

**COMMUNITY MECHANISMS FOR MANAGING CONFLICTS BETWEEN  
FARMING AND HERDING COMMUNITIES IN YOBE STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

Seven Local Government Areas in Yobe were covered in this study which aimed at community level mechanisms for managing conflicts around land and water use by the pastoralist and herding communities. They are: Damaturu, Fika, Fune, Geidam, Gujba, Jakusko and Tarmuwa were studied to discern the. It employed qualitative research design with the application of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were sourced through interview with key informants and Focus group discussions, while the secondary data were sourced from literature relevant to the study and Researcher Observation was also used. The study reveals that traditional institutions at the various strata in Yobe State have played significant role in the management of conflict relating to access to land and water between farming and herding communities in their localities. Recommendations include that with the changing nature of conflicts, key stakeholders at the local, state and national levels should equally invest and place emphasis on prevention to compliment efforts by the state.

**KEYWORDS:** Community, Mechanism, Natural resources, Pastoralist, Farmers and conflict Management

## **INTRODUCTION**

The linkage between environment, natural resources and outbreak of violent conflict has been established by scholars (Malthus, 1798). Land and water, to a large extent, the two may not need to be separated as they can be grouped as one. This is because water itself is one of the constituents of land, and some of the most important resources needed by mankind for daily existence. This is because all human livelihoods are directly or indirectly dependent on these two important resources. Very important is the fact that these resources can be put into different uses by different group of users. In spite of the significance of land and water to human existence and multiple uses they can be put to; they are limited in supply and somewhat scarce. Furthermore, their access and usage by mankind are severely constrained by artificial and natural barriers (Adisa, 2012).

These factors of multifarious uses and limitedness in supply of or access to land and water always necessitate various forms and dimensions of competition among different groups of users. Most times, competitions for these resources usually result in violence that brings about immense loss of lives and properties. There are two types of competitions for these resources. On the one hand is inter-user group competition which involves competition between two or more groups of users. For instance, competition between agricultural users and non-agricultural users is a typical example of inter-user group competition. The other is intra-user group competition, such as the manifestation of competition between pastoralists and farmers over the use of these resources. Competition between these two agricultural groups over the use of land and water resources has always resulted in fierce conflicts and outbreak of violence largely due to increase in human and animal populations while these resources are limited in supply (Gefu and Kolawole, 2002).

In Nigeria, farmer-pastoralist conflict is one of the most prominent conflicts resulting from use of resources (especially water and land) between two agricultural user groups. Although, the competition between the two users of resource has been on for a long period of time, it has assumed a violent dimension in recent times and has become very rampant in

contemporary Nigerian society. The relationship between the two groups was more of cooperation than frequent conflict. Michael Baca (2015) noted that in many areas, farmers and pastoralists usually formed a symbiotic relationship on the use of resources. Pastoralists offered goods such as milk, meat and fertilisers to farmers while farmers provided them with grains and other agricultural products in exchange.

Therefore, there was mutual understanding between the two users of the resources. However, this mutual understanding between these two groups has declined considerably leading to the widespread and protracted violence between them. In North East Nigeria where the country is currently combating insurgency, farmer-pastoralist conflicts have displayed potential of worsening insecurity of the region and the entire Nigerian state. The combination of several factors driving the conflict in the region is one of the reasons the conflict has become very difficult to manage. Governments' response and management of these conflicts is usually very poor. Instead of stemming the tide of violence, it rather exacerbates it (Agbegbedia, 2013). Community level mechanisms are strong and dependable alternative because they promote inclusion, foster reconciliation and confidence-building and respect the norms and values of the people.

Most time, attacks and reprisal attacks usually result in cycle of violence that often led to massive loss of live and displacement of people at the local level. It is important therefore to critically examine the community-based mechanisms usually adopted by the traditional rulers at the local level in the management of farmer-pastoralist conflicts in their domains as well as understanding their strengths and weaknesses in addressing the prevalent conflict. Thus, this study therefore examines the historical and current community initiatives employed to manage crisis emanating from the use of water and land between farmers and pastoralist communities in Yobe State.

