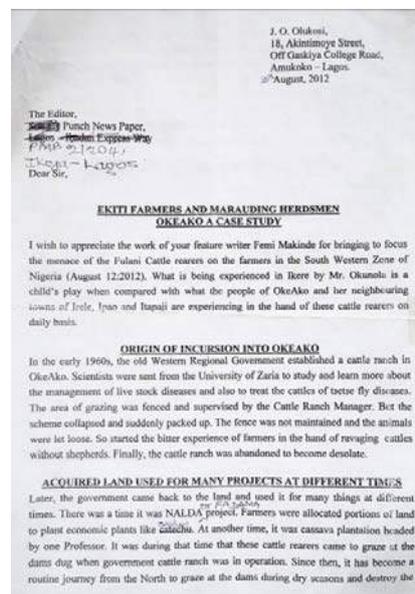


# Pastoralist-farmer conflict in Southwestern Nigeria, 2016

Project No. 600-802-1031ZG

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## FINAL VERSION FOR CIRCULATION

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1. Introduction: background to conflict .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Background.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 The farmers	3
2.2.1 Oyo .....	3
2.2.2 Ekiti .....	4
2.2 The herders	5
2.2.1 FulBe pastoral system.....	5
2.2.2 Breakdown of the family and authority systems .....	6
<b>3. Timeline of conflict.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Oyo	6
3.2 Ekiti	7
<b>4. Theories to explain the upsurge: rational and fantastic .....</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 Popular theories	8
4.2 Broader-scale explanations	9
4.2.1 General .....	9
4.2.2 Grazing Reserves and stock routes.....	11
4.3 Culture clash: varying concepts of land ownership	12
4.4 Prescription drug abuse	12
4.5 The growth of cattle-rustling	13
<b>5. Security issues.....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.1 Police	13
5.2 Army	13
5.3 Informal sector	13
5.3.1 Pastoralist organisations .....	13
5.3.2 Vigilantes.....	14
<b>6. Making progress.....</b>	<b>14</b>
6.1 Steps towards a solution	14
6.2 Analytic versus narrative reports	15
6.3 Constructing regional solutions	15
<b>7. Proposals for action.....</b>	<b>15</b>
7.1 Where can a CSO act directly?	15
7.1.1 Live fencing.....	16
7.1.2 Information sharing .....	16
7.1.3 Media work.....	16
7.2 How can a CSO act to influence policy?	17
7.2.1 When no direct action is possible .....	17
7.2.2 Control of transhumants .....	17
7.2.3 Ranches, grazing reserves and stock-routes .....	18
<b>8. Trends .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>10. Where next?.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>20</b>

## PHOTOS

Photo 1. Newspaper report of Ekiti State conflict	7
Photo 2. Fulani community at Oke Ako	8
Photo 3. Demonism of Fulani herders	8
Photo 4. Cactus ( <i>Euphorbia</i> ) fencing on the Jos Plateau	15
Photo 5. Thorny plant, <i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	16

## MAPS

Map 1. Oyo State map	4
Map 2. Ekiti State map	5
Map 3. Composite map of FulBe movement southwards in Nigeria	10

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Nigerian population growth (1955-2015)	10
Figure 2. Oil prices from 2011, showing collapse since January 2015	18

## ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Community Support Organisation
JDPI	Justice, Development and Peace Initiative
JDPM	Justice, Development and Peace Movement
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLPD	National Livestock Projects Department
PA	Pastoral Association

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ❖ The two main goals of the mission were to provide more in-depth information on the farmer-pastoralist conflict in the Yoruba-speaking areas of southwestern Nigeria and to organise a workshop to bring together experiences from across the Nigerian Central Zone, to conduct training and discuss further proposals for action
- ❖ Extensive interviews were conducted with both pastoralists' and farmers' leaders in Oyo and Ekiti states, as well as government officials concerned with this issue and relevant NGOs.
- ❖ This report also incorporates findings from the workshop, held in Abuja 31st October to 4th November
- ❖ A preliminary report was made in Aachen on 8th December, 2016, and a revised final report was submitted to MISEREOR on 20th December 2016.

