

## **FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE**










### **SITUATION DASHBOARD**

#### **ON CONFLICTS AND ETHNIC TENSIONS BETWEEN PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS**

**ISSUE: 5 (1ST APRIL, 2020 TO 30TH APRIL, 2020)**

##### **HIGHLIGHT**

There continues to be relative peace in more communities in the LGAs monitored within the reporting period, while few communities have some conflict situations, while others have unstable peace. Below is the peace stability (and otherwise) rating of the monitored LGAs:

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

Key: Durable Peace  Stable Peace  Unstable Peace  Conflict 

##### **GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE**

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

## INTRODUCTION

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

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

### *Economic Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers*

Pastoralists and farmers in Awe, Doma and Obi LGAs have continued to attend the same local markets freely and patronizing each other without any form of exploitation or sell goods or services to one another with differential in price. Some of the markets monitored are the five (5) days interval Awe local market, the Oriso local market and the Friday market in Agyaragu both in Obi LGA and the Wednesday market (Kasuwan Laraba) in Doma, variety of items were sold by both parties which includes goats, yam, vegetables, dairy products and local chicken. The pastoralists and farmers both men and women in the communities visited sold their goods and offered required services to each other without hesitation or bias.

As at the reporting period in all monitored locations, there was a considerate level of economic relations between pastoralists and farmers in Makurdi and Gwer West LGAs except Guma which experienced violent conflict incidents that led to mutual distrust and breakdown of economic relationships between pastoralists and farmers. In the Benue Central area, there was a decline in involvement of pastoralists in commercial activities especially in Guma where incidents of attacks occurred. In Guma LGA, pastoralists maintained their settlements around communities such as Kwata (near Agasha), Gbajimba, Yogbo, Udei and parts of Tyulen, but did not buy or sell actively in local stock markets. In Gwer West, pastoralists maintained their settlement in Sengeve, Tongov, Tse- Bukem, Gbaji, Gidan Pepa, New Nigeria and Anguhar. Majority of these pastoralists travelled by boat to buy and sell in Wadata (Makurdi LGA) as tensions arose in Agagbe, Enger and Anguhar markets following conflict incidents. The economic interrelationship between pastoralists and farmers in Makurdi remained very high. In North bank and Wadata areas the town, high economic activities were observed until third week of March 2020 when government restrictions on movement was pronounced as part of the measures put in place to contain the Corona Virus or COVID-19

Pandemic. Despite this, significant volume of unhindered trade in dairy and protein products was dominated by pastoralists in other markets such as Fiidi, Wurukum and High Level.

In Katsina-Ala, and Ukum LGAs farmers and pastoralist are partially attending local markets such as Zaki-Baim, Jootar, Peva and Tomanyiin weekly markets patronizing the products of one another, most especially in Katsina-Ala, but for Logo, it is observed that the women of the pastoralist who do bring their local products for sell as at November, December 2019 has stop, they no longer sell Nunu in the local markets and in clear terms as observed, their women have stop attending local markets. The men of the pastoralist have also stopped attending local markets in Logo LGA for now. In Katsina-Ala pastoralist who are considered indigenous pastoralist by their period of stay in Katsina-Ala, who are cattle sellers at the cattle market maintains that relative peace is experienced and economic activities have also improved as compare to the heat period of conflicts. The pastoralist here reside in Hausa community residential area within these community, pastoralist set up small business facilities for buying and selling with members of the host communities.

Farmers and pastoralists in different communities belongs to market unions and cooperatives such as Rafin Jaka, Rumin Giwa, Damba, Fadama, All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) and Miyetti Allah Kalta-Hore in Awe and some parts of Obi (Obi town) and Doma, while in some other communities like Agyaragu and Akanga, no such cooperatives exists. In communities where both farmers and pastoralists belonged to same market union or association they both benefit from loans because quite a number of pastoralists are now venturing into farming too, although farmers usually benefit more since they are more in number compared to the farming pastoralists in such cooperatives.

Monitors reported that Pastoralists and farmers are members of different unions and cooperatives, although the unions and cooperatives and meant to be exclusively for distinct economic group. Pastoralists belong to unions and cooperatives like Rafin Jaka, Rumin Giwa, Damba, Fadama, Miyetti Allah Kautal-Hore, and MACBAN; while farmers belonged to All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) and Bam. The involvement of pastoralists and farmers in market unions and cooperatives is low in all locations except Makurdi. Most of the cooperatives and unions are set up along the genres of products sold. This means, there are separate unions and cooperatives for yam sellers, grains sellers, livestock sellers etc. Generally, pastoralists and farmers all have equal access to economic opportunities in the various communities visited. Everyone was able to trade in an open market regardless of their economic orientation.

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

In Doma, Awe and Obi LGAs Pastoralists and farmers all have equal access to economic opportunities in the communities visited. The communities availed everyone the opportunity to trade in an open market regardless of their economic orientation.