In other to carry out this research, primary and secondary sources are used. The primary source of data for the study included interviews and focus group discussion with relevant stakeholders. Secondary data were elicited from books, journal articles, official

government documents, dailies and periodicals, online materials among others. Similarly, data were also collected from observations of the researchers while in the field.

### **Past Community Level Management Mechanisms for Conflict Management Between Pastoralists and Farmers in Yobe State**

Pastoralism and farming are two occupations that can be dated back to antiquity. They developed out of human interaction with their environment and the need for them to domesticate wild plants and animal (Smith, 1984). Moran (2006) observed quite appositely that human beings from time immemorial did not only passively adapt to their environment but that where it matters, they have had to modify their environment to facilitate their quest for food security and survival. Pastoralism and farming are two of the occupations developed by man to enhance their survival on the earth (Ellen, 2002). In virtually all parts of the world, farmers and pastoralists coexist interdependently with little competition and without any recourse to rancour and outbreak of violence between them. A typical example of this in historical past was the coexistence and interdependence between the Pathans (basically sedentary agriculturalists), Kohistanis (practicing farming and transhumant herding) and Gujars (basically nomadic herders) in the same locality around Swat in Northern Pakistan (Barth, 1959).

Animals are kept well away from crops thereby reducing the chances that they would destroy the cultivated fields. The above illustration given is to buttress the fact that the two agricultural groups can co-exist without rancour. In fact, the coexistence of the two occupational groups offered many advantages to both groups. Crop farmers often require products of the pastoralists for a significant part of their protein needs. Similarly, the nomad's community depend on farmers for certain needs for themselves and their animals. As Monod (1975) observed that no nomad people can exist for long without contact with sedentary people. This however does not suggest that little skirmishes were usually not recorded among the two groups. Blench (2003: 1) observed that "the conflict between nomad and the settled farmers goes back to the earliest written records...". Spate (1953) in his account of human

geography also noted that the conflict between farmers and herdsmen was one of the fiercest conflicts that have attracted the attention of classical historians.

In Nigeria, farmers and pastoralists who are now at loggerhead over use of resources have enjoyed splendid co-existence and interdependence in time past. Awogbade (1983) and Blench (2000) have buttressed this fact in their various studies in Nigeria. These scholars explained that although there were emerging competitions for resources between farmers and pastoralists, the latter were usually welcomed in communities they go. They explained that a wide network of exchange existed between the pastoralists and farmers such that pastoralists usually kept animals especially cattle for “landlords”; most of whom were farmers interested in investing on cattle rearing but did not have time or possess the technical knowhow for tending to them. Also, milk, cattle and cow dung (manure) were used in trade-by-barter exchange for farmers’ agricultural produce especially grains. This was also the case in Yobe State. Farmers and herdsmen had enjoyed peaceful co-existence and interdependence before outbreak of incessant violence the two groups are currently experiencing.

Respondents interviewed in a focus group discussion session at Jakusko LGA lend credence to the nature of peaceful coexistence between community members and farmers on the one hand and pastoralists on the other one in the time past: A participant in FGD session with farmers in Jakusko LGA explained succinctly that:

In the olden days when Fulani herdsmen used to come to our communities, they normally first visit our king and inform him that they would come and graze on the land of the community after people had finished farming and harvesting their crops. The king would then use the community town crier to announce the arrival of the Fulani herders into the community and inform them that they had taken permission from the king to graze their cattle on the land of the community. The king would then instruct the community through the town crier that farmers should harvest all their crops within a particular timeframe to enable the Fulani herdsmen graze their cattle. Once the timeframe elapsed, the Fulani herdsmen and their cattle would be given access to all the community land to graze their cattle because it is expected that the community would have finished harvesting. They would then graze the land between one to three months and go back. In return, the Fulani

herdsmen pay some money to the king in appreciation (FGD session with rural farmers on 12 November, 2021 at Jakusko Community).

