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NO RETREAT NO SURRENDER CONFLICT FOR SURVIVAL BETWEEN FULANI PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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Abstract:

Our herd is our life because to every nomad life is worthless without his cattle. What do you expect from us when our source of existence is threatened? The encroachment of grazing fields and routes by farmers is a call to war (HameSaidu, a Pastoralist, Wuse, 2009-IRIN, 2009).

The continuing Fulani Pastoralists' militancy for the survival of their cattle makes fierce struggle and violent conflicts with farmers inevitable. As Farmers continuously encroach into the grazing routes, they leave the Fulani with no alternative to neither retreat nor surrender. The traditional practices that focus on the close integration between raising of livestock and enhanced farming have posed serious dialectics in the dynamic relationships between pastoralists and farmers in Northern Nigeria. Northern Nigeria is a plural society with the potential for conflict. However, the conflicts between Fulani pastoralists and farmers in Northern Nigeria are essentially economic in nature, irrespective of the religious, cultural and political colourations that might be diluted to advance certain objectives.

Migrant pastoralists in Nigeria are made up of many ethnic groups and the largest being the Fulbe or Fulani; constituting over 90%. The Fulani are well integrated amongst the sedentary Hausa farmers, who emigrated into Northern Nigeria from the Senegambia Valley several centuries ago (Adebayo, 1995). The availability of ecological, economic, environmental as well as social factors explain the need for posture, market proximity and the reciprocal social relationship with the host community. A combination of these factors increases the potential for conflicts in northern Nigeria (Blench, 1994, Tolnab, 2001, Fabusoro, 2006).

Keywords: Pastoralists, Farmers, Northern Nigeria

The Setting and Framework of Conflict in Pastoralism and Sedentarism

Conflict is largely a phenomenon of plural societies. In Nigeria, conflict has become a very widespread occurrence; manifesting in all spheres of human endeavors. A study of

major sources of conflicts between the Fulani pastoralists and farmers shows that land related issues, especially over grazing fields, account for the highest percentage of the conflicts. In other words, struggles over the control of economically viable lands cause more tensions and violent conflicts among communities. As Pastoralists and cultivators have coexisted for a long time, the complexities over the land-use system have dramatically changed and thus become the dependent variables in conflicts between herdsmen and farmers.

The Fulani indisputably represent a significant component of the Nigerian economy. They constitute the major breeders of cattle, the main source of meat, the most available and cheap source of animal proteins consumed by Nigerians. The Fulani own over 90% of the nation's livestock population which accounts for one-third of agricultural GDP and 3.2% of the nation's GDP (Eniola, 2010:3). Furthermore, the contribution of the Fulani to the local food chain and national food security cannot be overstressed. The Fulani, with their dominance in the Sahel region, are the best known and most numerous of all the pastoral groups in Nigeria. The traditional and unique Fulani encampment (*ruga*) consisting of temporary structures made of stalks, closely knit family members and livestock is the natural habitat of the orthodox Fulbe settlement.

The expansion of Fulbe pastoralism into Nigeria is unknown. It is suggested that Fulbe began to settle on the plains of Bauchi Emirate transcending onto the grassland of the Jos Plateau (Morrison, 1982, cited in Blench, 2010:4). Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers have existed since the beginnings of agriculture and increased or decreased in intensity and frequency depending on economic, environmental and other factors. For example, increases in the herd sizes, due to improved conditions of the cattle, compelled the pastoralists to seek for more pastures beyond their limited range. Climate change has constituted a great threat by putting great pressures on the land and thus provoking conflicts between them. However, improvements in human health and population have enhanced a much greater pressure on land. Since the 1980s therefore, there has been a marked expansion of cultivation of the *fadama* (riverine and valley-bottom) areas. This means that both the farmers and pastoralists have engaged in fierce struggles for access to such valuable lands which, more often than not, result in increased conflicts and violence.

Important features of the current harmony and disharmony in Pastoralism and sedentarism, reflect enhanced sedentarisation and increased Pastoralism leading to constant conflict with agrarian societies (Blench, 2010:1). Interdependent relationships between Fulani and farmers, based on exchange of products, can be sustained if the pressure on resources is neutralized and mutual terms agreed. Hence, the higher the degree of pressure

on vital resources, the greater the degree of conflicts. The degree of harmony and conflict between Fulani and farmers provokes a certain degree of perceptions, particularly in the patterns of the conflicts and corporation, leading to the inevitability of the breakdown of law and order (Blench, 1984).

