2. Doma	Cuibo
Plateau	
1. Bassa	Miango and Rukuba
2. Riyom	Ganawuri
Taraba	
1. Ardo Kola	Sunkani
2. Sardauna	Lemesaiga, Lemetela and Gembu

The major communities living in these study areas include, Hausa, Nindam, Bajju, Fulani, Jaba, Mada, Namana, Ninzo, and Adara in Kaduna. Akwanga- Mada, Eggon and Fulani in Nasrawa, and Jukun, Kutep, Ichien, Fulani, and Tiv in Taraba. Benue has the Tiv, Idoma, Fulani, and Hausa, while Plateau is populated by the Birom, Maghavul, Fulani, and Hausa.

While some of these communities have been characterized as aggressors, collaborators or even victims of the conflict, this study was restricted to understanding the dynamics among pastoralist groups and between pastoralists and farmers. A better understanding of the difference between the various groups now residing in the Middle Belt and how these populations are changing conflict dynamics will require a more in-depth study.

We interviewed a total of 70 respondents (28 women, 42 men) of which 44 were pastoralists (19 women, 25 men) and 21 were farmers (8 women, 13 men). We also interviewed a female academic and a male government official who had valuable insights to share and three male representatives of the pastoralists associations Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore and Pastoral Resolve (PARE).³

We define a pastoralist as someone whose economic system or way of life is based on raising and herding of livestock. While other ethnic groups pursue pastoralism in other parts of Nigeria, all pastoralists present in the research locations studied were Fulbe.⁴ While Fulbe and pastoralism are synonymous in public discourse, not all pastoralists are Fulbe and not all Fulbe are pastoralists. Many non-pastoralist groups also own and raise cattle, including through interactions with Fulbe for example by accepting cattle as payment or paying Fulbe people to graze cattle on their behalf. However, as their livelihood and way of life is not dependent on this activity, they are not classified as pastoralists in this study or in the popular imagination.

We selected respondents to ensure diversity in terms of spread of age, gender and representation from different pastoralist groups. This study aims to uncover dynamics within and between pastoralist communities so we deliberately chose to interview a higher number of pastoralist respondents. Apart from representatives of pastoralist associations, we did not interview Fulbe who live in towns. A few respondents had lost their cattle due to violence but most respondents were engaged in rearing cattle as their principal livelihood either exclusively or in conjunction with farming. We ensured respondents included pastoralists from different Fulbe clans and who pursued different patterns of movement and settlement. While we took steps to ensure a high number of women respondents (40 percent of the total), complete gender parity was not possible given time constraints and the need to interview community leaders in each location and representatives of pastoralist associations, all of whom were men.

Before starting data collection in any location, the team, working with people from or with in-depth knowledge of communities, gathered information on the different pastoralist groups present in the area and made preliminary arrangements required to arrange interviews. We made efforts to encourage research participants to feel comfortable with the research process and in discussing sensitive issues of power, discrimination and additional axes of marginalisation such as age, ethnicity, gender, occupational group, religion and location.

We held interviews in quiet, secluded locations and, if other people came there, either changed venues or asked these people to leave. We sought and obtained consent to audio record all interviews. These recordings were sent to transcribers to type up a verbatim record to ensure the most accurate documentation. A grounded theory approach was used to code and analyse data.

Respondents chose the language of interview. While many respondents chose Fulfulde, other languages used were English, Hausa, Irigwe, Mambilla and Tiv. We conducted some interviews in more than one language, following the lead of respondents in switching languages. In cases where the research team did not know the language in which respondents wished to speak, those with the requisite language and interpretation skills assisted us. This paper uses quotation marks when describing respondents' comments but the reader should bear in mind that these words have been translated into English as almost all respondents spoke in another language.

³PARE are a Mercy Corps partner and supported this research.

⁴While this group is known as Fulani by those outside it, this paper will use Fulbe as this term is used by group members to describe themselves. You could note that 'Fulani' is the Hausa term for them and that they have different ascribed names across West Africa.

1.5.1 Limitations

The study does not aim to be and cannot be representative of all those living in research locations let alone in northern Nigeria but rather provides data on experiences and thoughts of respondents. Constraints of time and budget necessarily limited its scope, including of those who participated. For example, interviewing more pastoralists and representatives from community-based associations would have been advantageous. However, the number of interviews possible within the timeframe available limited the range of people with whom we could speak.

We sought a balance between ensuring a range of perspectives and keeping within these constraints. We prioritised meeting different groups of pastoralists, even if arranging interviews took time and meant we spoke with fewer people, rather than interviewing pastoralists easiest to access. Finding and seeking the consent of purely 'nomadic' pastoralists to be interviewed proved challenging. This difficulty is partly as many previously nomadic pastoralists have become semi-nomadic/ semi-settled. Additionally, those who continue to pursue nomadic styles of movement tend to interact much less with others, in large part due to conflict dynamics.

When accessed, nomadic pastoralists were wary of talking openly and tended to be guarded in responses. This suspicion is unsurprising given how they are often viewed by others, including pastoralists more settled. Given time constraints, it was difficult to build up the trust required among this group. Although some respondents in this category spoke openly, many did not. This dynamic may have been different if the research team had a longer period to spend with each group, although it may have also be difficult to gain agreement to do so.

Moreover, there were some groups, namely Fulbe from Zamfara, who pastoralist respondents mentioned as being problematic or involved in violence or criminality that we were not able to meet. Suspicion remained among pastoralist respondents even if few, if any, Fulbe from Zamfara were present in their locality. We were not able to go to locations where these groups are present due to reasons of security, time and access. The team had not put in place the arrangements necessary to go to Zamfara itself as this was not one of the research locations identified. In research locations where Fulbe from Zamfara were present, these groups tend to try to remain under the radar. They move often. By the time their locations became known and contact made, the research team had moved on to another state. We were not able to go back to interview these groups, particularly as it is likely they would have moved on again by the time we reached the area in which they were known to be staying.

2.0 Pastoralism in Nigeria today

Pastoralists have experienced great change in recent years. This chapter starts with the different groups which pastoralists use to identify themselves before outlining key challenges they face and ways they are adapting to their new realities. It aims to bring forth their perspectives and so is drawn from interviews with pastoralists exclusively.

2.1 Group identification

It is difficult to classify pastoralists using clear-cut categories as a high degree of fluidity appears in practice but there are a number of different ways pastoralist respondents defined themselves and others. Groupings were according to occupation, clan, movement and location.

2.2 Occupation

The Fulbe are divided into those who farm (Fulbe Remaibe), those who rear cattle (Fulbe Duroobe) and those who live in towns and do not rear cattle (Fulbe Wuro). As our focus is on pastoralism, this section presents the experiences of mostly Fulbe who rear cattle, some of whom also farm crops, except for a few respondents who, after losing their cattle, have turned to crop farming.

There are many Fulbe clans and sub-clans and, while it is beyond the scope of this study to develop a classification of Fulbe clans in northern Nigeria, their clan is a way Fulbe respondents self-defined. Clans maintain kinship via marriage, visits, commiseration/ condolence visits and oral histories. Fulbe can mobilise across clan lines when it comes to conflict and supporting each other in its aftermath. Many respondents, especially older ones, had knowledge and understanding of the history of their clan including the locations from which they were said to originate and their pattern of migration from that place. Relations between clans will be explored further in the chapter on intra-pastoralist relations and dynamics.

2.3 The settled/ nomadic spectrum

One of the major ways respondents classified themselves and other pastoralists was movement/ settlement patterns. There is a spectrum here between nomads who have no area of permanent residence and sedentary groups often involved in farming and livestock rearing who graze their cattle near their residence. In between these ends of the spectrum are semi-nomadic/ semi-settled groups which migrate at specific times of the year according to the onset of the rainy and dry seasons and agricultural cycles over different ranges, from shorter ranges a few kilometres away to longer ranges of up to 300km. As discussed in the next section, families can have some members who live in one location while others move.

While there seems to be fluidity across the spectrum and individuals and families can move along spectrum and back at different life stages, respondents broadly classified pastoralists into two groups. The first is the Rindobe, the pastoralists that migrate. Their main source of livelihood is selling milk, products from milk and cows. Respondents also referred to this group as the Mbororo, a Hausa term for a bird that flies from one place to another which is seen as derogatory by some respondents, or the Leyyi'en, a term used to describe people who move who are unknown to the speaker. Most migratory pastoralists self-defined as Rindobe which is why this paper uses this term. Nobody called themselves Le'ien. The second group is the Jodibe or Taku'eTaaku' who are settled in one area although their young men can be moving to graze cattle elsewhere. While their sources of livelihood still include pastoralism, they often also engage in farming, trading, tailoring, riding motorcycle taxis and other occupations.

In practice, while there are clear differences at either end of the spectrum, for those in the middle, whether someone is Rindobe or Jodibe heavily depends on to what degree they self-identify. Respondents who identify as Rindobe and Jodibe often had similar movement patterns in reality, with some family members staying in one location while others moved. One female respondent said that the Rindobe can become Jodibe if they have settled in one place for at least two years but respondents expressed a wide range of views of what it means to actually be settled. This self-classification may be influenced by strong narratives from settled pastoralists of how much better it is to be settled and how they are (morally) superior, as discussed in the next chapter. As a result, some pastoralists who are more migratory may describe themselves to others as Jodibe or, conversely, may want to cling to the Rindobe identity out of solidarity and a strong sense of identity, even if they are less migratory than before, because of this disapproval.

2.4 Location

Respondents who were more settled, also identified with the location in which they lived. Some respondents spoke of themselves as being the ‘indigenous Fulbe’ of a particular location to stress their claims to pursuing livelihoods on these areas of land. They do so in the face of narratives around indigeneity from non-pastoralists such as farming communities and to distinguish themselves from other pastoralists who arrived more recently into the area or who are engaged in movement between areas. In some cases, respondents saw this indigeneity status as extending across large geographical areas as their ancestors had come to the area a long time ago but had not settled in any one place. For example, respondents living in the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba state spoke of how long their families had lived in the area even if the practice of staying in one place had developed only in recent decades.

2.5 Influence and decision making

Respondents spoke of how decision-making happens in the family, movement group, clan and according to location/ proximity. It varied greatly across research locations and took different forms for pastoralists who are more settled and those who migrate.

The primary unit of organisation is the family. Respondents, particularly those who were more migratory, described a large degree of autonomy. Families made decisions, for example around movement, without consulting or informing anyone else. They could join or leave movement groups at their discretion and decide to settle in or leave an area. Across all pastoralists, while the patriarch was said to be the one who made decisions, they often did so in consultation with their wives and grown children. Respondents spoke about the influence women have in the family, particularly over their sons. Some respondents said this influence exceeds that of fathers due to the closer relationship and more time sons spend with mothers and that this influence could be used to ensure peace or to drive conflict.

Those who migrate spoke of doing so in groups of a number of households in search of pasture. These groups could include several clans, although levels of inter-marriage often blurred these lines, or consist of households of the same one or two clans moving together. While these groups often comprise those connected by family and kinship ties, their make-up can be amorphous, with people joining and leaving the group. Some respondents spoke of moving in a group of a core four to five households consisting only of those linked by blood and kinship ties, for example four brothers moving together, with others joining and leaving the group according to direction of travel. Other respondents spoke of moving in larger groupings of different families and clans. They noted the advantages of moving in larger groups for increased safety during a time of increased violence and criminality and as others can look after your children and belongings.

“We are 15-20 households moving together. Four groups – the Bodi, Yabaji, Fikaji and Ba’en - move together and we meet and move with other groups. This group was moving together when I was born. Other clans come and stay with us. We intermarry and become one and people would leave the group also. They could meet another clan and choose to stay in the area and integrate with them. When we met other clans facing the same way, we became one as we had the same interest. We also had people who weren’t even Fulbe but boys we hired to look after the cows who became Bodi and intermarried.” Fulbe man interviewed in Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau

Among the Jodibe Joodiibe (settled pastoralists), leadership hierarchies, although they did not always work in practice, are more established. While in some research locations, each clan had their own leaders who came together to discuss issues such as outbreaks of cattle disease, Fulbe leadership recognised by the government and other communities is tied to geographical locations and covers different clans and Fulbe settlements in the area. As for many non-pastoralist groups in northern Nigeria, there is a multi-tiered system with the *laamido* at the top then followed by the *ardo* (‘leader’)

then the ardo's cabinet consisting in decreasing level of hierarchy of *wakili*, *madaki*, *chiroma* and *jauro*, all of whom are responsible for different geographical areas. An *ardon ardodi* is selected by all the ardos in a particular LGA or state to represent them. Migratory groups of pastoralists interact with the ardo of locations through which they were passing, for example to inform them of their presence, to request permission to stay in the location for some time and to ask for advice.