The above narrative of the rural farmers are a vivid portrayal of the peaceful coexistence and cordial relationship between community and their farming population on one hand and the pastoralist who are mostly nomadic on the other hand with regards to the use of land resources in Yobe State. This fact, although in other various dimensions, also existed in all of the communities where the researcher conducted interviews and focus group discussion sessions with farming communities in Damaturu, Fika, Fune, Geidam, Gujba and Tarmuwa LGAs. Respondent pastoralists in FGD and KII sessions in Jakusko, Tarmuwa, Fune and Geidam LGAs confirmed the earlier peaceful co-existence between them and farmers on one hand and between them and the communities where they inhabit on the other hand. They went ahead to say that the warmth embracement they always received whenever they come and the peaceful co-existence that existed between them before led to the decision of their father and forefathers to settle among them many decades ago.

While this practice is pointing at the peaceful coexistence and interdependence that existed between the two groups in the time past, it also has shown how they have been able to rotate the use of land for the benefit of both. Higazi and Yousuf (2017) buttressed this fact and its significance to maintaining peaceful coexistence between the two groups in Northern Nigeria in time past. They observed that rotating the land was a long-established pattern in the Northern Nigeria.

Under such a system, pastoralists would avoid farms before crops are harvested, but after the harvest they would be encouraged to take their cattle onto farmland to eat crop residues and manure the land, leaving the farm before the next planting season. The manure left behind increases crop yields the following year. Fallow land is given over to pastoralists for an agreed upon period, after which it is cultivated again and the farmers benefit from the manure. Another portion of land is then allocated for the pastoralists to graze their livestock on.

As a result of this, clash between the two groups was minimal. However, this is not to say that minor skirmishes did not always ensue between the two groups. As social conflict theorists have adequately informed us, conflict is a necessary occurrence from the social interactions among people within a community. However, extensive network of relationship constructed by interdependent and cooperative relationship between the two groups helped to build a robust social capital such as reciprocity, trust, inclusivity, harmony and promotion of a sense of community which usually made conflict management between them a very easy task. Added to the social capital created by the extensive network of relationship between these groups is the presence of effective informal mechanism for addressing conflicts at the community level. Respondents expressed that although some issues of conflict with regards to the use of land and water usually emerged between farmers and pastoralists, they were usually peacefully resolved because of the cordial relationship between them. A respondent farmer in Gujba LGA affirmed this:

In the olden days, if by mistake cattle entered into a farmers' farmland and ate up the crops of the farmer and the herder notice on time before the farmers notice, he would look for the owner of the farmland and report. In the process of reporting, he might plead for forgiveness or even offer to pay compensation for the destruction. However, where the owner is not known, he would report to the village head who would then look for the farmers.

The highest demand of the farmers for the encroachment of cattle into their farmland was compensation. However, because of the cordial relationship between the two communities and in the case where the level of destruction was not massive, and for the fact that the pastoralists came to report the situation to the farmers, the pastoralists were usually pardoned by the farmers. Most times, this settlement usually would take place between the two communities without the involvement of the village/community traditional rulers. In the word of the traditional ruler of Geidam, Ngazargamu Emirate:

...in the olden days when conflict occurred between farmers and herders, they were usually resolved between themselves. It was very hard to see such conflict going to the village head or come to the king's palace.