The complexity of pastoral resource management hinges on the unstable claims and counter claims on pasture, water and other resources. This complexity is also based on certain principles of flexibility and reciprocity. Land is the major resource base of the pastoralists but is not an individually fixed asset with specific use and accessibility (Sandford and Habtu, 2000, Thebaud and Batterbury, 2001, Nori, et'al 2005). Since the pastoral Fulani wander ceaselessly with a herd of cattle and constantly explore new terrains in harsh and treacherous environment, they naturally surrender to nature with primary objective of securing the security of their animals. The security of pastoral livelihood depends on the condition of their herd and grazing ecosystem which symbiotically relies on the availability of razing pasture, watering holes and other ecological, socio-economic and safety conditions.

Issues bordering on local community security, safety and development are paramount in the enhancement of governance and increase or decrease in agitation for control of resources as well as encroachment of the rights of others. All these have implications for survival and struggles between or amongst communities. Again, local resistance to state policies is central in resource-use through strengthening of community capacity to manage resources and deal with conflicts. Hence, security is a framework for intervention and conflicts. Since insecurity gives ways to conspiracy, conflicts are inevitable. The object of security is to primarily advance the well-being and possessions of the persons involved; while the survival of the state is secondary. In other words, when the character and nature of the state do not seem to protect the security of the citizens, their freedom and choices completely shift away from the state to individuals or groups as the foci of security.

When the state pays a lip service to the security of the means of livelihood of its citizens, like cattle and farmlands; and there is no sufficient guarantee for safety, fear and suspicions amongst them emerge. The citizens exercise no restraints in individually or collectively protecting the security and safety of their resources and lives. Since safety and security have become scarce commodities, only those that can afford them protect them with all the means available, at the detriment of others irrespective of the risks involved. As the state cannot regulate the mutual coexistence of its citizens in the harmonious sharing of the competed resources, the parties may have to resolve to struggle among themselves with no retreat, nor surrender and for the survival of the fittest.

The goal of human development is to evolve and foster understanding, mutual respects and the principle of give and take, among others. This is to enhance security and safety for all in order to directly participate and be inclusively involved to make life better, dynamic and respond to changing circumstances. This should be deliberately designed to avoid, mitigate or neutralize conflicts with the objective of accommodating and sustaining collective interest for security and safety. Aspects of consensus building and mutual respects in promoting peace, security and safety makes communities to strategically organize, control and manage its resources efficiently without resorting to conflicts. This involves proactive mobilization to foster social cohesion and responsibility for collective action on any issue that threatens the security and safety of the community. Since the root causes of conflicts are traceable to and manifested on ethnic and religious differences, the political economy of the state constitutes the architect in these incidences. The failure of the state, for example to resolve the ‘settler/ ‘indigene’ identity and the inherent struggles over resources can be adduced to have brought dangerous dimensions of economic and political elements in the Fulani pastoralists and farmers’ conflicts (Fiki and Lee, B. 2004: 24-48).

Northern Nigeria: A Background

The area known as ‘Northern Nigeria’ serves as the ‘melting pot’ of the modern Nigerian Federation. Northern Nigeria therefore serves as the nexus of considerable social, economic, political and cultural struggles. The strategic importance of Northern Nigeria in commerce, trade, religious activities and thoughts has spanned a long period of time. These activities enhanced great contacts with ancient empires and kingdoms in African, Mediterranean and throughout the Islamic World. As a geographical region of Nigeria, Northern Nigeria is much more vast and arid and of course less densely populated than the south. The people of Northern Nigeria are largely Muslims and many of them are Hausa or transformed into Hausa. Apart from Muslims, there are other religious or cultural groups. Northern Nigeria became a British colony in 1900 under the Northern protectorate. Both the Northern and Southern protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 to form the Nigerian Federation. The modern Northern Nigeria is currently composed of 19 states with Abuja; the Federal Capital Territory.

Agriculture is the main stay of the Northern Nigerian economy, even though there are other mineral resources. The sustainability of agriculture in Northern Nigerian economy requires a strategic balance in the ecological and socio-economic activities as well as political considerations. In Northern Nigeria, rainfall occurs seasonally with a pronounced dry season.

The seasonal rainfall and prolonged dry season bring about dynamics in the ecosystem and sour relationships resulting in a sharp division between the sedentary farmers and the nomadic pastoralists.