Findings were;

- ❖ The conflict situation in southwest Nigeria is serious and deteriorating, but fortunately, levels of violence and damage to property are at lower levels than in Plateau and Benue
- ❖ Pastoralists have been in the southwest since the 1960s, but the earlier migrations are well-integrated with the Yoruba community
- ❖ The major source of the problem is the new wave of transhumant pastoralists who began to reach the southwest after 2005. They come from the semi-arid north and consist only of young men and hired herders. They appear to be very aggressive and unwilling to build bridges with local pastoralist leaders
- ❖ Since this is an area where large-scale farming is developing based on rural finance, crop damage can result in major economic losses and indebtedness
- ❖ Farmers have responded to the invasions by poisoning the cattle and some states are passing harsh anti-pastoralist legislation
- ❖ Uncontrolled and exaggerated media reporting and social media blogging are promoting intergroup hatred
- ❖ The collapse of the Nomadic Education system, intended to provide schooling for pastoral peoples, is reducing education and potential for peacebuilding
- ❖ Peace meetings are the most common response of CBOs and the authorities; but with no way to include the transhumants this is of limited value
- ❖ There are many areas where NGOs and CBOs *can* act to improve matters by defusing tension. These include;
  - The creation of more effective information sharing systems. The mission found that little was known about events and policy in areas outside the immediate concern of individual projects. However a broader vision is essential in dealing with pastoralists, where remote events frequently affect local interactions
  - An extended effort to contact pastoralist leaders who have been excluded from the process of community dialogue
  - The more effective use of vernacular media to communicate analysis and information to all sides in conflict situations
  - A more systematic assessment of the role of traditional leaders in both reconciliation and exacerbation of conflict and dissemination of lessons learnt
  - A more effective use of stock routes and grazing reserves which have long been intended to reduce conflict between herders and farmers, but which have been allowed to fall into disuse in some areas
  - Investigation into the possibility of developing a live fencing strategy

In the light of this, it is suggested that;

- ❖ Working groups reflecting three major zones are established; the Southwest, the Benue region and the Central Zone
- ❖ They put together joint reports on the zonal situation in relation to conflict, incorporating insights from the reports and workshop
- ❖ These are reviewed and used as the basis for proposals to remediate the conflict situation in their zone, but with harmonisation and co-ordination with the other zones
- ❖ Technical papers are prepared to provide backstopping on the issues of live fencing and the frequent claim that ranches are the solution to this problem
- ❖ Visits are made to the households of transhumants in Sokoto and Katsina with a view to better understanding their apparent ignorance of the situation

## **1. Introduction: background to conflict**

In the light of reports from various communities in the dioceses of the Middle Belt, MISEREOR requested the consultant to investigate the situation in two states, Benue and Plateau, in February/March 2016, with a view to developing a more in-depth analysis of the roots of the conflicts, to evaluate existing initiatives and to make proposals for policy options to improve the situation. Following the report on this visit, a follow-up visit to the south-western states Oyo and Ekiti and a training workshop was undertaken from the 1st of October to mid-November 2016<sup>1</sup>. The Terms of Reference are given in Appendix 1. An itinerary of field visits undertaken is given in Appendix II. The field research took place over the first month, and writing-up was in Jos, to continue gathering and checking information available on this topic.