### *Socio-cultural Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers*

There were no stereotyping names which either pastoralist or farmers were observed to call each other except for sake of jokes or greetings with expressions such as Agwoi jo or TV jo. Across all locations, stereotyping names were not used against each other. It was however, observed that pastoralists and farmers call each other names such as *Sarkin Noma*, *Agwoi/Agwei*, *Onoho*, *Munchi*, *Tiv-njo*, which are not meant to slight one another.

In Katsina-Ala, Ukum and Logo, pastoralist and farmers have a considerable long term relationship which some historians trace to be of the same ancestry. Pastoralist refers to the farmers as *munchi* while the farmers refer to the pastoralist as ‘mbaagbidekpoo’ or ‘Agewi’ however; these names are called without the intention to mock, stereotype or trigger hate.

In Awe, Doma and Obi LGAs some pastoralists live a bit detached from the community, while majority lived in separate locations, but none of either party lived in an unsafe or places at risk of stigmatization. The Tiv’s that relocated into the Awe town are gradually moving back to their main hamlets such as Jangargari, Gidan Anthony and Mararba all of which were communities that were destroyed during pastoralists and farmers conflicts in that area.

There is continuous increase in farmers and pastoralists participation in each other’s socio-cultural activities although pastoralists usually participate more, since they are more privy with information about farmers events more easily, even when not invited sometimes once they meet an occasion they will join and partake, while farmers participate in pastoralists events mostly when invited and a few times if they coincidentally meet the pastoralists celebrating they do partake. However, Coronavirus pandemic has rendered social activities unpalatable. In communities like Rukubi, Yelwa and Akwata of Doma LGA and Mahanga of Awe LGA pastoralists and farmers are getting to learn and understanding each other’s language.

There are continuous inter-marriages across Nasarawa State between pastoralists and farmers; more so in Awe LGA, although in some communities like Akanga, Agwatashi there is rarely such inter-marrying.

Before the this conflict escalated, both groups attend cultural feast of both party such as Biki, Suna, kwase kenmen burials etc. these activities were common in Logo LGA in particular, Ayilamo, Ukemberegya/Tswarev until in 2011 up till date when the conflict between pastoralist and farmers started. It is observed that currently there is no socio-cultural inter-relationship between pastoralist and farmers. This is not only because of the coronavirus pandemic but also the displacement of farmer from their communities. As at the time of reporting, pastoralists have continued to increase in numbers at those locations.

In Katsina-Ala, pastoralists reside with the farmers in the Hausa community, socio-cultural inter-relationship between pastoralist and farmers is said to be personal which is considerably very low. The same situation at Katsina-Ala is observed/reported at Ukum LGA.

In Nasarawa state, the children of pastoralists and farmers hitherto usually attend Islamic worship and teaching centers (Makaranta Alo) in places like Awe Market, Shohon Gari and Sabon Gari of Awe LGA. They also attend same schools, health care facilities regardless of religion or cultural difference.

The use of traditional attires between pastoralists and farmers varies across communities monitored in the LGAs; some believe farmers or pastoralists adorn each other's attire for sake of mischief while others say think differently. As according to them, they do wear each other's attire especially during and while attending their festivities or cultural events. It is also observed that both parties seldomly adorn their traditional attires due to modernization how much more wearing another's traditional attires.

#### *Political Inter-relationship between Pastoralists and Farmers*

In Awe LGA farmers and pastoralists were constantly involved in decision making in the community as there is monthly meeting held by the emir of Awe, also the LGC Chairman does a monthly meetings with the various group leaders, in Doma and Obi LGAs of Nasarawa state farmers and pastoralists have a limited involvement in decision making in the communities.

Involvement of pastoralists in decision making processes was high in Makurdi LGA. Pastoralists were part of community policing structures particularly in Makurdi LGA, while in other LGAs their involvement in decision making have been limited with regards to participation in security dialogues and meetings. There was minimal involvement of pastoralist in decision making compared to farmers in Guma and Gwer West LGAs.

In Katsina-Ala it is revealed that the pastoralist who are considered indigenous pastoralist living within the Hausa community actively participate in political process and they are registered party members and voters card carrying members among the polling units within Hausa community. But are not involved at decision making process and further reveals that political benefits are not been given to them as a community. In Logo LGA pastoralist are in no way involved or participating in political process due to their lack of interest. The same condition of Logo applies to pastoralist in Ukum LGA.

Farmers and pastoralists carryout civic activities in turns or within their groups due to the fact that they live in separate locations within the community. Although in Awe market and Agyaragu Obi market pastoralists and farmers from time to time carryout market cleaning together.

Generally, in all monitored communities across Benue Central, farmers and pastoralists significantly observed the state and federal government directives on COVID-19 prevention. Aside this, pastoralists and farmers did not carry out joint civic activities like sanitation due to the fact that they live separately within the community together, as such everyone carries out their civic activities separately.