Northern Nigeria is a plural society composed of large ethnic groups with the immigration of several new ones. In addition, Northern Nigeria is also made up of Islamic culture that mingles with a variety of traditional and other cultures (Akinwumi, et'al, and 207:117-212). These varieties of cultures create potentials areas of conflicts with every group projecting its interests in resources allocation, resource management, and resource control as well as claim rights over different resources. The plurality of the society is therefore related with recurring conflicts in the region– ethnic, religious, economic, political among others. The implications of the conflicts have brought about high degrees of loss of human, animal and material resources.

Conflict for Survival: Security over Farmland and Cattle

The types of conflicts for survival between the Fulani pastoralists and farmers in Northern Nigeria vary in form and intensity from one community to another. Social and economic factors continue to provoke violent conflicts among the Fulani pastoralists and farmers. The intensity and variations of the conflicts largely depend on the nature and type of the user groups where the pastoralists graze. These conflicts have constituted serious threats to the means of survival and livelihoods of both the farmers and pastoralists and what both groups are tenaciously protecting and projecting. The conflicts, through provocative claims over access rights to farmland and cattle routes (*labi*), have become ubiquitous and seem to have defied solutions.

In order to develop an effective, efficient and acceptable system for managing these conflicts, there is the need to appreciate and identify the cultural issues associated with the vulnerable groups (Otite& Albert (eds) 1999:1-30). In addition, there is the need to comprehend how the farmers and Fulani on the one hand and the community and the state on the other have viewed such conflicting issues and the strategies put in place to ameliorate or even resolve them. Until the sources of such conflicts are clearly identified, understood, managed and resolved, such incidences will continue to show their ugly heads at the slightest provocation.

Various cases of conflicts in Northern Nigeria involving the Fulani pastoralists and farmers consist of significant variables in economic, social, political and ecological parameters. These conflicts occur mostly in areas of stiff competition for grazing land and

farming but the degree of intensity differs from state to state depending on the ecological location and the communities involved. Even though droughts and climate change in Northern Nigerian have worsen the trends of Fulani pastoralist relationships with farmers, the decrease in the annual rainfall and shortening of the wet season have added inputs to the intensity and magnitude of Fulani exodus southwards. These movements and the search for pasture land have caused widespread conflicts and destruction of human and animal lives as well as farmlands with adverse implications for the political economy.

The exacerbation of vulnerability and conflicts in Northern Nigeria between Fulani pastoralists and farmers is not only caused by climate change but a combination of factors. For example, with the expansion of population, the rate of food production would naturally increase and to meet that increasing demand, it is natural for the farmers to encroach into marginal lands that had been the traditional pasture routes for the cattle. This has therefore heightened struggle between livestock and agricultural production which, more often than not, result in the escalation of conflicts (Nyong, 2010:37). Hence, as population grows, more land is being cultivated and less is available for pasture; forcing Fulani to migrate and tramp on crops cultivated by farmers.

Bruijin and Dijk (1995) and Nori, et'al,(2005) have assessed the sources of vulnerability in fulbe pastoral system. It is shown that both the sources they control (animals) and do not control (land, water, market, politics) have direct and significant impacts on their livelihoods and the host communities. Table 1 exhibits the Fulbe perception on the sources and degree of vulnerability in their system. First and foremost, the greatest threat to Fulani livelihood is nothing other than the insecurity of the cattle due primarily to prior accessibility to pasture land and water points. This is followed by cattle diseases as exhibited in Table 1.

Table 1: Perception on sources and level of vulnerability (insecurity)

	Highly vulnerable	Vulnerable	Fairly vulnerable	Not vulnerable
Sources of Vulnerability/Insecurity				
Poor access to land for grazing	XXXXXX			
Water inadequacy	XXXXXX			
Cattle diseases		XXXXXX		
Poor veterinary services		XXXXXX		

Government actions and inactions		XXXXXX		
Poor educational level			XXXXXXXX	
Sociocultural problems			XXXXXXXX	
Conflict with host				XXXXXX

Source: Adapted from Fabusoro, E.2007 – Key issues in Livelihoods Security.....

Clashes between farmers and pastoralists in Northern Nigeria are ubiquitous and on the increase. These clashes generally centre on access to and competition for grazing land and water. As pasture land shrinks, sequel to taking over of such lands by farmers, conflicts become inevitable. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the Fulani pastoralists to move and graze without veering into crop fields. More than 60% of the reported cases of conflicts occurred during the dry season. These conflicts, more often than not, are concentrated around the resource-endowed locations like the fertile flood plains, river valleys and other water points which involve the right to ownership and access.