A workshop was held in Abuja from the 31st of October to the 4th of November, bringing together all the JDP officers involved in the surveys and officers from other dioceses and states. The objective was primarily to gather reports from regions not visited, to conduct some initial training in analytic report writing and proposal formulation and budgeting. Further details of the workshop are given in §10. and Appendix III. A report on the mission was presented in Aachen on 8th December, 2016.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 The farmers**

#### **2.2.1 Oyo**

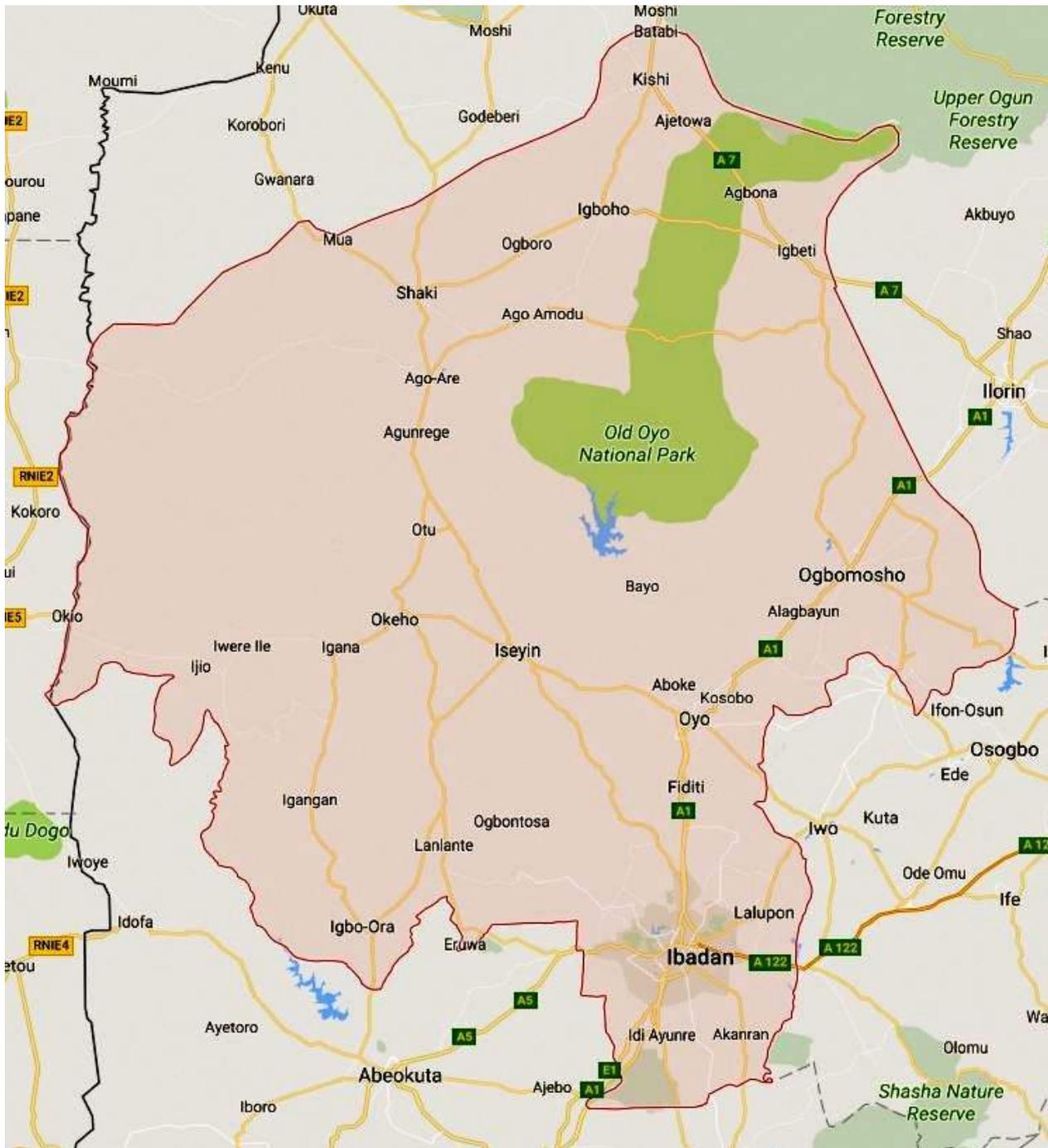
Oyo State in Southwest Nigeria was created in 1976, with its capital in Ibadan (Map 1). The human population was estimated at 6 million in 2006, but may be presumed to have increased. It has a land area of around 28,500 km<sup>2</sup> and consists of derived savanna with a typical rainfall of 1000-600 mm annually. The inhabitants are almost all Yoruba-speakers, although there is a significant proportion of migrants from other states, as well as from neighbouring Benin and Togo. The major occupation of the inhabitants is farming, as there is little industry. A large national park around the remains of Old Oyo is situated between the Ibadan-Kontagora Road and the Oyo-Shaki Road, although it is a long time since there were any large animals within its boundaries.