Women played key roles in the community when it came to the planning and organising events such as naming ceremonies, weddings and festivities as well as coming together to discuss issues and inform group decision making. The position of 'women's leaders' in many locations has come about due to initiatives by politicians or government officials as well as civil society organisations rather than organically. Their role is to organise women to hear politicians during campaigns, receive and distribute goods to women and mobilise women to attend awareness raising sessions and to participate in campaigns such as those around child immunisation.

If women have issues they wish to raise, they go to the head of the family who takes the matter to the leader who discusses it with other elders. In some locations, women from all clans come together to discuss, deliberate and take their concerns to elders. For example, women respondents in Laduga grazing reserve spoke of how they come together to discuss conflict dynamics then choose one of their members to present on their behalf to the leader. He calls a gathering which they can then address.

In practice, decision-making is highly devolved and operates at different levels. While the *ardos* have a certain level of power and influence, this is not absolute. Individuals, families and groupings of pastoralists that come together in migration make decisions for example around movement without informing the *ardo*. Some respondents talked of how many of the *ardos* of today are politically appointed and, as will be described later, create and perpetuate conflict.

3.0 An era of challenges

Respondents talked of how things had been in the past and about the challenges they currently faced, from changing climate and insufficient pasture to reduced social cohesion and increased livestock disease and death. While relations between farmers and pastoralists is covered in more detail below, this section touches on the ways this conflict and violence is affecting pastoralists' lives.

3.1 Practices of pastoralism in the past

Pastoralists' way of life greatly depends on context, varying between research states. While research locations in Plateau and southern Kaduna have a long history of settled pastoralism, many parts of Nasarawa and Benue have historically had few settled pastoralists and many migratory pastoralists and Taraba has had both settled and migratory pastoralists.

In the past, more pastoralists moved between different locations than is the case today. Some pastoralists passed dry and rainy seasons in different places and moved in between. Others would stay in one location for one season and move between areas the rest of the time. For example, one Fulbe woman told us how her family would leave Zaria during harvest time and move to new locations, staying around two months in each place, until the rains came when they would move back to Zaria.

Pastoralists have a particular zone of migration as cattle adapt to the ecology of the areas in which they live. If pastoralists move to a new area suddenly, it is likely that many of their cattle will sicken and die due

to diseases present in the area and different types of pasture both of which they have not had the time to adapt to. Movement to a new area altogether is done slowly from location to location over the years so cows can slowly adapt to changing ecology. It can take 10 to 15 years to permanently migrate to a completely new location.

Those who are more nomadic also move slowly to allow their cattle time to adjust. Nomadic pastoralists interviewed spoke of how they had moved long distances over decades, passing time in each location before moving on. One respondent spoke of how he and his family had migrated from Zamfara to Niger to Kwara to Oyo to Lagos to Benin Republic to Togo to Cameroon to Taraba, staying for anytime between two to 10 years in each place. When asked why he engaged in this movement, he replied: "When a farmer in one piece of land gets 20 bags of maize and is told the same amount of land in a different place will get 40 bags, where would they prefer to farm? We moved as we get more in another place. Some places are good for animals and they become healthy and strong and their productivity increases but, in other areas, the grasses are not good and the cattle do not feed so it is not good for them" (Fulbe man in Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba).

A Fulbe woman who is over 80 years old said her family had no permanent settlement but would go anywhere the grazing was good: "It is only Lagos I've not gone to." She described how women walked and those not able to do so would ride on horses or donkeys. Upon arrival at a new location, women would cook food, hawk milk and construct houses while the men scouted places for grazing. She spoke of how things had changed as a result of grazing areas no longer being open, as conflict had set in along cattle routes and as there was no pasture. She has now settled in Ganawuri in Riyom LGA, Plateau as she is no longer able to move due to physical frailty.

Pastoralists scout areas before moving. One respondent spoke of going with other pastoralists using public transport or motorbikes to search for new places then moving with his family and cows. During the initial trip, he would meet pastoralists staying there (both migratory and settled) to say he was interested in moving and ask where they stayed to then settle nearby. Then, the family would move to the new areas, whether by walking or by public transport, and construct the settlement in which they will stay. Depending on the kind of movement they favour, pastoralists can stay for months or

"We were in Jota Marabu on the border between Benue and Taraba. We moved due to lack of pasture and would go as far as Shito in Ikun local government in Benue to graze. It would take four days to go there. We would stay for some time then return. We moved to Anyii because of water and pasture. We would be in Anyii in the rainy season and Buruku in the dry season, taking three days to move in between... Some years we would go to Kwatan Sule in Guma local government. There, they are rice farmers so after they remove the rice, we would buy rice husks and give our animals. Each year, we would go to either Kwatan Sule or Buruku. We were doing this for 35 to 40 years" Fulbe man, displaced from Anyii in Benue to Angwan Akote, Awe LGA, Nasarawa

years in one place before moving on again. Many respondents, particularly older ones, said life was better in the past. They spoke of increased social cohesion and lower levels of suspicion.

3.2 Changing climate

Pastoralists talked about the impact of changes in climate and people moving away due to lack of rain: “Before, we would get rain after five months but now it takes seven months for it to rain. Many people move because the lack of rain affects pasture. Many of my relations moved to Cameroon because the

“Life was very good and nice before. We could trek from here to Kafanchan and get anything you want. People didn’t look at you as a threat to society and you can go to any house to ask for water.” Fulbe woman, Ungwanungu, Sanga LGA, Kaduna who was over 70 years in age recounting her childhood migrating.

grasses are no longer as much as they were before as when animals continue to graze, the grasses will die” (Fulbe man in Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba). However, while respondents talked of making movement choices due to news pasture was no longer good in certain places, changing climate was not a strong theme that came through. When talking about pasture and water, respondents’ key challenge was rather farming in grazing routes and areas rather than rainfall changes and variability, heat or any other climatic factor.

3.3 Expansion of farming areas and insufficient pasture

Grazing routes and reserves are areas officially designated for pastoralists’ use by law. Their delineation is well known by communities in the locality and, historically, there have been strong norms and customs that these areas should not be used by others. However, these areas have been gradually encroached upon due to failure by different levels of government and community leadership

“The grazing areas have been overtaken by farmers and cattle routes have been blocked and there is not enough space to graze so animals destroy crops. The cattle routes need to be expanded for cows to pass. You cannot carry cows on your head. Wherever route is blocked, it is a serious problem to find how to pass... Other people think pastoralists are not human beings. If they saw us as human beings, they would not block cattle routes.” Fulbe man, Cuibo, Doma LGA, Nasarawa

structures in enforcement and the weakening of these structures and mechanisms for preservation of areas for grazing. Almost every pastoralist respondent talked about lack of pasture due to expansion of farming onto grazing reserves and routes by farmers from the area and elsewhere. They try to divert their cattle to new areas but often also fail to find pasture there. While many respondents expressed sympathy for farmers who had farmed in these areas and whose crops were destroyed as a result of cattle grazing, they also were extremely frustrated about this state of affairs.

3.4 Reduced social cohesion and increased fear of violence

Respondents talked of reduced social cohesion among pastoralists and between farmers and pastoralists. They had been experiencing a lot of conflict and tension along grazing routes, in many places, for a number of years. Fear had been present for significant periods of time, linked to conflict between farmers and pastoralists as well as events such as the Jos crisis of 2001 and the post-election violence in Kaduna in 2011. One young man who grazes said, “We are not sure about getting to Magama until we get there as anything can happen. The change has been since the start of the Jos crisis in 2001” (Fulbe man, Ungwanungu, Sanga LGA, Kaduna). Mothers spoke of being afraid for their sons who travelled to graze, praying for them and fearing they would not see them again.

“The movement is still on but we have had to change our routes due to conflict. The route through Berom land is not accessible and other routes near towns and cities have been taken over. We need to stay and move before they awake. We now move to Bauchi, Niger, Enugu and Abuja. The length of movement has increased because cities and towns have taken over grazing lands. So, some of us return in a year, some do not come back if they find some place more conducive and some have gone to Cameroon.” Fulbe man in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau

While many respondents linked farming on grazing routes and areas to increased farming populations, some saw a direct correlation between reduced pasture and conflict, believing farming was a deliberate strategy done as a form of revenge and to spark violence. As one Fulbe man interviewed in Ungwanungu in Sanga LGA, Kaduna said, “They are deliberately farming [on stock routes and grazing land]. What can it mean? It means they want trouble.” Pastoralists have to keep more careful watch over cattle to ensure they are not killed or stolen. “Before, you could push your cows to the bush and they would graze freely and you don’t need to go because nothing will happen and there was no farmland in the bush. But now, everywhere

has been taken over by farmers. There was security, no thieves, enough water and pasture but now you cannot graze comfortably” (Fulbe man, Cuibo, Doma LGA, Nasarawa). They had moved from places which had become ‘no go’ areas or stopped going there for fear of violence. This dynamic intensified pressure on relatively safe areas due to increased populations of people and cattle. Conflict dynamics between farmers and pastoralists will be explored later on.

3.5 Increased livestock disease and death

Respondents described difficulties finding enough food and water for cattle and how herds were getting weaker, reproducing less and producing less milk. Incidence of cattle disease such as booru (foot and mouth disease), hanta (liverflukes) and sammore (trypanosomosis) had increased, linked to hunger as cows are scavenging and eating whatever they can find and the collapse of veterinary services. Migratory pastoralists said their cattle were stronger, healthier and had higher resistance to disease and climate changes. This difference was as they were used to moving to new places, adapting to the ecology there, and consuming pasture from different areas with a variety of nutrients. However, as many were no longer able to move as they had previously done, they were seeing resulting reduced resilience in livestock.

They spoke of cattle dying. Some respondents had seen their entire herd killed. Others spoke of cattle death due to sudden movement. When movement has to occur quickly due to conflict, pastoralists stay as close to the original location as possible. Where they are forced to suddenly move to a new area, a high number of cattle sicken and die. For example, respondents forced to leave Benue for Nasarawa had lost many livestock which had moved to a new area too quickly to be able to cope with different pasture and cattle disease found there. They had moved their cattle back

“We have to move from place to place and allow slow adaptation for animals but we moved at once to a place too far so there was no slow adaptation and this affected animals. If we wanted to move here, the animals would have come in the rainy season for three to four months then go back to Sabon Gidan Agan to adapt to the environment but we had to take the animals at once.” Fulbe man displaced from Benue now in Nasarawa

to Benue despite the dangers as they felt all animals would die if they remained in Nasarawa. Even the more resilient cattle of migratory pastoralists sometimes died in these circumstances.

4.0 Adapting to new realities

Due to the challenges outlined above, pastoralists have had to adapt and make many changes. Faced with declining pasture and the spectre of conflict, they are changing where they graze, how they graze and for how long they graze. Many pastoralists have chosen or been forced to settle in one location and are no longer as migratory as they had been before. The young men of the family, sometimes with their wives and children, now move with cattle while elders are sedentary. In many cases, young men form large groups for protection and to share the tasks done by the whole family previously. Pastoralists, particularly those remaining in one place, are pursuing new livelihoods. These dynamics have changed power relations within families and communities, with older men in particular complaining of diminishing power and respect.

4.1 Changing grazing patterns and finding new ways to feed cattle

Many pastoralists have changed grazing patterns. They take long detours to get around cattle routes blocked by farming or because of the threat of violence along the route. They have to go further into ‘the interior’ i.e. away from human habitation away from the areas they used to graze. Or, frequently, they have to use roads, because the stock routes are blocked. The tarmac damages the animals’ hooves and risks collision with vehicles. Movement can be longer or shorter. While some respondents are now travelling further distances and spending longer lengths of time in relatively newer areas, others are now sticking closer to home.

Not only are many routes and areas now farmland but, in some areas, a new type of grass that animals cannot eat grows. Respondents spoke of carrying cutlasses rather than the sticks of before to cut down leaves from trees [forage] to feed livestock. However, doing so is not always available as trees have been cut for firewood. When conflict is triggered, having cutlasses around mean conflict is more likely to lead to serious violence as they have been used to wound opponents.

“I have been grazing cows for 20 years. When I was small, it was easier and simpler to graze but now, the grasses are no longer there. Most places are farmland. The places before had grass but now we see this new kind of shrubs. The grass cannot grow so we cannot graze. This started five years ago. We get less rain now compared to the past. For the past two years, the weather has been hot. Many animals died because the dry season became longer and there is nothing for the animals to get. Most streams dried up so it is difficult to get water. Before, we would climb trees and cut leaves when the dry season became harsh and there was no grass but there has been cutting of trees in the last two years because farmers are looking for money and food security. Now, we can only follow animals and pick up anything they can eat. If not, the animals return hungry.”
Fulbe man, Gwadei, Sanga LGA, Kaduna

4.2 Settlement

“In time, movement may become history”
Fulbe woman,
Ganawuri, Riyom LGA,

All pastoralist respondents spoke of a movement towards settlement. This shift occurred at different times for different respondents and locations. For example, in Plateau state, it was dated to the time of the state of emergency declared by Obasanjo from May to November 2004

as a response to the communal crises in Plateau State whereas others said this had happened more recently in the past five years. While this shift has intensified in recent years, it is part of a wider trend. According to a male Pastoral Resolve representative, “In the 1960s, 70-80 percent of pastoralists in Nasarawa and Benue were nomadic but we have seen spontaneous settlement from the 1970s onwards due to changing culture, expansion of cultivation and government policies... Now, less than 10 percent of Nigerian pastoralists are totally nomadic with no permanent settlement.” Many respondents believed Fulbe nomadism was dying out as a way of life.