### **Current Community Level Conflict Management Mechanisms for Addressing Pastoralist-Farmer Conflicts in Yobe State**

All the respondents interacted with in interview or focus group discussion sessions expressed that the good relationship between farmers and herdsmen in their communities began to decline from 1990s. 1990s is a notorious period in the history of international peace and security. It is a period of the emergence of the intra-state conflict in which forces within the state rise in arms against the state or other forces within the state. There are many factors propelling current outbreak of conflict between farmers and pastoralists in Yobe State. While some of the factors caused more and more southward movement of pastoralists into Yobe State, other factors make land and water critical issues of conflict between the two groups. These factors are:

**Desertification of the Sahel:** Sahel zone which covers Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Eritrea, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Ethiopia is a region characterized by intense heat and very high duration of sunshine around the year. Most of the inhabitants of the region are semi-nomads. Since around 4000BC, the climate conditions of the Sahel started becoming drier at a very fast pace therefore causing lakes and rivers around the zone to shrink and cause desertification (O'Brien, 2005). Regular drought and mega drought especially those of from 1450 to 1700 lasting 250 years and 1914, 1951-2004, 1968-1974 and 2010 has significantly decreased land conducive to settlement. This is causing migration of farming and pastoralist communities to humid climates region in West Africa with Yobe State in Nigeria as one of the preferred areas because of its proximity.

**Desiccation of the Lake Chad:** The Lake Chad is a strategically important lake to the Lake Chad Region. It sustains the sources of livelihood of over 30 million people in Central and West African regions large chunk of which are pastoralists. However, since 1960 till date, the water body has shrunk by 90 percent (Gao, et al., 2011). There are many reasons for the desiccation of the water body. They are: global climate change and extreme weather conditions, desertification of the Sahel, unsustainable exploitation of the water by riparian



states and local inhabitants and demographic pressure on the water body (Odada et. al., 2004; UNESCO, 2007). As a result of this, the land and water available are usually unable to support the livelihood of the people. This has propelled pastoralists to move with their cattle down south with Yobe State as one of their preferred places of settlement.

**Rural Banditry in the Chad Basin Region:** The Lake Chad region is a highly unstable region in West and Central African region. Apart from the threat of insurgency, the region is notorious for several forms of banditry one of which is cattle rustling. Part of the factors in the prevalence of banditry in the area is the desiccation of Lake Chad which has disrupted the means of livelihood of the inhabitants who have now taken up a new livelihood in banditry. The predominance of this threat and its inability to frontally address it by riparian states is also driving inhabitants of the area especially pastoralists to safer areas depending on their perception. Again, one of their most preferred places is Yobe State.

**Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency:** Boko Haram insurgency in Lake Chad region and in North East Nigeria is also a significant factor in the preponderance of farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Yobe State. Places where pastoralists have been grazing their cattle have now become hideout of insurgents.

For instance, Sambisa Forest used to be a large expanse of land where cattle used to graze before the outbreak of insurgency (Interview with Ibrahim Wadaima of Damaturu Emirate who doubles as Zanna Sulhu, 1 December, 2021). This place has not been vacated by pastoralists and they have now taken refuge in areas far away from the forest. As more and more pastoralists and their cattle are forced by circumstances in the Sahel to move down south, many factors continue to contribute to increase in the use of land for farming activities in the state. Some of these factors are:

**Population explosion:** Population explosion within the Nigerian state contributes significantly to the farmer-pastoralist conflict in Yobe State. According to the National Population Commission, current population of the Nigerian state is estimated to be 206,139,589 million for the year 2020, which is about 2.58% increase from that of the previous

year. Percentage of the population living in urban areas within the state is put at 48.9% of the population. This means that more of the Nigerian population is within rural areas where a large chunk of them are involved in farming than urban centres where white collar jobs are mostly done. As the population of the Nigerian state is increasing, so also is the population of Yobe State which is one of the constituent states of the region. While accurate population of Yobe State does not exist due to lack of records, the 2006 National census put the population of the state at 2,321,339 million (<http://population.city/nigeria/adm/Yobe/>. Accessed on 30 December 2021). This significant increase is further complicated by the fact that fertility and rate of procreation in rural areas in Northern Nigeria where Yobe State is located is one of the highest in the world (Hamza and Yousuf, 2017). The implication of this is that it put pressure natural resources in rural communities especially land and water.