The population is very unevenly distributed, with some very large traditional towns, such as Ibadan, Oyo and Ogbomosho in the east of the state, and rural areas, especially west towards the border of Benin Republic with only small rural settlements. Nonetheless, Oyo State is an important contributor to the urban food supply in Southwest Nigeria. The main crops are cassava, maize, yams and in the north of the State, guinea-corn. Agriculture is not mechanised, and labour shortages on farms have attracted migrants and contract workers from other regions. In recent years micro-credit has become a significant element in the system of agricultural production, with farmers growing staples on a larger scale using bank loans to buy farm inputs. The insecurity following conflict with herders described in this report is a major constraint in expanding production.

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<sup>1</sup> I was accompanied throughout by Mal. Umaru Hassan, a Fulfulde-speaker who has worked on pastoral issues for many years. In Oyo State, John Fakorede (JDPM) acted as facilitator and Ekiti, Ige Lawrence and Fabunmi Kehinde (JDPI). My thanks to them and all of the office staff who facilitated the scheduling of meetings, especially Kolawole Awoyinka and Remigius Eze. This report consists of my own analyses and they should not be taken as supporting all statements made here.

Map 1. Oyo State map



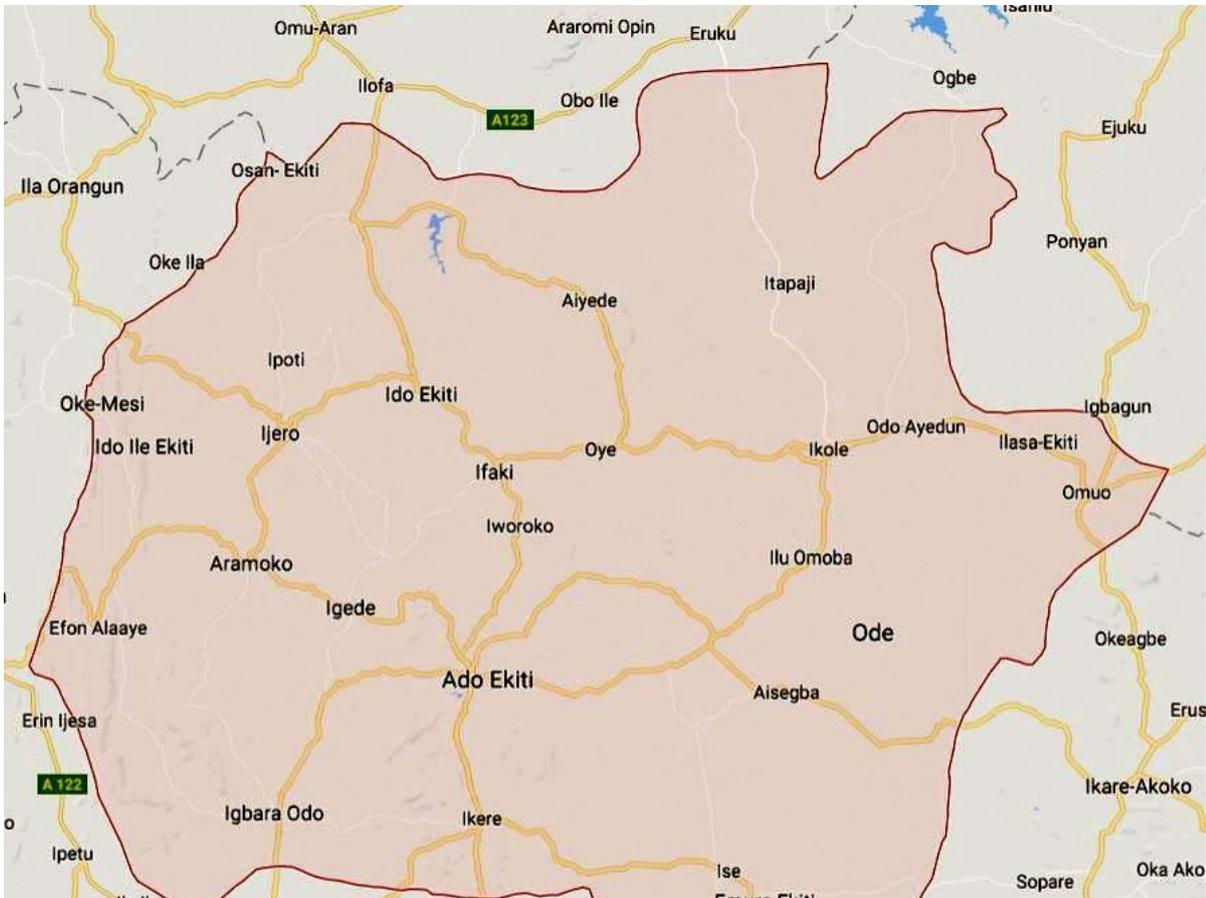
Source: Author

### 2.2.2 Ekiti

Ekiti State in Southwest Nigeria was created in 1996, with its capital in Ado-Ekiti. The human population was estimated at 2.7 million in 2005. The land area is around 6400 km<sup>2</sup> and the annual rainfall 800-600 mm (Map 2). Unlike Oyo, Ekiti State is marked with low ranges of mountains stretching along the northern part of the state. Until the twentieth century, much of the land area was heavily forested, but extensive clearance for agriculture has created a derived savanna. The main occupation of the inhabitants is farming, but the state has a reputation for economic innovation. The low population has encouraged businessmen and women from other states to begin large-scale farming, especially of cassava, for urban markets. The labourers associated with these operations are usually from outside the state, especially the Ebirá people from Kogi

Pastoralist-farmer conflict in the Nigerian Central Zone, 2016 Roger Blench Final Circulation version  
 State or Tiv from Benue. Even more remarkably, there are villages of Kabiye people from Kara in Northern Togo. Similar issues with credit as in Oyo State were reported in Ekiti.