Pastoralists settle in areas previously known to them and after asking for and receiving permission from the local ardo and other community leaders. Respondents spoke of three broad ways settlement took place. The first scenario is where the whole family settles and their cattle, if any remain, graze nearby. The second is where the entire family settles in a place except for its young men who continue to migrate with the cattle. The third is where elders stay in one place while younger people migrate with the cattle. Most of the men in the group walk to new locations with animals while the women, children and one or two men use public transport as this is easier and safer. Sometimes, one wife may remain with the elders while the other wife travels with her husband. Pastoralists can move from one form of settlement to another, first settling their elderly family members then their wives and children before stopping movement themselves. In many cases, this change happened as a result of (fear of) violence or the size of herd.

“We had to sell a lot of animals and their productivity decreased. Because of the crisis, places we used to go to became difficult to go to. They stopped giving birth and some died. Some of our relatives were attacked and killed together with their cattle. It was very difficult. If I thought about where to go, I could not sleep at night. We suffered a lot so we decided to settle in one place and only move animals to graze and return. We decided to settle here as the majority of the people are pastoralists. We called the leader of the area to say we want to settle here. He consulted with others and did a thorough investigation before giving his decision. I was worried he would say no after the consultation but he told us to look for areas to settle then chose the area for us.” Fulbe man, Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau

Respondents said they now realised they had been suffering during their years of migration and were glad to be living in one place. Others wanted to continue to move but were unable to do so. They spoke of how they missed moving, that their cattle had been more productive before and that cultural practices had weakened as they were now living with people of different cultures. They chose areas to settle or reside based on significant presence of Fulbe. For example, pastoralists who left Anyii in Benue chose Angwan Akote because many Fulbe pastoralists are in the area.

4.3 Increasing responsibilities on younger men and decreasing power of the patriarchs

The shift from the family walking together to only young men moving with cattle has brought challenges. In some cases, their wives and children await them in the next location whereas in others, they are away grazing for months at a time. This change has increased the burdens of both women and men who still move. Before, although these tasks fell disproportionately on women, the whole family would be involved in packing up belongings and setting up camp in a new location. These days, the women together with one or two men who use public transport with them are charged with setting up the new location while the men are on the move with the cattle. Meanwhile, young men, particularly those whose families are settled in one place, are also having to do more. Tasks shared between family members are now falling completely on their shoulders. In addition to grazing animals, young men now have to buy ingredients, cook food, set up and pack up camp, find pastoralist women to whom to sell milk for hawking, make decisions about cattle routes to take and try and settle any disputes that arise.

They have started to move in larger groups not just for protection and support in case of attacks as described above but for practical reasons, to share tasks among young men which used to be divided across family members. Cooking rotates among the group with young men in teams taking it in turns to cook. This shift affects how well young men can look after cattle. They either have divided attention or leave less skilled boys to look after cows. These boys are unable to control the cattle which then damage crops. Respondents also said boys hired to look after animals are not invested in this work because animals do not belong to their families and they are not on good terms with cattle owners. In other cases, boys hired to take care of animals will leave without notice, leaving the pastoralist to look for animals in the bush.

“Women would cook food so we can concentrate on grazing but now, young men have to look for and cook food and look after animals... Migration alone is tiresome compared to when women, children, elders are there. The schedule is more and a bit tight. The work that two or three people used to do has been reduced to one person so our activities increase. Women would tie up all the luggage, prepare huts and food while young men concentrate on animals... Now, most of the youth when we come to a location and find pastoralist women in the area, we sell milk to them. We don’t hawk whereas before, women would hawk milk or sell to people who came to buy.”
Fulbe man, Ungwanungu, Sanga LGA, Kaduna

“When we were with our parents, they teach you so many things – how to relate with people and how to take care of yourself and your family... Both father and mother would be advising you. When you are not with them, you have to think about what to do and some decisions are very difficult.... Sometimes, you can discuss with elders who are still migrating. Nowadays, young men come together to advise and have decisions. We also discuss with our wives who are with us so we can come to a decision together.”
Fulbe man, Cuibo, Doma LGA, Nasarawa

The young men interviewed spoke of missing parents and their advice. They discuss matters and seek advice from wives if they are with them. If their wives are elsewhere, they spend months without family. They spoke about the loneliness they feel during this time and how difficult it had become to take decisions, for example about which cattle routes to take, without having family members around. The family splitting impacts familial bonds. Marriages break down due to this distance and breaks in interaction and communication. Young men said they spent less time with family now than before as they no longer

move together. Visits can be shorter if cattle routes are blocked by farming activities. This means young men must rush back as they have left cattle with others whereas they could previously move with cattle and spend more time with families.

These young men are under a lot of strain. They are responsible for the wealth of their families which is tied up in cattle but face increasing difficulties in finding enough food and water to ensure their continued good health while avoiding violence. They do so with reduced parental advice and support and from ages as young as 15 years onwards. Older respondents expressed great sympathy for these young men. Women respondents in particular spoke of the challenges faced by their teenage sons while looking after the family’s cattle. However, older respondents also spoke about how young men’s character and behaviour had changed without parents around to advise and in the absence of their wives and children.

Young men in Nigeria are often blamed for violence and, as will be shown in the section on farmer/pastoralist relations, much violence in research locations is driven by the actions of others such as community leaders and politicians. Young men can be agents of peace as well as involved in conflict. However, it is important to recognise the role of masculinities in driving conflict and for conflict morphing into violence. This shift from entire families to large groups of young men moving with cattle is significant. All-male groups, particularly those charged with protecting family and community lives and property, can exhibit behaviour more likely to exacerbate conflict and violence. Respondents for the present study linked increasing numbers of fights, encroachment onto farmland and involvement in criminality with this change. Young men spoke about how their elders, female and male, used to caution against violence when young men wanted to retaliate against wrongdoing. Without the presence of these voices, this need for restraint was less likely to be voiced. Masculinities, the desire to protect the wealth of their families, the intense stresses these young men are under, drug abuse and the lack of family support in a time of declining pasture and water and increasing violence combine to intensify conflict dynamics and make violence more likely.

*“Now, a young man doesn’t know what to do and before you realise it is bad, it’s gone far. For example, they abandon animals and engage in other unrelated activities such as you can align with others to engage in kidnapping, cattle theft, cattle rustling, robbery. Some listen to elders and women but some now do not listen or obey instructions. Some call parents or wives to tell them of the situation for advice but others do not consult and take the law into their own hands.”
Fulbe man, Ungwanungu, Sanga LGA, Kaduna*

Meanwhile, the power of older men had reduced. This changed power dynamic is not surprising given the burden of livelihoods now falls on younger men who run risks and do work necessary to graze cattle while older men are more likely to remain free from the hardship and strain. Older men still expect deference but do not necessarily fulfil the responsibilities needed to earn respect. Many older male pastoralists complained of younger men, about how they dressed, that they were taking decisions alone and that traditional ways of showing respect to older men were not followed. They felt young men could decide not to agree to certain practices such as shadi or *soro*.⁵ While older men interviewed were not necessarily proponents of shadi and there are many reasons why shadi as a practice is no longer followed by many Fulbe, older men felt these decisions by younger men were indicative of the power they had to decide which traditions to follow or not follow.

⁵ Shadi is a practice whereby young men of another clan beat young men and boys who are their age mates. The person being beaten has to show he can withstand pain and so prove his masculinity. When a clan issues an invitation for shadi, it is very difficult to refuse as the person refusing will be branded a coward and his refusal used as a reason to disregard what he says. This practice takes place from a young age onwards, escalating in the amount of violence and with formal invitations issued, until the age of around 30 years. While this used to be more playful in the past, it has become more violent with often serious injuries suffered requiring medical treatment and leading to bad relationships and bitterness between clans.

They also expressed unhappiness at changes in gender roles and norms. Due to economic necessity, women are now going out more in public and engaging in a range of new livelihoods. Some older women said gender norms had become more restrictive but this has recently changed. One Fulbe woman in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau said women in her family had stopped doing certain things such as hawking milk about 10 years ago as they started to practice kulle⁶ due to religious influence as their husbands did not want their wives to go out. However, this restriction has changed and now some women in her community are selling firewood, doing tailoring and running shops as well as hawking

“Now, people have a lot of knowledge but no wisdom... There is too much civilisation now so young people decide to marry from other tribes. Children decide what they want. There is a lot of disrespect from women and children. It is becoming unbearable as they want to eliminate you if you have wealth. Pastoralist women would only hawk milk before but now they open shops and restaurants and connive with children to kill, take your cows to the market to sell and make the husband sick with high blood pressure.” Fulbe man in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau

milk. This shift is due to broader societal changes and increased levels of education as well as increased need for women to engage in new forms of economic activities given family need, men’s inability or unwillingness to provide and the lack of viability of previous livelihoods that women pursued such as milk hawking. Some older men said they still try to ensure their wives and daughters do not hawk milk but stay at home and have husbands looking after them. They felt they received less respect from women who also are less likely to rely on them. They expressed suspicion and discontent about the livelihood activities in which women were engaged, saying women go out for hawking milk and arrive back late at night and no longer listen to their instructions or orders.

4.4 Pursuing new livelihoods

In the past, women would hawk milk, take care of the family, cook food, fetch water, wash clothes, look for firewood, set up and pack up camp when moving and do other household tasks. Men would graze the cattle, milk the cows and give the milk to women for processing and selling. With time, this role would be played by sons rather than husbands. These dynamics still continue in some communities but people also pursue new livelihoods as they have settled, seen cattle killed or stolen, had to sell cattle or found pastoralism to no longer be productive.

Whereas women sold milk and men sold cattle previously, income was either not forthcoming or insufficient to meet family needs. Some women respondents said cows did not have enough grass to produce milk. Other respondents had to buy milk from other pastoralists to sell as their family’s cattle were either grazed by the young men of the family in locations faraway or had been killed. Doing so badly affecting profit margins. A Jos based researcher spoke of how women were no longer able to go to the market in some parts of Plateau state because of fear of violence and that their business had been affected by rumours that Fulbe women were poisoning people through the milk and oil they sold. As women are no longer able to provide for the family through selling milk as they previously had done, families are increasingly reliant on the sale of cows to meet the family’s needs, leading to

“I would hawk milk and get money and buy whatever I wanted... I would buy clothes, buy ingredients for cooking and husbands were relieved of this [responsibility]. Men would buy rice, maize and beans from the money they got selling cows. Our husband wouldn’t even know how much money I sell the milk for and he has no business knowing. Women decide what to buy. If I had money left over from what I want to buy when I come home, I would hide the money from him.” Fulbe woman, displaced from Anyii in Benue to Angwan Akote, Awe LGA, Nasarawa

⁶ Seclusion.

dwindling herds. Particularly widows and those who had taken in the children of their children or co-wives killed in violence spoke of the difficulties of supporting the family.

“The crisis has impacted women negatively as we had a lot of milk in Benue and would hawk, get money and use this to take care of ourselves... There is no pasture or water for cows here. We had fear of conflict and crisis so we had to separate the people from the cows. So, people stay in one place where it is safer and send cows to graze in Abendo in Benue. It’s not a very safe place to go and settle as conflict can happen at any time... [Husbands] have to sell a cow to take care of the family and household responsibilities. Women would support the running of the household before [through selling milk but can no longer do so] ... More cows are being sold now than we would like as there is no other alternative.” Fulbe woman, Cuibo, Doma LGA, Nasarawa

Settled pastoralists diversify into new livelihoods while pursuing pastoralism if possible. Women make clothes, sell soap, pomades and bournvita, raise chickens and white goats, braid hair, knit sweaters, sell ghee, butter, fura da nono and moi moi during the dry season and fry akara and yam. Meanwhile, men are tailoring, selling fertiliser and provisions, being taxi, okada and keke napep drivers as well as grazing animals. While both women and men are farming, women farm maize and rice while men farmed guinea corn, ginger, carrots and cabbage for commercial use.

5.0 Intra-pastoralist relations

Although interactions across pastoralist groups had been positive in the past with marriage frequently cited as an indicator of strength of relationships, respondents also spoke of reduced levels of solidarity and support compared to before. Violent conflict had affected relations. Pastoralists spoke of particular groups being more likely to be involved in crop damage, criminality and violence and the actions they had taken to mitigate these risks. Relations between pastoralists had frayed as a result with some groups no longer interacting or feeling a sense of bitterness towards each other.