**Government Policy of Economic Diversification:** Another factor contributing to farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Yobe State is federal government policy on diversification of the economy from predominantly oil-based economy to other sectors. The need for diversification is made more pungent consistent fall in the price of oil in international market and unabated militancy in the Niger Delta region where the oil is exclusively extracted and gradual reduction in oil deposit available in Nigeria. Among the non-oil sector, agriculture stands out as the greatest priority area. This has encouraged more people to be interested in agriculture especially farming.

As a result of combination of all these factors, population of farmers within the state continues to increase exponentially and the demand for land and water for farming activities has increased. Meanwhile uncertainty, climate change and extreme weather continue to propel southward movement of pastoralists and their cattle to the state and other flashpoint areas in search of pasture and water. The resultant effect is increasing population of farmers and livestock in areas around Yobe State while land is fixed in supply and in fact its quality continues to decline on daily basis due to pressure of use. This usually results into competition between the two agricultural groups.

Thus, it is very common to find farmers encroaching into grazing reserves and cattle routes (Burtali) while cattle also stray into farmlands. During the researcher's fieldwork from Damaturu to Tarmuwa, Jakusko and Geidam on November 10, 2021, we observed three cases of farmers encroaching into burtali. The three cases revealed two dimensions of encroachment - complete and partial encroachments. Complete encroachment is when the whole burtali becomes a farmland. This was particularly seen at the outskirts of Fune enroute to Fika. Partial encroachment is when a part of the burtali is used for farming; in which case the route is shrunk significantly. This was seen in Gujba and Damaturu areas. Therefore, instead of cattle walking on their routes, they were seen walking by the roadside to prevent destroying crops.

Although farmers interviewed claimed that lack of clear demarcation of Burtali from farmland is responsible for their encroachment, we observed from the three cases seen along the way that even where the Burtali had been clearly demarcated with pillars, farmers have still had to encroach. On the other hand, herders and their cattle also encroach into the farmlands. The reasons for encroachment of cattle of herders into farmers' farmlands vary from the perception of respondents. The reason farmers gave for cattle encroachment into their farms is that pastoralists always deliberately allow their cattle to encroach into farms to eat up their crops because it fattens and also make their cattle increase in quantity and quality. Most of the pastoralists interviewed agreed that their cattle sometimes stray into farmland however, they disagree with the position of farmers that they deliberately allowed such to happen. They explained that this mostly happened when farmers encroach into Burtali. Interview with a leader of pastoralist community in Fika aptly captured this fact. He said:

It is very difficult for our cattle not to encroach into farms. We do not just lead our cattle into farms to eat crops. The cattle routes have become very narrow as a result of farmers encroaching into cattle routes and our cattle are now much more than what we use to have before. With this, our cattle easily stray into farms.

Much more important factor in the encroachment of cattle into farmland is the use of minors (children) to lead cattle into grazing. Largely due to inexperience of the minors in herding; playfulness during grazing; lack of adequate capacity to control the cattle from

encroaching into farm; tiredness and many other factors, cattle led by minors often result in encroachment especially where farmlands are located very close to the grazing areas. Apart from these factors, there is also an emerging opinion that the minors and young pastoralists are vulnerable to drug abuse thereby facilitating the frequency at which cattle stray into farmlands. Although, in some communities, cattle herding by minors have been interdicted, it is still prevalent. Interview with leadership of pastoralist community in Tarmuwa affirmed this as a fact and explained why the act of leading cattle with minors is very prevalent thus:

Before there were no many cattle as we have now but now our cattle are many. Therefore, we have to divide our cattle into smaller groups to be led by our children. We have also observed that these children usually leave the cattle in the field to roam around without control while they play with themselves or even sleeping. As a result, cattle will stray into nearby farms. Apart from the fact that our cattle are now much, we also have the responsibility to train the junior ones (referring to the children) how to lead and care for our cattle so that before they grow, they would have got the experience and then we can have someone to inherit our heads of cattle.