**Map 2. Ekiti State map**



## 2.2 The herders

### 2.2.1 FulBe pastoral system

The FulBe [Fulbe] or Fulani are the main pastoral people in Nigeria, along with the Shuwa Arabs and the Koyam in the northeast. They herd mainly cattle, with small numbers of sheep and sometimes goats. They probably entered what is now Nigeria in the fifteenth century and travelled along the Sahel Belt as far as Lake Chad. During the eighteenth century some groups settled in the towns and effectively became urban residents, perhaps owning cattle but not herding them. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century FulBe settlement expanded considerably as a vast new zone of pasture opened up in the subhumid areas.

This period of expansion is at the root of many of the contentious issues in the Central Zone today. Many of these areas were non-Muslim, so much of the understanding between the FulBe and the Hausa farmers based on common religion was absent. The majority of the herders are seasonal transhumants, usually moving south towards the river systems of Central Nigeria in the dry season (roughly December-April) and then north when the rains bring fresh grass. Many FulBe keep part of their family further north and the majority of families do some small cropping of cereals. The traditional household economy of the FulBe was based on the sale of surplus milk and milk products, which are exchanged for cereals. However, milk is no longer the prestigious product it was, and its value is now low. In addition, poor nutrition for the cattle causes a decline in milk yields, so increasingly the herders' economy is based on the sale of surplus bullocks for meat. In addition, farmers valued the manure of cattle as fertiliser, so often would invite the FulBe to camp on their farm after harvest. The cattle ate the cereal stalks and fertilised the fields. All these factors induced

herders to increase herd size but then to move into previously unfamiliar areas of the Central Zone. But at this point they entered a very different agro-ecological and cultural matrix where;

Farmers were increasingly not Muslims and had no understanding of FulBe culture. Farmers grew yams and other crops which did not produce edible residues and did not need manuring

Farmers did not drink, indeed could not digest, dairy products, so were not interested in the main items the herders had to sell

This meant the basis for co-operation was lacking, which tended to decrease trust.