According to 2009 official report of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Nigeria has officially demarcated 4125 grazing reserves or routes. Out of this number, only one third is put in use, whereas 270 grazing reserves have been put into cultivation. In order to curb farmers-pastoralists' clashes, the federal government in September 2009 carried out demarcation of a grazing route running through the central states of Nasarawa, Benue and Plateau. Other grazing routes also marked out and demarcated were started across Katsina and Bauchi States, spanning across Abuja. Further grazing routes were also demarcated from Sokoto in the Northwest to Oyo State in the Southwest as well as another 2,000km grazing route from Adamawa State in the Northeast to Calabar in the Niger Delta (UN-IRIN,2009).

Bauchi and Gombe States are situated within the Northeast pastoral zone of Northern Nigeria. These states are the focal points of reference in the National Fadama Development Projects (NFDPs). Hence, various cases of conflicts emerged and because of the incessant clashes between the farmers and pastoralists, it is necessary to examine the causes, dynamics and consequences of such incidences as they affect the nature of the State in Nigeria's federation. Between 1996 and 2002, Bauchi and Gombe States respectively recorded 28 and 112 reported incidences. The recorded human losses for the two states during the same period were 101 and 20 respectively. However, large animal losses and crop damage were

equally recorded in addition to other huge injuries inflicted on human, animal, plant and others (Ajuwon, 2004).

The dimension of militancy in the conflicts is associated with the advent of the aggressive Udawa and Bokoloji pastoralists which further led to the emergence and introduction of guns and other sophisticated weapons in the conflicts as well as the use of new communication devices, accompanied with banditry. In all these areas, non-adherence to the grazing reserves for cattle, which have continuously been encroached by farmers, is the primary cause of the conflicts. All these have produced adverse consequences in the destruction of villages, settlements, crops, and irrigation facilities, human and animal lives. In Bauchi, for example, areas mostly affected included Jama'are, Gamawa, Kuddu, Misau, Zaki and Kirfe Local Government Areas, among others.

Within the Northwest and North central pastoral regions of Northern Nigeria, the incidence of serious cases of conflicts for survival between pastoralists and farmers also led to loss of lives and destruction of properties with the emergence of insecurity due to the continuous desire for vengeance by the parties involved. In Jigawa State, the conflicts between the Hausa farmers and Fulani rearers, is a phenomenon that continues to occur in Miga, Kaugama, Birnin Kudu, Garki and Maigatari local government areas with loss of lives, properties, cattle as well as various degrees of injuries. The use of guns and other weapons have added a new dimension to the conflicts alongside the intrusion of camel pastoralists from Niger Republic (Pyramid Trust, July 17, 2009).

In Nasarawa State, the perennial conflicts for survival between cattle herdsman and peasant farmers over the control and access to resources are increasing. For instance, the UdeniGida village incidence of Nasarawa local government area turned bloody with more than 30 people dead, with many houses, crops and other properties set ablaze (Daily Trust, December 21, 2009). The cause of the violence was due to the destruction of rice farmlands by cattle. The use of guns and other weapons has become very rampant by the parties involved. Sometimes, gunmen are constantly recruited and paid to launch attack on either of the divide. This situation is common throughout Northern Nigeria and must be directly connected with global warming and climate change which automatically put enormous pressures on land and other resources.

These pressures have caused regular conflicts for survival in Gwagwada district of Chikun local government area of Kaduna State. Due to climate change therefore, pasture portions already allocated to herdsman dried up which led to cattle invasion of farmland by destroying crops and streams where the communities use as drinking water (Okpi, 2010:1-2) .

In the North Central Zone, the conflicts have assumed religious and ethnic dimensions. In this zone, due to the nature of the conflicts, Fulani pastoralists were forced out of the areas or prevented entry. These conflicts have degenerated into full scale wars with the Plateau state government's involvement. In 2002, Pastoralists were driven out of Bassa local government of Kogi State after bloody encounter with farmers. Between 1996 and 2002, 49 cases of conflicts between farmers and pastoralists in Kogi State were reported (Ajuwon, 2004).