To understand current community level mechanisms for addressing herdsmen and farmers conflict in Yobe State, conflict between farmers and pastoralists in Yobe State should be understood from two different dimensions. These dimensions of the conflict can also be understood from the two different types of pastoralists that exist. The first type is the transhumance (nomadic) pastoralists. These are pastoralists that consistently move several kilometres, sometimes crossing international boundaries basically in search of greener pasture and water for their cattle. The second type is the sedentary pastoralist. These are herdsmen that now reside with farmers in the same community. All the farmers and community leaders interviewed said that they often manage conflict between them and sedentary pastoralists very well but usually have problem dealing with the transhumance pastoralists. This is because the transhumance pastoralists were usually expected to come to their communities in January after planting had been concluded and harvesting made.

However, they would come in the mid of planting season especially between June and September. Farmers interviewed said this usually happened in the night and when day breaks,

nobody is seen but when it happens within the day yan banga (community vigilante group) is often used. The use of yan banga, community people explained, is contingent on the fact that the transhumance pastoralists are usually aggressive and even sometimes attempt to attack farmers with weapons when their attention is called to the destruction their cattle has caused. On the other hand, conflict between local farmers and sedentary herdsmen are usually resolved using community level mediation mechanism usually midwived by the various strata of community leadership ranging from the village head to the district head and emirate council. These community leaders are: Jauro, Ardo (head of Fulani community), Lawani or Lamba (village head), Bulama or Maiangwa (ward head), Sarkin shanu (leader of owners of cattle) and Hakimi or Ajiya (district head). The mode and pattern of the community level mediation mechanism varies from place to places with high level of decentralization. There are at least two kinds of community level mechanisms for addressing conflict between farmers and herdsmen in areas of research.

**Setting up of Permanent Community Committee:** One of the ways communities have responded to conflict between herdsmen and farmers is the formation of permanent community level committee to address, among other issues, conflict between farmers and herdsmen as well as allocation of resources - land and water- between the two communities. These community level committees usually compose of community level traditional leadership and it is usually decentralised from the grassroot to the district head.

**Infusion of Representatives of Herdsmen in the Traditional Community Leadership Structure:** This approach involves putting representative of pastoralists usually Fulbe in the traditional community governance of the people. This is done to give a sense of belonging and inclusivity to the pastoralists. For instance, in almost all the emirate councils in Yobe State, representatives of the Fulani community usually called Ardo are infused into the traditional council of the people. This person is not only expected to serve as the representative of the herding community at the various strata of community leadership but to serve as their

mouthpiece and also report issues emanating from their interaction with members of their community to the palace for quick settlement.

### **Effectiveness of Current Community Level Mechanisms for Managing Farmer-Pastoralist Conflicts**

These various community level mechanisms have produced a mixed result. One of the areas that the community level mechanisms have demonstrated effectiveness is the administration and supervision of compensation regime in pastoralist and farmer conflicts. People interviewed explained that whenever their farm produce or animals are destroyed or harmed, the first point of call is the nearest community leader especially village or ward head. Compensation is normally agreed on after an assessment of the damage has been carried out through a collegiate system and in the case of encroachment into farm; the rightness of the planting area is ascertained. Where the planting area is not right for the farmer, s/he bears the brunt of the destruction and no compensation will be given. However, where the farmer has rightly planted and the pastoralist's cattle strayed into the farm, payment of compensation may be due. However, in most cases the farmer may be under-compensated as a result of comprising. On the other hand, the farmer may outrightly pardon the pastoralist whose cattle strayed into a person's farm. As a result of the involvement of the various strata of community leadership, many cases of conflict have been resolved between farmers and pastoralists and this has helped to promote social cohesion and harmony.