In Nasarawa state it was said that the programmes and distribution of aid targeted both farmers and pastoralists and that it is usually shared along the lines of associations and groups who in turn shares with their members in order to avoid groups or associations complaining their members have not been considered in the aid.

### *Justice for Pastoralists and Farmers*

In the LGAs visited across Nasarawa state there was no conflict incidences in the communities meanwhile, within the reporting period, farmers appear to prefer the community/traditional leaders, the vigilante and in Rukubi of Doma LGA the army to help settle disputes between them and pastoralists.

The Benue State Livestock Guards continue to man their operation units leading to arrest, arraignment and one conviction of pastoralists in a Makurdi chief Magistrate court in different operations. Farmers sampled do not adequately trust that they can get justice from the police and other security agents. They expressed fear that bribery could pervert the course of justice. On this basis pastoralists and farmers usually opt for out of court settlement and utilize mediation and dialogue, showing their trust in the local justice. Farmers in particular expressed concerns over extortion associated with litigation. Also, respect for the rule of law was rated as minimal. In all LGAs monitored in Benue state, it was observed that pastoralists engaged in open grazing activities despite laws proscribing it in the state. Chief Magistrate Court sitting in Makurdi presided over by Mr. Isaac Ajim had during the period under review convicted an 18years old Adamo Golle to serve 1year in prison for contravening Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment law 2017 of Benue State.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Adamu Ibrahim, Abubarkar Usman and Salah Landi were arraigned before a Makurdi chief magistrate court presided over by Mr. Isaac Ajim for allegedly violating the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law of Benue State.<sup>2</sup> In another development it was revealed that the Benue State government had released over 460 cattle's belonging to the pastoralists which were impounded by the Benue State Livestock Guards for violating anti open grazing law was handed over to them.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vanguard Newspaper and Court Registry

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Tribune Newspaper 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2020



### *Security Situation in Communities Hosting Pastoralists and Farmers*

Security operatives are present in most of the communities visited, with the Operation Puff Adder still in full force, while police and vigilante check points are regularly positioned along roads and highways leading to all the communities in the various LGAs monitored during weekly markets days. In Rukubi of Doma LGA soldiers are always on patrol all over the community due to the presence of Olams farm in the community which in turn has helped to foster peaceful coexistence between pastoralists and farmers, such that when there is misunderstanding between them the soldier is there to go for justice.

Generally security operatives were present in all the communities during our peace monitoring visit, the Operation Puff Adder still in full force, while police and vigilante check points are regularly positioned along roads and highways leading to all the communities in the various LGAs monitored. Similarly the Agro Rangers Squad of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) are responding to conflict incidences whenever called upon. Police and other security agencies maintained presence in many locations as at March, 2020. Despite the presence of these security agencies, a number of communities in three council wards of Guma LGA. were attacked, namely: Mbawa, Mbabai and Mbadwem, Stephen Tsav village was attacked 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, also Tse-Jov community on 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, Chongu community on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 and Tse-Anagu community on 23<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 both communities in Mbawa Council ward, in Mbabai council ward Tse-Igba community was attacked on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 and Tse-Tarvaan community of Mbadwem council ward was attacked on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2020.

As for Logo LGA in particular, Awashua, Ukembereagya/tswarev, Ayilmo, the justice system is weak as at the point of filing this information, having observed that the security agents available do take some money from the pastoralist and render unfair judgment against the farmers. The population of pastoralist within these areas has increased more than before, and they graze on the little farm some people did when a little peace was observed. The pastoralists are not observing the anti-open grazing law within the listed communities. In Katsina-Ala and Ukum the justice system is very okay, as said by both pastoralist and farmers and both parties commended the police the good work of protecting lives and properties. Security situation in Logo is fragile considering sustained influx of pastoralist in the communities with the attendant consequences.

### *Mental Health Situation of Pastoralists and Farmers*

There were conflict incidences which were recorded within Guma communities as monitored and a substantial number of the pastoralists and farmers who are victims and survivors continue to exhibit signs and symptoms of divergent psychosocial disorders which the teams have been managing since the beginning of our intervention. Particularly, the team has continued work in four select pilot areas of Daudu IDP Camps 1, 3 and 3 in Guma LGA as well as the Cattle Market Community in North bank area in Makurdi LGA of Benue state. In

all the monitored locations, mental health situation of the farmers in IDP camps as well as Pastoralists in the Cattle Market Community in North bank area have continued to weaken due to the losses and devastation they suffered as a result of the previous conflict. COVID-19 pandemic has also raised the stakes of the mental wellbeing of pastoralist and farmers especially in the past two weeks in the reporting period.

### *Advocacy Highlight*

In all the location monitored there is need for increased dialogues among all key stakeholders. These dialogues need to be localized to widen participation. Furthermore, there is need for security agents and government to close up all ungoverned spaces utilized for perpetuation of violence. A state coordination instrument such as Peace Commissions in Benue state will not be out of Place.

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

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