In Plateau State and indeed all over Northern Nigeria, pastoral fulbe are in peril, sequel to the eruptions of the ethnic-religious conflicts. In 2009, hundreds of nomadic Fulani pastoralists were expelled from Wase local government area. Apart from the conflict going out of control, the malignant conflict for survival has also witnessed killing of livestock through poisoning of the pasture land and water points especially in Heipag, BarikinLadi local government area where over 70 cattle perished (Daily Trust, July 17,2010). It should be stressed that since the 19th century, pastoral fulbe had been attached to the Plateau. Fulani pastoralism in Jos area had thus been well entrenched but in recent times turned into increasing pressure due to increasing and steep struggle between the fulbe and other sedentary groups for control and ownership of land and other resources.

Hence, the transformation of the relationships between the crop cultivators and pastoral fuble spontaneously changed from that of complementarily and trust to hostility, violence and wars. These have been endemic all over Northern Nigeria. With religion, politics and ethnicity becoming interwoven, the conflicts over scarce resources have become more fierce and deadly. Hence, the contours of these resource-connected conflicts are more often than not manipulated along religious, ethnic and sectional divide thus making them more intricate, complex and difficult to resolve. The causes of these conflicts in these pastoral corridors thus range from droughts and erratic patterns of rainfalls and the concentration of farming and grazing to the *fadama* areas particularly in Kebbi State.

The state projects on *fadamaprogrammes* (NFDP) have been viewed as a direct threat to pastoralists for their dry season grazing. Upland grazing areas are in a poor state and cannot support teaming livestock; leading to the shrinkage of land use sources for both farmers and pastoralists. The movement of Fulani Pastoralists for pasture into various parts of Northern Nigeria has been accompanied with attendant challenges and opportunities for both the farmers and pastoralists. In addition, this movement has brought about tension, conflicts and wars leading to further emergence of the state of insecurity, political instability and socio-economic quagmire.

The state has continued to play prominent roles in the escalation of conflicts over land on a number of factors. For example, the ‘indigene’ and ‘settler’ phenomena have not been addressed and settled, the issues of unresolved grazing land and water spots for the survival of farmers and pastoralists as well as other corresponding matters on socio-economic relationships between the two warring groups (Tenuche, & Infatimesun, 2009:361). In the entire North Central region, there are a number of factors that provoke the escalation of conflicts. Land related conflicts account for about 50% of the entire conflicts in the region whereas Fulani-farmers’ conflicts account for about 40% of the conflicts on land related matters.

North east Pastoral corridors are also replete with conflicts of survival between farmers and fulbe pastoralists. In 2009, hundreds of pastoral fulbe were expelled from Demboa local government of Borno State. However, the invasion of Tipto, Kisa, Samne, Bangi, Wurke and Gure communities in Lamurde local government area of Adamawa State by cattle rearers with guns left unconfirmed number of dead and injured persons with over 2,000 rendered homeless due to the destruction of villages (New Nigerian, February 1, 2010). The political economy of land use in Nigeria is inherently biased against pastoral fulbe interest within the system of resource use.

Around the Mambila Plateau in Taraba State, there exists a century old conflicts between the pastoralists and farmers. With Fulbe migration since colonial era into the thickly grassy land on the Mambila Plateau, grazing for cattle can best be described as ideal. The area is known to be a land of great diversity in human and other resources and therefore ideal for its ecological characteristics: palatable grasses, adequate rainfall and less threat to animal diseases. There were sporadic incidents of conflicts between the Mambila farmers and pastoralists as far back as 1923 when fulbe allowed their cattle to trample crops (Migeod 1925: 164-6 cited in Blench, 2010:4). Certain constitutional and political changes in Nigeria led to corresponding changes in the fulbe-farmers relationship in Mambila. Hence, the obstruction of the Fulani annual movement to valleys in and around the areas led to the outbreak of violence in the 1980s and 1990s culminating in the violent clash in 2002 with burning down of Mambila villages among others (Blench, 2010:4-5).

Implications of the Conflict on the Nigerian Federation

The eruption of violent conflicts between the Fulani pastoralists and farmers as manifested, in many forms and dimensions have wide range of implications on the Nigerian federation. However, the intensity, scope and frequency of such conflicts have shown the

fragility of unity of ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. The tenacity to maintain ‘no retreat and no surrender’ by all parties in the conflict indicates the porosity of Nigerian federation. The conflict prone areas in fierce struggle and competition over the shared resources undermine the relative peace, stability hitherto enjoyed; with threats to social order. The conflicts have brought about fundamental problems of human security in the region particularly with regard to humanitarian crises.