However, the use of the traditional system is now gradually collapsing. More cases of conflict between the two groups are now taking out of the intervention of community leaders to the police and courts where the two groups will come back to the society more divided and polarized because of the winner-takes-all principle of the state institutions. Some of the weaknesses of the approach fuelling collapse are explained below:

**Overestimated Compensation Claims:** one of the reasons for the continuous collapse of the traditional institution in the management of conflict is the overestimation of compensation usually by the farmers to the herdsman. This is so because decision on the estimate of compensation to be paid is usually through approximation. As a result of this, herdsman who

are usually the payers of the compensation find it difficult to accept the compensation and often go for settlement outside the community. Farmers interviewed in FGD session in Geidam also added that sometimes, herdsmen are forced to pay compensation against their wish. This usually brings serious backlash to the farmers. They complained that:

sometimes herdsmen are forced to pay compensation for the destruction carried out by their cattle but when they finally pay, you may wake up the following day and find out that your farms have been completely eaten up without knowing who did it and the herder will leave the community immediately. Even when the herder is around, there may not be evidence to prove that his cattle did the new destruction (FGD in Fika, 2021).

**Politicisation of Issues and Decisions:** another reason for the gradual waning of the strength of the community level mechanism is the real or perceived politicization of issues and major decisions. There are allegations from herdsmen that community leaders always refuse to take critical decisions or implement them when it involves farmers because they often consider farmers as their kits and kin.

**Breakdown of Process of Dialogue:** Another reason for the failure of the community level mechanisms is breakdown in the process of dialogue at the local level. This is usually brought about by heady positional negotiation and the inability to shift ground and accommodate the other parties in the process of dialogue. This always produces a stalemate that always necessitated use of police or court as the final resort.

**Lack of transparency and accountability in community governance:** Another very important point is lack of transparency and accountability in the governance of local community by traditional rulers. Most times, traditional rulers sell/allocate community land to the farmers and herdsmen without the knowledge of the community. Some farmers complained that they did not just decide to plant on Burtali or grazing reserves but that the land was allocated to them by traditional rulers after the have paid a sum of money.

## **Conclusion**

Traditional institutions at the various strata in Yobe State have played significant role in the management of conflict relating to access to land and water between farming and herding communities in their localities. In times past, involvement of the traditional rulers in the management of conflict between the two groups was limited. This is because crises between the two groups relating to access to land and water were minimal. Furthermore, existence of peaceful coexistence and harmony between the two groups enabled them to jointly resolve their crises before they get to the doorstep of traditional leaders.

These community-level mechanisms have also proven to be inadequate to manage the conflict between the two agricultural groups. Some of the challenges preventing the effectiveness of these mechanism are: overestimate compensation claims, politicisation of issues and decisions reached, breakdown of the process of dialogue, lack of transparency and accountability in community governance and identity polarisation. Furthermore, very significant in the failure of community-level mechanisms is the perception by herdsmen those traditional rulers are kits and kins of farmers and usually take side with them in conflict issues involving the two agricultural groups. In spite of the utility of this approach and its ability to ensure comprehensive resolution of conflict, its credibility and use has continued to decline as more and more local pastoralists preferred to take their cases to police or courts. This explains the cycle of violence that usually trails the relationship between the two groups in Yobe State. The following recommendations are thus suggested:

1. In spite of the challenges confronting the traditional/community leaders in the management of conflict related to access to land and water use between farmers and pastoralists, they are still the best to effectively manage the conflict. There is therefore the need to train community leadership for capacity building establishment of Community Accountability forum.



2. Establishment of Community Accountability Forum. This will contribute significantly to the prevalence of farmer-pastoralist conflict in the state. Efforts should therefore be made to promote democracy and civic culture in at the local level.
3. Strict operational system of land use rotation that basically stick to seasons should be strictly operated by farmers and pastoralist. Farmers should plant and harvest their plants between April and December while pastoralists should be given access to the land between January and May.
4. Governments of the Lake Chad States and the international community should address climate change and extreme weather conditions affecting river bodies including the Lake Chad. Lake Chad region government should also collectively address the desiccation of Lake Chad as this will reduce the southward movement of pastoralists significantly.

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