5.1 Interactions between pastoralist groups

Respondents spoke of generally good interactions across the groupings outlined in chapter three. They spoke about relationships between different Fulbe clans, which can vary depending on the location and clans concerned. They spoke of other groups with whom they did and did not inter-marry and the reasons why. While they were a sense of solidarity among the Fulbe, this feeling was said to be no longer as strong as it once had been.

5.1.1 Inter-clan relations

Relations between clans vary. Some clans are closer than others due to historic ties if clans came from the same location, present interaction if they live together now or if they are sub-clans of the same clan. Respondents said hardship and crisis brings together people of different clans who have gone through this common experience together. While some respondents felt closer to their own clan or to clans with whom they had a shared history, others felt location and shared history was more important than the clan. They were closer to those they lived next to even if they were of different clans rather than people of the same clan who lived far away. Clans that are close have particularly friendly and joking interactions and are considered as ‘playmates’. The strength of relationship with another clan can be present across the clan, for example if for reasons of lineage, or be localised to a particular area, for example if two clans live together and intermarry. In some cases, clans had become so close they considered themselves as one.

Although there are conflict dynamics related to inter-clan relations, respondents disclosed no significant conflict between clans. They spoke of tensions between individuals of same and different clans alike, for example during community gatherings for ceremonies and religious festivals or over marriage if two people want to marry the same person. In some areas, conflict mitigation mechanisms deal with intra-pastoralist conflict dynamics. For example, in Laduga grazing reserve in Kaduna, respondents said elders, clan leaders and heads of family meet to manage risk of escalation of conflict. Although conflict dynamics existed between pastoralists in research locations, for example around issues such as land, theft of cows and farm produce and sexual violence, no significant incidence of intra-pastoralist violence save that which was gender-based violence was disclosed.

5.1.2 Support and solidarity?

Many respondents spoke of feeling solidarity with other Fulbe. They spoke of going on condolence visits and giving money and food items to others who had been caught up in violent conflict. However, they also described a dissipation of ethnic identity and solidarity. Sometimes, this change is due to practical reasons. An older Fulbe man interviewed in Rukuba in Bassa LGA, Plateau spoke about how brotherhood had decreased saying friends used to visit each other previously but now, people hardly visit or support even their own blood relations. He attributed this change to people being less willing to walk long distances, less sympathetic and more attracted to “worldly things.” For other pastoralists, diminished relationships were a conflict avoidance mechanism. One Fulbe man interviewed in Rukuba in Bassa LGA, Plateau said: “The Irigwe people are fighting with the pastoralists in Miango and not others – but we will not be spared if they think we have come to support the pastoralists there.”

5.1.3 Inter-marriage as an indicator of cohesion

In some areas where pastoralists are settled, clans marry internally for the first marriage but for the second marriage in case of divorce or widowhood, women and girls can marry men of other clans. These dynamics are highly context specific however as in other areas, inter-marriage between clans is common and women and girls have more choice in marriage partner rather than having elders decide. Respondents in some locations even spoke of marriage between Fulbe who were settled and non-Fulbe being common, as long as the person concerned was also Muslim. Meanwhile, Rindobe (migratory pastoralist) respondents spoke of mostly marrying within the group that travelled together, including within the family or lineage: “I married the younger brother to my father so he was in the same group. We were 10 households moving together. We are all related” (Fulbe woman, from Wukari in Benue who had moved to Angwan Akote, Awe LGA, Nasarawa).

Inter-marriage is not common or encouraged between Rindobe and Jodibe. While Jodibe (settled pastoralists) spoke of increasing numbers of intermarriages with other clans and with non-pastoralists, many respondents showed reluctance to allow their children to marry Rindobe. They felt marrying Rindobe would be a step backwards, did not like the migratory lifestyle and worried about the additional hardships their children would face. As one Fulbe woman in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau said, “We marry other clans but not the Le’ien because of their culture and their exposing of bodies and as they keep moving about. I cannot see my child doing that and I would worry about my grandchildren’s education. Their men are violent and they don’t do houses for their women.”

“It is difficult to marry their daughters or sons but I am happy to marry my children [to them] if they are settled but not if they are nomadic. I will encourage them to settle first as my daughter is not used to moving and sleeping outside. If a nomadic girl agrees to stay here, that will be okay, but not if she pulls my son to migrate. I hate movement, not the people who move” (Fulbe man

Rindobe respondents spoke about how their daughters would be happy to marry Jodibe men to have easier and more comfortable lives. On the other hand, they thought it would be difficult for a Jodibe woman to marry a Rindobe man as they would likely find the migratory lifestyle difficult, not have the required skills to do tasks required in movement and be unable to cope. These statements need to be seen in the context of conflict dynamics between the Rindobe and Jodibe, discussed below.

6.0 Conflict dynamics between pastoralist groups

While no incident of violence between pastoralist groups was mentioned, many conflict dynamics exist with claims and counter-claims made. A significant fault-line is around movement and settlement, between those seen as Rindobe (migratory pastoralists) and Jodibe (sedentary pastoralists). While some respondents from both groups had positive things to say about the other, the Jodibe evinced a superiority over the Rindobe due to the fact they were settled, their increased levels of (formal) education and their supposed higher religiosity. They disparaged the movement in which Rindobe engage, their continuation of cultural customs and gender norms and roles, saying that Rindobe men did not live up to ideals of Islamic masculinity and women provided for the family and dressed in ways not allowed by Islam. The Rindobe on their part felt stigmatised and discriminated but stressed their higher level of knowledge and exposure from living in different places. Respondents also claimed particular groups of pastoralists were more likely to be involved in crop damage and criminality. Conversations centred around pastoralists from particular locations as well as circling back to the Rindobe/ Jodibe dynamic.

6.1 The Rindobe vs Jodibe dichotomy

The quality of relations between Jodibe and Rindobe varied. Many respondents from both groups talked about meeting when grazing, attending each other's festivals and ceremonies and their children playing together. Main sites of interaction are between women, young men and elders/ leaders. Rindobe women come to the towns and villages to buy goods at the market, sew cloths and hawk milk. Young men interact as they often graze in the same areas while elders/ leaders interact when it comes to matters affecting their communities.

Some Rindobe respondents talked about how much more they liked the settled lifestyle. Increased access to education, mentioned by almost every respondent, was particularly prized. For Rindobe women, the attractions of being settled in one place are obvious. They spoke of being under constant strain and the stress of having to prepare for movement. One respondent who was 30 years old had given birth to 10 children, all on the road with no access to antenatal or hospital care. Sometimes, sick people can be left behind to continue accessing medical care as the group migrates because staying can mean cattle, their main source of livelihood, will die. Meanwhile, some Jodibe respondents said they appreciated that Rindobe protected their culture and traditions, wore Fulbe attire, followed Fulbe customs and spoke a 'purer' Fulfulde unadulterated with Hausa words in contrast with themselves who had assimilated. They saw Rindobe as having larger herds and bigger cattle because "They have more grass, keep to tradition and give things to their cattle to make them healthy and grow" (Fulbe woman in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau). They had sympathy for the Rindobe. They saw them as vulnerable to violence while passing through conflict-affected areas. They believed, due to their lack of education, Rindobe had less access to healthcare and were more likely to be taken advantage of, for example by being fined higher amounts than the value of crops damaged. All of that is true!

However, more Jodibe respondents were highly critical of the Rindobe than positive. A number said that there was nothing they liked about them. They saw themselves as superior precisely because they were settled. Their narratives showed a respectability politics⁷ focused on length of settlement,

It was difficult to understand the present-day meaning of the term 'Mbororo'. It is meant to signify pastoralists who move but some migratory pastoralists identified with their clan rather than this term, saying 'Mbororo' was a term given to them by Jodibe with which they don't identify and saw as derogatory. Pastoralists who were called Mbororo by others would say this term did not apply to them. A nomadic woman said this: "The Mbororo are the original Fulbe. We see them plait their hair in a certain design. They are the genuine Fulbe. Anyone else is not an original Fulbe. We cannot understand what they say as their language is difficult. I don't want Mbororo to come close. There are no intermarriages between the Sisilbe and Mbororo. There is nothing I like about them. We are all migratory pastoralists but even if we are moving in the same direction, we do not settle in the same place together. We don't mix" (Fulbe woman, from Wukari in Benue to Angwan Akote, Awe LGA, Nasarawa). It is was clear this term carries significant stigma, to the extent that almost every respondent distanced themselves from it.

expressions of religiosity and gender politics, contrasted with Rindobe who they often call Mbororo or Le'ien. See above comment - Mbororo as a word not necessarily derogatory per se, very much context dependent. The settled Fulbe use it in a derogatory way, but for nomads they generally do not see the term as negative. It is true that clan and lineage are more prominent and meaningful, but as a general term to refer to the nomadic Fulbe, Mbororo is accepted.

The above box is quite revealing because the Sisilbe are a clan with origins in north-west Nigeria but now found all over, including in Taraba where this interview was

done. Something you need to know about them is that they are one of the pastoral Fulbe clans who generally cannot speak Fulfulde. They speak Hausa, and this creates a barrier between them and other Fulbe *Ieyyi*. There is suspicion between them and other Fulbe, and issues of migration history and length of time in an area come in, especially in a place like Taraba where some of the other pastoralist groups have been there for 150 years or more. It is interesting but not very surprising the Sisilbe woman does not identify as Mbororo, and their not speaking Fulfulde explains why she said they find their language difficult! It can be assumed they have lost much of the culture of the nomadic Fulbe too which ordinarily the Mbororo would value.

The last sentence of the box, highlighted in yellow, is indicative of one of the limitations listed in the study, that the research team had difficulty accessing nomadic Fulbe groups. It is the more settled Fulbe who want to distance themselves from the term Mbororo, not the nomads – who are known by various names: *Fulbe rimndoobe*, *Fulbe gaccungol*, *Fulbe bayrugol*...

Jodibe viewed Rindobe as less religiously conscious, characterised them as drinking alcohol, going out at night, smoking, not fasting or praying or praying when they were dirty rather than clean and not practicing good Islam. They did not like that Rindobe followed Fulbe customs, seen as not allowed by Islam, which they had left behind. One example given was when young men travel in a group from one community to another to celebrate the transition to becoming *korijo* (a life stage at 28-33 years

⁷ The term 'respectability politics' describes the ways marginalised groups police their own members and show their behaviour and social values as compatible with the mainstream or dominant groups rather than challenging them for failure to accept difference. People engaging in respectability politics do so believing that conformity to standards deemed acceptable by the mainstream or dominant groups will protect members of minority or marginalised groups from prejudice, violence and systemic injustice. However, this policing is not only symptomatic of internalised oppression, whereby the idea of inferiority of certain identities, behaviour and ways of life become internalised by individuals of minority or marginalised backgrounds, but continues to place acceptance in the hands of oppressive systems and tends to create sub-groups that become even more marginalised

of age) for approximately a month. One Fulbe woman interviewed in Rukuba in Bassa LGA in Plateau said: “[Before] all we were looking forward to is the koriyo where during naming ceremonies, we would invite people, play drums and dance... Now we are educated, exposed and realise it conflicts with the religion, all the clans here have stopped. The Le’ien are still doing this. We don’t like this as it is not putting children on the right path. They will only know how to drum and dance when they grow up and don’t want to go to school for proper education.” As with other Muslims in northern Nigeria, while pastoralists are more likely to belong to the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya tariqa of Sufi Islam, in areas of Plateau and southern Kaduna, many (settled) pastoralists are from the Izala sect.⁸ Many Jodibe respondents gave the risk of their children learning these ‘bad habits’ or becoming religiously lax as the reason they do not want to become too close to Rindobe.

Before you marry a woman, you must have a place where you will keep her but they move around with wives and sleep wherever night falls. You have to take care of your women, give them a room to stay not keep on seeing your wife suffering and looking for what the family will eat. Rindobe men are not living up to their responsibilities under Islam. Before you marry, you must ensure your family will provide for your wife in terms of clothing, food and housing.” Fulbe man, in Ganawuri (Wuronmodi), Riyom LGA, Plateau).

Another area of criticism is gender norms. Rindobe respondents said they did not like the way Jodibe women behave, characterising them as not having kunya⁹ and engaged in opening up shops and having occupations which they saw as not good while the Jodibe said Rindobe women were half naked rather than being covered as required by Islam. Rindobe men were seen as not living up to breadwinner masculinity ideals and Islamic standards of manhood. Many Jodibe men talked of how they do not sell cows to look after their families financially but rather that household needs were met by the money earned by Rindobe women by hawking milk. Jodibe women also spoke of the differences between Rindobe and Jodibe men, saying Rindobe men care more about their animals than their wives. They saw Rindobe men as being hot-tempered and more likely to beat their wives before divorcing them. Given the sensitivities involved in asking questions around domestic violence, the study was unable to ascertain if this was the case in reality.