These challenges are due to policy implications of the political economy with the formulated policies designed ostensibly to reduce and manage the conflicts, but ironically turned to escalate them the more. This development has put the MDGs under serious threat due to struggle for natural resources under contention. Conflicts in a federal structure can be effectively and efficiently managed when there is a sound and clear policy to respect the feelings of each group, with give and take devices. Mismanagement of these conflicts shows that there is a weak institutional capacity in Nigeria’s federation to manage them right from traditional to governmental institutions.

The essence of federalism is good governance, collective security and safety for the constituent units. Since human security is paramount, the elimination of potential threats of existence and fear of the deprivation as well as and enhancement of collective will must be sufficiently guaranteed (Elaigwu&Akindele (eds), 1996:87-900). Conflicts in Nigeria since the 1960s have fundamentally undermined the stability and development of the Nigerian State and economy. The social, economic and political tensions created as a result of numerous escalations of violent conflicts have raised fundamental national questions for the survival of the Nigerian State. The failure of the state to manage and resolve such conflicts has put a question mark on the suitability or relevance of the federal structure to the Nigerian reality. The identity or resource and political based conflicts have become the recurring dismal in the failure of the Nigerian federation.

The woeful failure of the Nigerian State in enhancing security to Nigerians is breeding mistrust and lack of patriotism amongst Nigerians and leaders. This has cast dark clouds over the survival of the federation. The harvest of conflicts, especially the stand-off between Pastoralists and farmers, must have been cultivated and irrigated by the leaders and followers in varying forms and magnitude. This has shown the low level of cohesion and fragility amongst numerous ethnic nationalities sequel to the construction and constitution of the Nigerian federal structure leading to the ubiquity of instability of the failed Nigerian State and federalism.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Recurring scramble for scarce ecosystem resources has degenerated into violent conflicts in Northern Nigeria between fulbe pastoralists and farmers. These conflicts have become more intense, widespread and destructive. Since most of the fulbe pastoralists do not own or possess the rights to land, they therefore depend absolutely on open land to feed their cattle, culminating in intense pressure on land and frequency of conflicts. Ecological, climate change and of course government policies on agriculture, especially the all-year *fadama* farming, are threats to pastoralist access to pasture. However, additional farms acquired and encroachments of traditional cattle routes have drastically reduced the grazing space for the livestock to access pasture areas and water points. Furthermore, the use of police and courts to resolve conflicts between fulbe pastoralists and farmers by government has been ineffective. This has contributed to the frequency of the clashes especially since the 1980s sequel to the democratic dispensation, introduction of modern weapons in the conflict and communication devices as well as the use of bandits in terrorists' activities. All these have exacerbated chronic insecurity that have encouraged the conflicting parties to take responsibility for their own security and to defend themselves, which is a threat to the sustainability of the federation.

The failure of the government to prevent the escalation of conflicts between Fulani pastoralists and farmers in Northern Nigeria is traceable to the above issues, among others. It is therefore recommended that for harmonious coexistence and security, government must make policies that are designed to enhance the Fulani pastoralists by ensuring that they secure rights to land use in order to reduce insecurity and ameliorate the spate of conflicts. This will, among other things, bring about peaceful coexistence between the Fulani pastoralists and host communities. This also enhances the security of the cattle, to access grazing space or resources without pouncing on farmers' crops.

For a sustainable peace to reign, there must be a deliberate design to enlighten and mobilize the parties in conflict to understand the ecology and the resources available in the localities. This opens a window for interdependence and complementaries among groups in the optimal use of the resources for collective benefit and equitable access. Thus, the place and space must be exploited for common interest with effective regulation of activities, behavior and conduct. This scenario can only come about if herders keep to agreed routes and farmers avoid farming across them with stern government policy and strict compliance.

In addition, factors associated with the conflicts must be properly appreciated and managed by appropriate institutions involved in the conflict resolutions. Hence, local

governance in the conflict must not be overlooked. Traditional strategies may be combined with the emerging ones. This relates on how communities create local structures and networks for the purposes of engagement, participation, inclusiveness, mutual partnership and transformation of the environment through equity in resource utilization. As safety and security generate trust, mutual benefits are automatically derived. However, structures created for and by communities generate networks and feedback by ensuring that people relate to each other amicably for common use of resources and ensure a safety first principle in cattle grazing movements and pasture as well as crop production. Understanding the peculiarities and exploiting opportunities inherent in the Northern Nigeria can produce greater prospects for effective, efficient and sustainable conflict resolution strategies in enhancing the farmer-nomad relationship.

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