Many Jodibe respondents wanted Rindobe to settle, send their children to schools and stop modes of dressing and cultural practices seen to contradict Islam. In areas where formerly migratory pastoralists had settled, many respondents who had been settled there when they arrived spoke of how well they had integrated and the length of time they had lived in the same place together. However, even these groups were seen as still having a way to go to ‘catch up’ to their own standards in terms of education, Islamic knowledge and other ways of being ‘civilised’. On the other hand, Rindobe respondents viewed those who had settled as ‘Westernised’ as they had become integrated with non-pastoralists and go to state and Islamic school as opposed to Rindobe who remain closer to Fulbe culture. They were not happy about how they are seen by Jodibe and felt discriminated against and stigmatised.

⁸ Sufism is often defined as the individual quest to get closer to God and interpret Islam in the context of the prevailing (corrupting) times. Sufis make up the majority group of Muslims in northern Nigeria and tend to favour internal struggle to conquer the self to external jihad targeted at others. While the Qadiriyya is the oldest of the Sufi orders in northern Nigeria, the Tijaniyya is possibly the largest Sufi order. In 1978, Jama’atu Izalatil Bida’a wa Iqamat al Sunna (Society for the Eradication of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition), popularly known as Izala was established by reformist Salafists. Izala is opposed to Sufism which it considers to consist of beliefs and practices that are unacceptable innovations. While it advocates societal (moral) reform without violence, many accuse Izala followers of intolerance, provocation and aggressive behaviour towards other Muslims such as forceful seizure of mosques and attempts to prevent conduct of Sufi rituals and there has been violent intra-Islam conflict. Abdul Raufu Mustapha, and Mukhtar U. Bunza, ‘Contemporary Islamic Sects and Groups in Northern Nigeria’ in Abdul Raufu Mustapha (ed), *Sects and Social Disorder: Muslim Identities and Conflict in Northern Nigeria*, (James Currey, 2014), pp. 54-97.

⁹ Shame.

Rindobe and Jodibe held different attitudes of what constitutes knowledge and wisdom to be prized. Each felt they were wiser than the other. While Jodibe talk about attending school, Rindobe talk of the value of other forms of wisdom, stressing their knowledge of cows and exposure to other locations, people, languages and ways of living as opposed to the Jodibe who stay in one place. These narratives seem to have intensified at a time of increased fluidity of categories as more pastoralists have moved from migrating to settling as well as a time of increased conflict and violence.

“Rindobe are wiser and more intelligent than Jodibe... because we interact with different people in different locations in different communities... For example, in Kagoma, my wife would sit with people who are not Muslims or pastoralists and so is able to be wise while Jodibe only stay with one kind of people. They only know their area and people while our children can speak Kagoma, Tiv, Kadara and even broken English from when we stayed at the border between Enugu and Benue because they have spent time in different communities and interacted with people there. Jodibe know that the Rindobe know more than them, that we know people, are more exposed, know so many places and know animal diseases more. [Diseases] occur in different locations and Rindobe know which diseases occur in which places. Even when it comes to searching for a place to stay for some time, Rindobe look at the place and know what will be good for animals but Jodibe will not know.” Fulbe man, Cuibo, Doma LGA, Nasarawa

As discussed below, intra-pastoralist relations feed into broader conflict dynamics. Respondents who were or had been migratory until recently spoke about their fear of losing their ways of life while more settled pastoralists tended to cast blame on those who migrated. However, as described above, not all respondents held oppositional views and many could see the hardships and attractions of the other way of life.

6.2 The troublemakers

Pastoralist respondents pointed to certain groups of pastoralists as more likely to be involved in conflict, violence and criminality. These dynamics need to be understood in the context of a general breakdown in social cohesion and trust as discussed above. The groups mentioned included pastoralists from particular places such as Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Zamfara, Niger Republic and areas experiencing violence. The Jodibe/ Rindobe dynamic also played a role in intra-pastoralist perceptions.

Respondents spoke about pastoralists from other places coming into their locality and causing problems. For example, pastoralists who were previously in Benue spoke of those from Bauchi and Gombe causing more crop damage than those who stayed in the locality, feeling they allowed their cattle to deliberately damage farms. Respondents also blamed a group of pastoralists from Niger Republic. While they were not present in any of the research locations, respondents knew of them and their supposed behaviour from time spent in areas they were present as they had increasingly been coming to Bauchi during the dry season to escape desertification in Niger. According to one respondent, “People do not say good about them as they break all the laws. They allow animals to damage cassava farms. For us, damage is a mistake but for them it is deliberate. It’s in their nature and character. Since they came, we see more farms destroyed” (Fulbe man in Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau). As farmers were seen to be able to differentiate this group from Niger from other pastoralists due to their different animals and mode of dressing, this damage had not affected relations. Unfortunately, we were only able to talk with pastoralists who frequently migrated to Bauchi about this Nigerian group and, as Bauchi was not a research state, not able to talk with the group themselves. They might well be referring to the Uda’en.

The location seen by the largest number of respondents to produce pastoralists that caused harm was Zamfara. Notions of the Fulbe from Zamfara being criminals were prevalent although recent and linked to escalation of violence and criminality in the state. While some respondents saw many Fulbe from Zamfara as victims and blamed the current insecurity in Zamfara on lack of government action, they also automatically suspect those from Zamfara present in the area of any theft that takes place. In some locations, actions are taken to prevent Zamfara Fulbe coming into the area and, if someone gives permission for Fulbe from Zamfara to settle and there is any incident in the area, not only are

“Anyone who comes here from there, we fear that they are among the people committing those crises... Zamfara people kill people, attack whole village, rustle animals – the farmers there also do this. We are worried it can occur here” (Fulbe man in Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba).

the Fulbe from Zamfara blamed but so too are the people who allowed them to settle. There have also been efforts to restrict pastoralists leaving Zamfara and settling elsewhere as traditional leaders in Niger, on the request of their counterparts in Zamfara do not allow pastoralists to pass through Niger. The reasons given were economic, due to the revenue earned from milk and beef production by the Zamfara state government and potential negative impact if pastoralists leave the state.

Only in Taraba, did pastoralists talk of fear of the Fulbe from Borno. Possible reasons could be that the Fulbe did not join armed opposition groups in northeast Nigeria in large numbers, historic lack of participation of nomadic (as opposed to town) Fulbe in jihadist movement and as Fulbe in Borno are seen as victims rather than perpetrators of violence. Additionally, Fulbe from Borno have not migrated to research states apart from Taraba. In Taraba, some respondents spoke of how they were worried the violence in Borno may spread: “We are worried that Borno people will spread such ideology here because we hear they abduct children from school so there is fear among people with children in school that they will start doing such things here. If that thing comes here, they also rustle animals in their thousands and we are worried that we will lose our animals” (Fulbe man in Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba). However, they spoke positively of the Fulbe who had been displaced from Borno to Taraba, saying that they were fleeing violence and that there had been no trouble associated with them.

Despite the violence, there is still some movement between Borno and Taraba because of better productivity and reproduction, larger grazing areas, good pasture and healthier soil in Borno. Pastoralists migrate to areas in Borno that are safe during the rainy season and come to Ardo Kola LGA in Taraba during the dry season. However, many pastoralists have also fled violence in Borno for Taraba. While there has been no conflict between these internally displaced people and host pastoralists, there are issues with access to land as there is insufficient grazing area for all. While pastoralists who have been in Ardo Kola for a long time graze their cows elsewhere due to lack of pasture, this is not the case for people escaping violence who instead buy animal feed for their cattle as well as graze where they can.

Respondents expressed a lot of sympathy for pastoralists who had been forced to leave particular areas due to violence or political policies. They hosted them and gave them areas to stay. Many displaced pastoralists tend to go to places they have relatives or which contain displaced pastoralists. However, levels of support pastoralists could provide those displaced had declined as host pastoralists too were now struggling to look after even themselves and their families let alone able to help anyone else. Nevertheless, most pastoralists living in these areas characterised relations as largely positive. For example, pastoralists who were forcibly displaced from Benue said they had been welcomed by pastoralists living in Nasarawa communities. In Angwan Akote in Doma LGA, they had been given land on which to farm so they could get food to feed the family given most of their cattle had been killed. There had also been intermarriages. One reason for these smooth relations could be because of ethnic solidarity and sympathy given the terrible things that happened in Benue and also because many

“People displaced from crisis areas influence others to follow their way of thinking and do not communicate in a peaceful way. They have bad character and have been sent out and asked to leave [their previous area] as they are people used to crisis. They exhibit the same character that they used to exhibit and graze on somebody’s farm and destroy crops. They do not follow guiding rules, for example not to climb trees and cut branches to feed animals and graze carelessly. There are tensions between us as we have different ways of living and they influence our youth to accept [their] way of life” (Fulbe man in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau).

pastoralists in the area are relative newcomers too. One respondent spoke of having been in the area for only 13 years while the first set of pastoralists from Benue arrived 10 years ago. Also, as the pastoralists from Benue do not have many cows, there were no issues in terms of sufficiency of pasture or cows damaging farmland and worsening relations with farmers. Many non-pastoralists also were recent arrivals and relations between them and pastoralists from Benue and those living in Nasarawa beforehand were said to be cordial.

However, in other areas which have a longer history of settlement, some respondents blamed newcomers for encroachment on farmland. They said they do so because they

have a history of crisis with farmers and do not know what it means to co-exist peacefully. Actions of people from another area can spark conflict if they don’t follow the rules agreed upon between farmers and pastoralists of the community.

Additionally, dynamics between Jodibe and Rindobe discussed above manifest further when it comes to perception of who causes damage and violence. While crisis was seen as cutting across all Fulbe people, many Jodibe spoke of how Rindobe were mostly likely to damage crops at night and leave. Farmers who discovered this crop damage in the morning often blame and attack the nearest Fulbe community. Some Rindobe agreed that they were more likely to destroy crops than settled pastoralists but, they felt perceptions that it was in the character of the Rindobe to misbehave or damage crops was untrue and unjust. The Jodibe see Rindobe actions in damaging crops as affecting relations with farmer neighbours. When they explain what has happened, these farmers sometimes believe them that it was the Rindobe who caused crop damage and sometimes do not, depending on strength of relationships and their knowledge of intra-pastoralist dynamics.

These dynamics are a manifestation of a changing pattern of relationship between the Rindobe and Jodibe. There used to be more cooperation in the past. Rindobe needed food, water, security, social relations and interactions and information and so had to establish relations with communities along migratory routes to get this. Likewise, Jodibe needed information about what was happening in other locations. As a result, social relations existed between Jodibe, Rindobe and the farming communities they passed through. This pattern is now changing. Rindobe know the ‘territories of aggression’ where they are likely to be cheated or their property stolen. They cut off interactions, increasingly not

wanting to associate with anybody and passing through communities silently. They know relations even with the Jodibe are now likely to lack cordiality and they see them as being closer to farmers.

Some Rindobe respondents interviewed could understand why this was the case: “Farming is very difficult. You keep doing a lot of work then animals destroy. Farmers like their farm like pastoralists like their cows so the way Jodibe see Rindobe has truth. They sympathise with farmers when they see destruction. We have felt bitterness from Jodibe as the consequences fall on them. Someone commits a crime and the blame falls on the innocent” (Fulbe woman, Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau). However, Jodibe are engaged in policing Rindobe passing through their communities and many Rindobe are bitter about this. Respondents spoke of investigating Rindobe to see if they are of good character by calling relatives who live in areas from which they are coming. If they receive bad reports, they ask them to leave. If they commit any offences, they arrest them and hand them over to the police. In many locations, Jodibe youth have formed groups called Jonde Jam (Fulfulde: ‘Peace’) to patrol cattle routes and watch Rindobe who are passing. In Ganawuri, this has been happening for the past two years. If Rindobe cattle damage any crops, the pastoralist responsible is detained until the relevant farmer is around so they can pay compensation. There are usually clashes when this happens with arguments and accusations: “Rindobe feel unhappy and betrayed by their own people. Many Rindobe have taken to passing at night as a result, at times where Jodibe youth are not on the cattle routes” (Fulbe woman, in Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau).

7.0 Relations between farmers and pastoralists

In contrast to some popular narratives of ancient enmities, relations between farmers and pastoralists have historically been generally positive. Where conflict arises, it is resolved either bilaterally between conflicting parties or with the involvement of others. However, incidents of conflict have increased as have their escalation into violence due to a number of factors including some of the issues mentioned in the pastoralism in Nigeria today chapter as well as roles played by politicians, community leaders and media practitioners. Intra-pastoralist dynamics also play a part and some non-pastoralists point to particular pastoralist groups they see as problematic. Policy responses discussed include grazing reserves, banning open grazing, and ranching but, in the absence of strong conflict prevention mechanisms and due to the actions of political players, they can have unintended consequences of exacerbating conflict.

7.1 Putting violent conflict into perspective

While the focus of this paper is on conflict between pastoralists and farmers, this conflict should be placed in perspective. There can be as much conflict within these groups, for example between Tiv and Jukun (farmers) communities in Benue and Taraba as between farmers and pastoralists. One male Aten (Ganawuri) farmer in Riyom LGA in Plateau even said that he knew no history of conflict with pastoralists in his area that conflict was rather with other farmers. Farmers and pastoralists have a long history of peaceful coexistence. There are mechanisms to both mitigate and resolve conflict. Indeed, many respondents spoke about how this conflict was a relatively recent phenomenon and pointed to the role of political and community leaders in its creation and perpetuation.

7.2 A history of (more or less) peaceful coexistence

Pastoralists and farmers told of harmony, peace and cordial relations in the past. They visited each other’s houses, went for ceremonies and condolence visits and spent time together while buying and selling goods. Farmers asked pastoralists to graze on their land after harvest. Pastoralists gave manure to farmers. It was not only between those living in the same locations that relations were good. A

Fulbe man, interviewed in Angwan Akote, Awe LGA, Nasarawa recalled a time where he and his family were nomads, moving from Katsina to Bauchi to Adamawa to Taraba, and said: “I enjoyed the movement. Anywhere we went, we felt it was safe. We didn’t think of the conflict in the area. We are comfortable following the animals. We had enough pasture. We are free and don’t fear. It was a great time for me. We had no problems with the communities that we passed through.”

In some places, these relations continue in the present. Women in particular come together across community lines, speak with their husbands and sons to urge calm and protest for peace. These relationships tended to be strongest among people who knew each other well. In some areas such as Rukuba in Bassa LGA and Ganawuri in Riyom LGA, both in Plateau state, pastoralists and non-pastoralists have historic ties. In Rukuba, respondents spoke of how the Gamanko’en clan of the Fulbe and Rukuba people migrated from Sokoto hundreds of years ago. In Ganawuri, respondents said the Fulbe and Ganawuri people were co-existing in the mountains during the colonial era and moved down together. Young male respondents, often seen as perpetrators of violence, spend time together despite conflict dynamics: “We meet in the market and villages and discuss in the evenings in non-pastoralist villages. We make jokes. Sometimes we greet as we are passing but we sometimes sit and talk. We have never discussed our challenges, we just have fun with each other” (Fulbe man, Gwadei, Sanga LGA, Kaduna). Strong relations between groups are attested to by intermarriages. One respondent said, “We are closer to the Rukuba people than pastoralists far from here or Rindobe. We have intermarriages and grandchildren with them” (Fulbe man in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau).

7.3 Functioning conflict resolution mechanisms

In many locations, respondents spoke of conflict resolution mechanisms still functioning. Proactive efforts made by communities reduce levels of conflict. If cattle destroy crops, the pastoralist meets the farmer, apologises and either is forgiven or pays compensation for damage caused. This process happened either on a bilateral basis or with the involvement of others. Community leaders meet or there are committees of young people drawn from farmer and pastoralist communities to investigate incidents and decide ways to make amends. In areas where incidents spark conflict, peace and reconciliation meetings ease tensions. When crop damage occurs, pastoralists are asked to pay compensation. When cattle routes were blocked by farms, they met the leaders of the Fulbe and farmers’ communities who then spoke with farmers concerned to ask them to open an area for cattle to pass. This opening would be made and conflict mitigated. Success is not always guaranteed and some farmers continue to farm in grazing areas and incidence of crop damage continues. Yet, where it does work, fair processes of adjudication and sense of justice reduce incentives to use violence to address conflict.

7.4 The role of politicians and community leaders in driving conflict and violence

Often, farmers and pastoralists spoke of the role of politicians in driving conflict rather than blaming those in their community. According to one respondent who represents one of the pastoralist associations, “The interplay of politics, religion and quest to preserve exclusive land ownership for certain ethnics has caused a breakdown of relations between farmers and pastoralists in the Middle Belt.” He pointed to areas where the Fulbe share the same religion as farmers as having lower levels of social division as do areas where they are of different religions but which are less influenced by politics but areas where Fulbe and farmers have different religions and which are highly politicised as having the worst levels of conflict. Here, land (and, depending on the location, religion) becomes a rallying issue as Fulbe are opportunistic users of land when needed as opposed to farmers who annex land exclusively to

“We are here for a long time and still are not considered indigenes. When will we be considered as Nigerian?” Fulbe man, Gwadei, Sanga LGA, Kaduna

themselves. He said this dynamic started in the 1970s due to preaching by Muslims of the Izala sect and Christian evangelists and politicians championing ethnic groups and exploiting differences for popularity in the aftermath of the politics of the 1960s and the civil war. When pastoralists settled, people were initially welcoming but this started to change in the 1980s with division into who was considered an indigene and who was a settler and again since the democratic transition in 1999. Pastoralists who settled were accepted as long as they did not contest for power but still considered 'settlers' regardless of how long families had been in the area.¹⁰

Respondents also spoke of community leaders. While some leaders play positive roles as described above, many respondents felt community leaders were biased in decision making and, in the worst examples given, contributed and even caused violence. They spoke of particular locations where attacks against pastoralist or farming communities were planned by community leaders of both groups who gave instructions to the young men to attack. They also spoke of cases where corruption and personal interest had led to conflict. In one village in Taraba, the village head and ardo are believed to conspire to sell land used by others to Fulbe pastoralists and divide money made. Conflict arises when Fulbe graze their cattle on this land which is farmed by others. Both parties think the land is theirs. When community members meet the village head, he tells them he can sell whatever land he wants as he is the village head. Meanwhile, the ardo refuses to attend meetings called. This state of affairs has led to at least two people being killed. All sides are now doing their best to avoid conflict but are unsure what will happen during planting and harvest.

8.0 Conflict and violence

There has been increased incidents of violent conflict across northern Nigeria in recent times. The dynamics between different groups and the adaptations pastoralists have made play a role with some farmers perceiving the Rindobe as those who cause problems and seeing more of a connection between themselves and the Jodibe in their area. Increasing tensions and conflict have sparked into violence with conflict encounters often occurring between women farmers and young male pastoralists and spreading to the broader community and to other locations. Respondents felt the media and politicians played active roles in creating and spreading conflict narratives which spark violence.

8.1 Outside perceptions of different pastoralist groups

¹⁰ People in Nigeria are considered indigenous to certain localities based on their paternal family history and along ethno-linguistic lines. Someone who was born and brought up in a particular area in which their family has lived for generation is considered a settler not an indigene of that location, even if their mother is from that place if their father's family is seen to be from elsewhere. Being an indigene gives individuals and groups certain rights, including to political positions, as they are seen to both 'belong' to the land and the land to 'belong' to them. Classification is highly contested with groups often pointing out the length of time their families and ethnic groups have been in the area, including claiming that ancestors arrived in the locality prior to the group that is not considered to be 'indigenous.' The indigene-settler dichotomy is particularly problematic for the Fulbe, who are seen as being historically nomadic, even for families who have been settled for generations, and so characterised as non-indigenes.

Non-pastoralist respondents varied in whether they distinguished between different pastoralist groups. They showed less ability to differentiate and more propensity to stereotype and generalise in areas of greatest tensions and conflict. Here, respondents were more likely to say words to the effect that 'Fulani are Fulani' and all the same. Whether this is a cause or effect of conflict or part of a cycle of mistrust with lack of interactions and attempts to understand the Other is unclear.

In other areas, non-pastoralists were able to distinguish. They could tell the difference between animals of various groups due to different horns or ears sizes and shapes or due to cattle brands used. They spoke of good relations with the Jodibe but that the Rindobe caused problems. One male Ganawuri farmer, interviewed in Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau spoke of how crop damage was caused by the Rindobe. Because they move, the community do not know whom to hold responsible. He said they used to blame the Jodibe but their Fulbe neighbours they had convinced them it was the Rindobe not them who damaged crops. They believed them due to the trust developed by living together from childhood. He went on to say, "I have Fulani friends settled here and they are not happy with what the migrants are doing. There have been cases where settlers have reported migrants for encroachment. We and the settled Fulani are really close." Other farmer respondents also saw the Jodibe as having divided loyalties between their farmer neighbours and Fulbe co-ethnics or as being on the farmers' side. In some cases, Jodibe have not only formed Jonde Jam groups to patrol cattle routes and apprehend Rindobe whose cattle damage crops but have asked farmer leaders to tell Rindobe to leave as they damage crops, refuse to pay and cause trouble for all Fulbe. Many Jodibe clearly saw themselves as different from the Rindobe. They stressed the length of time families had been present so as to stake their claim to the land, including through saying their families were present on the land before farming communities now considered indigenes arrived.

"There is likely more damage by migratory pastoralists as they can destroy crops then move. You will be crying out in the morning that your crops have been destroyed and you can't see anyone as they destroy at night. Most of the migratory pastoralists follow the major highways as the cattle routes are blocked so if you farm nearby, you have the possibility of them allowing animals to graze and damage farms. If a person does not farm one year in an area and the land becomes fallow, they will graze there and if you farm nearby, there is also the possibility of crop damage. There is farming on the grazing routes/ areas where they graze as the soil is fertile where cows have stayed. No matter how small the place is, if they see a small place, they can manoeuvre to go and crops can be damaged. Pastoralists also rub dung on the crops as the animals will not eat these ones. It is the sensible ones who do this before they pass through narrow areas" female Nyandan farmer, Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba

Farmer respondents say they have noticed a difference in dynamics since families stopped moving together. One Tiv woman farmer, interviewed in Sabon Gida Agan, Makurdi LGA, Benue said, "When I first came here [25 years ago for marriage], they were moving with their families but not all communities would welcome them so if they found anywhere that was peaceful, they would leave their wives in one place and move [from around 2010/2011 onwards]." She had noticed a change in behaviour: "If you are coming with your family, you will be slow to cause problems as you worry the repercussions will fall on them but if you know your family is safe elsewhere, you are free to do anything." Farmer respondents contrasted their behaviour with the pastoralists of the past with whom they had good relations. They said pastoralists moving in groups of largely young men as opposed to families moving together had exacerbated conflict dynamics. They saw these young men as lacking restraint, patience and respect, using drugs and being more likely to engage in violence.

However, this narrative of Rindobe causing crop damage and being involved in violence, leaving the Jodibe to pick up the pieces can be a one-sided one. Despite narratives that pastoralists who migrate

are the ones causing problems by damaging crops, conflict can occur between different actors and for different reasons. From villages where community leaders conspire to make money by selling farmland to (settled) Fulbe pastoralists to Berom land in Plateau and the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba, there are many areas where conflict is between pastoralists and farmers of the location. Moreover, these relations between Jodibe and farmers cause problems for Rindobe too. Rindobe respondents who used to pass through lands where Berom communities are present spoke of how conflict between Berom and Jodibe affect them. One Fulbe man, interviewed in Gwadei, Sanga LGA, Kaduna said, “Now, we have to move as a group as animals will be rustled by the Berom. This started three to four years ago as Plateau Berom and pastoralists are fighting. They do not differentiate between the Plateau pastoralists and us.”

Other respondents spoke about how cattle of Rindobe could damage crops only once while they were passing while cattle of Jodibe could destroy the same crop from planting to harvest. They said the Jodibe shifted the blame to Rindobe claiming they are responsible for crop damage to avoid paying compensation. In some locations, who was responsible for crop damage depended on the season but farmers do not always know this. For example, in Ardo Kola LGA in Taraba, migratory, settled and semi-settled pastoralists are responsible for damaging crops during the April-May planting season although the Jodibe tended to shift the blame to Rindobe who had already moved on. However, during the harvest time in November-December, almost all damage is done by Jodibe as others are not in the area. A Fulbe farmer who has links to both Fulbe pastoralists and farmers said, “Jodibe can damage crops five times and only claim one or two and say Rindobe are responsible for the others” but only a few farmers would know this and be able to differentiate between groups while others see all Fulbe as the same.

8.2 Increasing tensions and violence

Respondents saw major conflict triggers being farming in grazing routes and areas, subsequent crop damage and blocking of watering points. They described how conflict between individuals escalates to inter-group conflict and to other locations. Boys and young men whose cattle damage crops can be beaten which escalates tensions and leads to violence, especially as they now carry cutlasses to cut leaves off trees to feed cattle and families are unhappy with the treatment of their sons. At the same time, conflict management mechanisms have weakened due to a number of reasons including leaders seen as corrupt, politicised and biased who have less influence than previous generations of leadership with communities and the roles played by politicians. Pastoralists who used to report crop damage in previous years have started no longer doing so to avoid problems as such cases are no longer settled amicably, seeking instead to move away quietly. Both pastoralists and farmers spoke of decreasing levels of patience that led to conflict turning violent. One explanation for increased violence given was increased use of drugs by both communities. Pastoralists said their young men were interacting with ‘bad friends’ from non-pastoralist communities who influenced them to take drugs. Farmers stated that cows damaged crops as many boys were high on drugs and so let their animals roam and, as there was high incidence of drug and alcohol use among farmers too, that this led to violence. Good that you mention the drug issue and that it is prevalent in different communities.

“Twelve to thirteen years ago, my cattle destroyed a sugar cane farm. After I paid the compensation, the farmer said this is our friend and refunded me the compensation I had paid him... Before, you would settle with a farmer amicably but now there is a fight so we no longer report to the community leader to resolve the issue.” Fulbe man in Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau

Violence often has gendered dimensions, with women and men playing different roles and gender norms driving conflict and violence. Despite violence being seen as taking place between (young) men, the crisis point is often conflict between young male pastoralists and women farmers. All women farmers interviewed spoke of the different ways Fulbe pastoralists treated them compared to male farmers. They felt disregarded and disrespected: “When they meet women in the farms, they will not answer if they are destroying crops and you try to say something to them. They entered my groundnut farm, I said something to them and they just looked at me as the cattle passed into the farm. They are more respectful to men and talk with them – maybe they think that women can do nothing to them but with men, this can lead to men fighting each other.” (Tiv woman farmer, Anyii, Logo LGA, Benue). They felt Fulbe pastoralists were more likely to encroach on farmland if a woman was there but pass by if they saw a male farmer: “They are more likely to come to women’s farms because they know women fear if they threaten.” (female Nyandan farmer, Sunkani, Ardo Kola LGA, Taraba).

They spoke of being harassed and threatened with rape or chased with machetes if they try to protect their crops: “Even if you try to protect your crops, they threaten to rape women. Now, they go to graze with arms. They will put their cattle on the farmland and if you try to say anything, they will shoot you... When they threaten women, women have to run away to save their life” (woman Ganawuri farmer, Ganawuri, Riyom LGA, Plateau). One (hijabi) respondent spoke of women being treated differently depending on whether they wear hijabs: “They treat women with hijab differently as they consider those with hijabs as Muslim and they give more threat to women without hijab who they consider as Christian. They look at those with hijab as sisters and those without as non-Muslims who don’t belong to them” (female Ayu farmer, Mayir, Sanga LGA, Kaduna). However, women also fight back. Respondents spoke of women using phones to call the police after which the pastoralist will disappear. In one case recounted in Benue, the woman farmer seized and took away the cutlass the pastoralist young man had pulled out to threaten her.

Rape is not only threatened but perpetrated, particularly in more rural communities, by both farmers and pastoralists. Farmer respondents spoke of cases where Fulbe men raped an elderly woman in Ganawuri as she was harvesting her crops and of a reported five cases of Tiv women being raped by men assumed to be Fulbe when they go to the bush. Conversely, on the Mambilla plateau in Taraba, respondents spoke of Fulbe girls and women being raped then killed in 2017 by Mambilla men who also, in at least once incident, cut a baby from the womb of a pregnant woman and killed both baby and mother. Domestic violence and abuse may also be increasing as a result of violence. Many respondents were reluctant to speak openly about this, not surprising given the culture of silence and under-reporting that surrounds this type of violence. However, one woman did talk about increased stress as a result of fear and violence manifesting in this way: “We have people getting angry for no reason, due to increasing stress as a result of the violence. This leads to more cases of husbands beating their wives” (Fulbe woman, originally from Miango but displaced to Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau).

These narratives were consistent among women respondents across research locations. They spoke of ways rape of women farmers increases anger against pastoralists and how male farmers lose their temper and retaliate because women are attacked on farms. Their stories point to ways in which conflict between women farmers and young male pastoralists can escalate to violence between farmers and pastoralists due to norms of protective masculinity that mean men feel angered and a desire to retaliate because ‘their women’ have been attacked.

8.3 Impact of media and politicians’ narratives on conflict dynamics

All respondents had strong opinions on narratives by media, government officials, politicians and others of the conflict. They felt the conflict and its causes and impacts were not well understood. They

said politicians and journalists did not have basic knowledge about Fulbe communities, let alone know the differences between different groups and their ways of life.

Respondents said the conflict was under-reported, that media coverage was full of negative or ‘sentimental’ reporting, development issues were left out and reporting was unfair. Fulbe respondents felt journalists saw everything as being the fault of pastoralists. They noted that media outlets reported attacks as being carried out by groups of Fulbe (‘suspected Fulani herdsmen’) with very little evidence this was the case and not issuing corrections or apologies when subsequent investigation uncovered that perpetrators were actually armed gangs or from another group. They linked ‘reprisal’ attacks against Fulbe communities to this inaccurate, misleading and biased reporting which triggered cycles of reprisals and counter-reprisals. They characterised media outlets as rekindling crisis once it had died down and accused journalists of “even enjoying the crisis as groups give out money in press conferences” (Fulbe man in Laduga grazing reserve in Kachia LGA, Kaduna).

“Tell the world that we are not as we are represented – bandits, robbers, kidnappers. We are not like that. There is no tribe in crime. You should not talk of ethnic groups when you talk of criminality. The Fulbe are bitter about this as almost everyone is staying away from the Fulbe due to media hype. You shouldn’t particulate this behaviour to the Fulbe alone. This is sending the wrong signal” Fulbe man in Laduga grazing reserve in Kachia LGA, Kaduna

They also blamed government officials and policy makers, saying that they did not act but rather turned away from the Fulbe during times of crisis, did not bring perpetrators of crime to justice and saw the Fulbe not as victims but perpetrators of crime and injustice. Lack of impartial justice and rule of law were seen as key drivers of conflict: “The Fulbe don’t go and look for trouble. The conflict is due to other people looking for trouble. The authorities do not take action so we feel all we can do is go on reprisal” (Fulbe man in Rukuba, Bassa LGA, Plateau).

The role of politicians in driving violence has been discussed above. In many research locations, politicians were seen as key actors driving conflict and violence. For example, as discussed below, Governor Ortom who passed Benue’s Anti-Open Grazing Law was seen as responsible for violence committed against Fulbe communities as he had given farmers the courage and power to attack cows. They felt soldiers, rather than being neutral, were heavy-handed and committed violence themselves against Fulbe but not Tiv communities. However, farmers interviewed in Benue and Taraba had similar narratives, feeling the soldiers present were on the side of the pastoralists. These dynamics will be discussed more in the case studies described in the next section.

9.0 Policy-making with (unintended) consequences

It is important to view this violent conflict not in isolation, occurring between the individuals fighting, but within the ecosystem in which it takes place. The role of community leaders, political contestation and religious and political leaders has been discussed above. There is an institutional context in which conflict and violence take place and policies that can create or exacerbate conflict dynamics. The following three case studies of Laduga grazing reserve, the Benue Anti-Open Grazing Law and conflict on the Mambilla Plateau makes these connections clearer. Each case study represents a different policy response often proposed and/ or implemented by policy-makers: grazing reserves, banning open grazing, and ranching. Conflict dynamics present and violence that has taken place in each case proves they, in isolation, are not the workable, sustainable and conflict-sensitive solutions required.

9.1 Laduga grazing reserve in Kaduna

While Laduga grazing reserve was established in the 1960s, movement of pastoralists there was initially slow. However, its population has greatly increased in recent times. Many Fulbe moved there due to communal clashes and political crises in surrounding areas. Many Rindobe who used to pass through during the dry season on their way south and during the rainy season on their way north have settled there. Although their cattle together with their young men still move in areas outside the grazing reserve, this movement is not as long ranging as it was before.

Fulbe, who are granted land, say they are able to farm enough to feed 20-30 cows from dry season farming. However, respondents spoke about lack of services and facilities. Bad roads make it difficult to leave during the rainy season. There is only a private clinic and no hospital on the grazing reserve. A small number of boreholes serves an increasing population. Government agencies come only twice a year to treat animals. Nevertheless, the grazing reserve is seen as a safe haven by those who moved there from volatile areas. As one 47-year-old Fulbe woman who moved to Laduga after her two sons and all their cattle were killed said, “Anywhere I look, there is Fulbe so I feel safer.”

However, while settling in one place is considered by many as being a way to avoid conflict, grazing reserves are not necessarily the magic solution. Some Fulbe respondents pointed out that the grazing reserves introduced by the government in the 1960s did not have sufficient land to accommodate all the pastoralists in Nigeria. Many of these no longer exist or have had farmers encroach on this land. Others living in areas outside grazing reserves spoke about not being able to move there as the reserve was already full and all land occupied. Moreover, given younger generations do not have a history of co-existence with farmers, this segregation may augur ill for the future. Conflict narratives may find it easier to take hold in the absence of a continued history of knowing and interacting with ‘the Other.’

Moreover, while grazing reserves are designated for pastoralists, in practice, there are farmers and other non-pastoralists present or nearby. These people include butchers, medical personnel, tailors, teachers, traders and others who move there for economic reasons. Relations between those who interact economically with pastoralists were said to be amicable with some marriages with non-Fulbe taking place. While there is no conflict with farmers in much of the grazing reserve as there are not many farmers present, there is conflict in the areas outside the reserve. Farmers spoke about how older family members had been moved from their lands by the government when the grazing reserve was created and given land nearby. They have been farming there for over 50 years but recently, as a result of crisis in other areas, pastoralists have come from other places to occupy these farms. Despite pastoralist leaders within the grazing reserve asking these pastoralists to move into the grazing reserve, they remain on this farmland.

These pastoralists say the area is a grazing reserve not meant for farmers and they can go wherever they want while farmers stress the land was given to their parents by the government. There are competing narratives over where the grazing reserve starts and ends. Farmers say their land does not fall within but is adjacent to the reserve. Pastoralists who are on their farmlands believe the whole area is part of the grazing reserve. A reported thirteen people have been killed to date. With the planting season approaching at the time of data collection, farmers and grazing reserve pastoralist leaders shared a sense of hopelessness about what to do and how to calm young men who are angry and being prevented from pursuing their farming livelihood.

9.2 The Benue Anti-Open Grazing Law

Farmer and pastoralist respondents described how previously good relationships in Benue had deteriorated over time. This situation started to change around 2010 when increasing populations of

farmers went to new areas to farm. Grazing lands were used for farming and house construction and cattle damaged crops. Whereas people would sit together and resolve issues when crop damage occurred previously, this increasingly no longer was the case, supposedly due to an increase in the numbers of migratory pastoralists in the area who would be more likely to damage crops then leave. These confrontations became more violent over time with cutlasses and machetes being used and reprisal and counter-reprisal attacks taking place.

The state government set up committees called the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in 2011 comprising both farmers and pastoralists. They tried to mediate conflict, including through opening up cattle routes and facilitating compensatory payments for crop damage. One young man who was involved in one of the committees said, “We tried to bring peace between farmers and pastoralists. If cattle ate crops, farmers would go to talk with the owner of the cattle before but now they reported to the committee. If a youth killed a cow, the owner would also report. So, it was the committee that was taking action, not the people involved directly talking with each other” (Tiv male farmer, Sabon Gida Agan, Makurdi LGA, Benue). In these cases, conflict did not lead to violence as justice was seen to be done in a more or less balanced and even-handed way. Although the committees were showing signs of success, a gun amnesty introduced by the State Government following political killings and increasing criminality had adverse consequences. Attacks against farmer and pastoralist communities increased, thought to be because attackers knew communities, having turned in their weapons, were undefended. Not only were attacks on Fulbe communities under-reported in comparison to Tiv attacks as Fulbe live in more rural areas and have less contacts with journalists but attacks on Tiv communities were misreported as being perpetrated by ‘Fulani herdsmen,’ leading to worsening relations and retaliatory attacks.

In Anyii in Logo LGA, two sets of dynamics escalated the conflict. The first was a 2014 case of crop damage. The farmer concerned found the pastoralist and settled the matter in a peaceful way but pastoralists came later at night and killed him. Following this killing, farmers would kill cattle in retaliation for crop damage to purposefully destroy pastoralist livelihoods. After farmers told pastoralist they were no longer welcome and should leave, they left but young men came back without families to graze at night. They damaged farms at the edge of cattle routes. More cows were killed in response. Another set of dynamics were around water access and use. Tiv women and Fulbe young men would clash at river banks. The women would go there to collect water at the same time young men brought cattle to drink. These encounters increasingly led to violence that started at water points and extended to settlements. According to a Tiv male farmer from Anyii, “The Tiv women were more in number so they would beat up the Fulani young men then the pastoralists would go to Tiv settlements. People were killed and houses burned then Tiv would retaliate.” The Fulbe young men felt a particular need to prove their masculinity with a show of force after being beaten up by ‘mere women.’ The military were sent in and attacks reduced.

Then, in November (check) 2017, the Anti Open Grazing Law was passed banning open grazing and requiring pastoralists to ranch cattle. No spaces were allocated for these ranches or guidance given on how to make this change. All pastoralists and farmers interviewed said this law escalated conflict and violence started again. Pastoralist members withdrew from the CJTF. Attacks on both communities took place. Fulbe respondents believed the Livestock Guards created by the state government to enforce the law carried out many of the attacks against their communities. Fulbe families left Benue and moved to Nasarawa. Pastoralists in Nasarawa told Tiv people living there that they should go back to Benue even though they had lived in Nasarawa their whole lives.

Benue’s Anti-Open Grazing Law is a clear example of the role of politics and policy making in exacerbating conflict and triggering violence. Farmers, while appreciating the law was passed to help them, spoke of how it had inflamed tensions and caused violence. Pastoralists forced to leave Benue

blamed the Governor not their farmer neighbours. They spoke of Tiv farmers gathering when they were leaving to ask them to stay. They said farming and pastoralism were complementary livelihoods in their communities. Farmers relied on livestock for cattle dung, farming in areas where cattle had been grazing to benefit from more fertile soil. As pastoralists did not graze in the same place two consecutive years as this was not good for animals, they moved on to new areas. They returned to the old places after the soil had reduced fertility by which time farmers had moved to more fertile places where cattle had been more recently. Some Fulbe pastoralists and Tiv farmers still keep in touch, speaking to each other on the phone. Pastoralists said that, despite the violence, they were more comfortable in their previous locations due to their knowledge of the area and relations with people living there. One Fulbe man said he was more comfortable speaking in Tiv than in Fulfulde and that his community continued to speak a mixture of Fulfulde and Tiv with each other in Nasarawa.

Yet, relations between farmers and pastoralists have been significantly affected by violent conflict. Farmers spoke of new pastoralists unknown to them coming into Benue and said there was no interaction between the two groups. This distrust, suspicion and fear is felt on both sides as these pastoralists too do not want to mix too closely with farmers. They spoke of how they had sent their cattle back to farm near where they used to stay as they, not used to different ecology, were dying in Nasarawa. As a result, some of the cows that had been brought by the 'new pastoralists' may well belong to the same pastoralists with whom farmers had good relations, perhaps looked after by younger generations, even if their friends stay away for fear of violence.

9.3 Violence on the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba

Unlike other research locations, most pastoralists are settled on ranches. Despite many factors that lead to farmer-pastoralist conflict elsewhere being largely absent, the plateau has seen repeated violence. Conflict is driven by two factors: disputes over land ownership and politics. There are competing narratives about patterns of settlement and related rights afforded. While the Mambilla say they are indigenes and the Fulbe are settlers with their presence greatly pre-dating theirs, the Fulbe say both groups came at approximately the same time. While there is clear demarcation between grazing and farming land, pastoralists were more able to buy land due to higher levels of wealth as well as colonial legacies of land demarcation continued in the post-independence era. As a result, while the Mambilla, who are largely farmers, are the most populous group on the Plateau, the Fulbe, who mostly graze animals, own the majority of land. The Fulbe have legal documents of ownership on their side but the Mambilla have political power due to their larger population. All local politicians tend to be Mambilla men and, as the Fulbe and Mambilla tend to support different political parties, politics, ethnicity and livelihoods are intertwined.

As populations increased, Mambilla farmers required more land and, considering themselves to be the indigenes of the area, became increasingly unhappy that the Fulbe owned the majority of the land. The Fulbe say politicians polluted the mind of the Mambilla, characterising Mambilla politicians as 'starting to instigate the Mambilla, saying why should you beg for land when you are the majority. The Fulani man does not have land but travels from one place to another... take the land and we will back you... even if it comes to the state, we have Commissioners, Speaker, we will protect you' (Fulbe man, Gembu, Sardauna LGA, Taraba). The Mambilla started warning the Fulbe that they need to leave 'their' land. Prominent politicians started saying "all land owned by the Fulbe is done so illegally... They have no land and will be eliminated. We will kill them if they refuse to run – their children and their cows – and dominate the land" (Fulbe man, Lemesaiga, Sardauna LGA, Taraba). Conflict started in one village in 2001 and spread throughout the plateau with a Mambilla group moving from one Fulbe settlement to another attacking people.

See Roger Blench's paper on the 2001 Mambilla crisis.

In the area of Leme, the Mambilla of Lemetela, a Mambilla settlement, went to the Fulbe of Lemesaiga, a Fulbe settlement, to recommend they leave the area for fear of violence as they would not be able to protect them. They helped them to escape. The Fulbe returned only due to military protection. However, nearby Lemeyirma where both Fulbe and Mambilla lived experienced attack. Fulbe respondents say their Mambilla neighbours took part despite the history of peaceful co-existence and joint cooperation. Today, relations in Lemeyirma are still strained. Land seized there by the Mambilla in 2001 was not returned and herds have still not replenished after many cows were killed during the attack. Fulbe respondents say they have started fencing the cows at night and watch their cows more closely than previously was the case.

Soldiers stayed in the area for six years and the threat of violence reduced but once soldiers left, Mambilla farmers started extending areas of cultivation. In 2017, many locations across the plateau experienced violence, once again incited by local politicians. The region of Leme was largely spared violence as local Mambilla leaders persuaded communities not to attack the Fulbe. In Lemeyirma, “The Mambilla talked among themselves to say that, since we have already experienced crisis, we don’t want to go back. When the Mambilla came from outside to attack, they told them not to attack and stopped them on the day.” (Fulbe man, Lemeyirma, Sardauna LGA, Taraba). However, conflict was triggered in Lemetela/ Lemesaiga due to clashes over land. When Mambilla women went to prepare farms for planting, the Fulbe told them this was not their land and they should leave. Mambilla men went to investigate what was happening and to protect their women and children. The Fulbe of Lemesaiga believe the Mambilla of Leme instigated violence, inviting others to come and attack. They feel there was impunity because of links with politicians. By the time police officers arrived, a father and his two adult sons had been killed. Many cows had been killed and stolen. When soldiers tried to enter the community, Mambilla women came out in masse to block the road to prevent them from doing so. Allegedly, the commander gave a directive to start shooting and a woman and a child were killed. The Mambilla blame these deaths on the Fulbe.

Livelihoods of both Fulbe and Mambilla communities have been seriously affected. Many Fulbe households have lost much of their livestock. They are no longer able to graze near the river during the dry season after farmers have harvested crops as they fear cattle will be killed. The Mambilla say women who want to farm or fetch firewood are stopped from crossing the boundary between the communities. Gully erosion has increased due to increased deforestation, as people use the sale of firewood as a livelihood source in the absence of other options. There is over-grazing as cows cannot go onto farmlands after harvest and are on the same land all year around. As a result of not being able to farm due to fear of violence, many Mambilla young people have migrated for work. Fulbe children are no longer able to go to school as the school is in Lemetela, a Mambilla village with Mambilla teachers. All Mambilla respondents interviewed asked for the government to relocate nearby Fulbe to another place “because they don’t want peace or to settle with us” and to replace them with “peace-loving” Fulbe. All Fulbe respondents feared they will be killed once soldiers, who continue to remain in Lemesaiga, leave the area.

This does not capture the large scale of the violence in 2017 against the Fulbe on the Mambilla Plateau. It was so systematic and widespread. Records suggest that more than 500 Fulbe were killed (some claim more).

10 Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper has presented an overview of intra-pastoralist relations and how they affect broader conflict dynamics between farmers and pastoralists. Pastoralist lifestyles have drastically changed over recent decades as many pastoralists have shifted to more sedentary ways of living while the young men of their families continue to migrate with cattle. Women and men are struggling to cope with these changes. Intra pastoralist relations have evolved over time with the relatively stronger social cohesion of the past fraying as a result of these changes, increased religiosity and solidifying of certain gender norms.

They affect conflict between farmers and pastoralists and are affected by them. Conflictual encounters between young pastoralist men and women farmers are exacerbated by particular nodes of masculinity that take root among young male pastoralist groupings and among male farmers who desire to avenge attacks and threats against women.

Many policy and legislative responses focus on changing pastoralists' ways of life, believing the solution lies in settlement, grazing reserves and ranching. While there is a need for modernisation and adaptation, this study has shown solutions need to be conflict sensitive, thinking through potential negative repercussions, and be political as well as technical.

Key Recommendations - Governments, donors and development partners should:

Young men are key stakeholders requiring dedicated resources.

As such, government and development partners should facilitate families and communities to identify ways to support young male pastoralists and improve relations through building genuine intergenerational dialogue.

Young men are said to be the key implementers of violence in Nigeria. Nigeria's pastoral societies have experienced intense changes over time due to a variety of factors which have undermined traditional parenting and role allocation strategies and put young men under a lot of strain. The shift from the family walking together to only young men moving with cattle has brought challenges. A number of constraints, from increasing difficulties in finding food and water for family and livestock, limited or lack of parental guidance to prolonged periods of separation from families are nowadays adding up to normal levels of risk that face young men. As this study indicates, this added responsibility, against limited parental guidance and family support has shifted their behavior, made them more vulnerable to violence and in some cases drug addiction. This study appreciates that the pressure and the complexity of influencing and winning a populace spread over a vast amount of inaccessible territory can be overwhelming, but recommends that development organizations and the federal and state governments provide programs and services to support pastoral parents and families to exert more and better influence for young men. The task of ensuring children's healthy development does not rest solely with parents or families. It lies as well with governments and organizations at the local/community, state, and national levels that provide programs and services to support parents and families. Efforts must be sensitive to hierarchies of gender, age and power and be institutionalised as part of long-term processes which enables the voices of young women and men to be heard on a regular basis.

Build intercultural competency.

To begin to put in place a good foundation for peace, development partners should address the challenge of cultural tolerance and prejudice, especially between Rindobe and Jodibe pastoralists and pastoralist and farmer communities. Interventions should aim to enhance understanding, tolerance and respect for cultural and religious diversity among targeted groups: Efforts are needed that will create spaces for constructive contact with those who consider themselves different from the "other"

based on cultural differences and build intercultural and interreligious competences as integral life skills for dealing with fears that spur stereotypes of “us” versus “them”, prejudice and/or xenophobia, that has created tensions, divisions and erupted into violent reactions in the Middle Belt. Such actions should include use of rigorous measurement tools to build the evidence base, to address a range of factors that limit inter and intra community Pastoralist-pastoralist, and pastoralist-farmer activities, and creative communication modalities that can help with new ways of imagining the ‘other’.

Conduct joint mapping of governance structures for peacebuilding and development with key stakeholders to verify effective mechanisms for dialogue, consultation, and influence.

The study has indicated that both pastoralist and farmer communities have some form of conflict resolution mechanisms in place. However, given the level and ferocity of the violence of late, these mechanisms seem uncoordinated and ineffective, lack federal and state government support and lack adequate resources. We recommend mapping governance structures responsible for peacebuilding and development at the village, LGA and state levels in the study areas. Formal and traditional governance structures responsible for peacebuilding and development planning should be mapped after interviews with government personnel from relevant departments, local community members, civil society organizations, multilateral agencies, and other relevant people. Entities identified should be evaluated against criteria, including development or peacebuilding mandate, degree of influence over peacebuilding and development decision-making in targeted areas, and feasibility of collaboration with other players. Ones mapped, the organizations needs should be identified for strengthening to make them more responsive, effective and better coordinated to deal with pastoralist challenges and pastoralist farmer conflicts.

Build capacity of pastoralist and farmer leaders to promote intercultural understanding.

We recommend establishing, or where available strengthen a network of influential pastoral and farmer community leaders and organizations (like Pastoral Resolve) to identify and mobilize existing social cohesion resources on the ground and work collaboratively with each other and the government. Support should be focused on key stakeholders, including religious leaders, CSOs, women and youth groups among others, to gain (possess) the organizational and individual strength required to extend themselves effectively to larger coalitions as well as the knowledge and skills to conduct successful joint advocacy time-bound campaigns to enhance dialogue and social inclusion that target vulnerable pastoralists and disadvantaged farmers, including other ethnic minorities, the disabled, women and girls. Additionally, a variety of expertise and actors including cultural actors, actors in the education sector such as teachers, youth groups, academics and scholars, civil society organisations, religious /belief communities should be mobilized to offer their input and neutral and safe space for encounters that seek to create an environment of mutual understanding and respect, and in promoting integration in society by allowing all to participate and benefit from an inclusive development process.

Promote the involvement of civil society organizations in intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and non-discrimination.

Local CSOs and other traditional structures should be considered for capacity building in the advantages and challenges of advancing advocacy issues through CSO networks. This will prepare them for building and sustaining coalitions to deal with pastoralist farmer issues (whether for one-off activities or on long-term interventions) and bolster civil society actors and organizations at LGA and state levels. CSOs should learn various techniques that serve the dual purposes of educating pastoralists on relevant public policy reform efforts related to cultural diversity and livelihoods, and spurring participants to action around reform efforts and challenge harmful government policies.

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