### 2.2.2 Breakdown of the family and authority systems

FulBe society is based on a strong moral code, the *lawol Pulaaku*, and respect for the older generation and the Ardos, or traditional leaders. The FulBe are divided into numerous clans, the *leyyi*, which traditionally determined marriage rules, migration patterns and access to grazing spaces. Since the early nineteenth century, there has been a conventional division between the *FulBe na'i* and the *FulBe wuro*. The *FulBe na'i* were the nomadic cattle herders, who stayed in the bush, while the *FulBe wuro* lived in towns. The town FulBe may own cattle but they do not manage them on a daily basis.

Traditionally, and in times of peace, the whole family moved, carrying their possessions on pack animals. However, in times of uncertainty, herd-splitting became common, with the older people, women and children at a home site, and the younger men sent off with the cattle. This has disadvantages, since the youth are no longer under supervision, and in modern times have access to the temptations of urban life, including alcohol and drugs. The increasing youth of the FulBe herding is rather visible, and from the point of view of the farmers, this irresponsible behaviour is part of the problem. Their attention is frequently not on the animals and damage to farms occurs.

## 3. Timeline of conflict

### 3.1 Oyo

The first Fulani to reach Oyo were Borgu'en, a clan herding the trypanotolerant keteku breed of cattle. They arrived from further west around the time of Nigerian Independence (1960). They settled close to the Yoruba villages and seem to have build up good relations with them, learning to speak Yoruba. They also began farming, and some are now settled with small herds and large farms. Their leaders were appointed by Yoruba traditional rulers to posts , such as Sarkin Fulani, within the local power hierarchy. Then, around twenty-five years ago, i.e. 1990, a new wave of herders came from the north, clans such as the Katsinanko'en, Hausa'en and others. Even so, relations were largely peaceful, though there was one violent conflict in 2001. Problems really began with the arrival of seasonal transhumants from Northern Nigeria about 2006 onwards. These people are usually known as 'Bororo', although this is a general term and they are divided into different clans and may originate in different areas. They come for the dry season (October to April) and return home north in the wet season. Unlike the other FulBe groups, these cattle are herded by young men, and often hired herders, and they do not generally make links with the local communities or even the settled Fulani. They are usually armed, either with swords, cutlasses or rifles, and they are willing to use these in conflicts. It is also widely claimed that they take drugs. Almost all the crop damage episodes were attributed to this group. It is striking that the nomadic herders are clearly not just making 'mistakes', but are intentionally digging up cassava and yams and feeding it to their cattle, and often subsequently setting fields alight. Farmers who confront them are often attacked with machetes (cutlasses), swords and handguns. The reason for this malice is unknown, but pastoralists asserted that the issue had become really 'hot' in the last 3-4 years. A major issue is farming across established cattle routes; from the pastoralist point of view these are their 'right', but farmers see these as unclaimed land.

In the southwest, the Yoruba have always had a more structured, hierarchical society than the Igbo and Tiv further east, and carrying of weapons is extremely uncommon. Farmers have chosen a more passive method of striking back by poisoning the cattle, either through putting rat poison in cassava or by poisoning water and grass by the rivers and ponds. This indiscriminate killing further enrages both sides and probably underlies some of the attacks by the herders.

3.2 Ekiti

Testimonies suggest that the first FulBe to reach Ekiti were Borgu'en (=Ilorin Fulani), a clan herding the trypanotolerant keteku breed of cattle. They arrived from further west around 1970, settling close to the Yoruba villages quite peacefully and built up good relations with them, learning to speak Yoruba. Photo 2 shows a typical community outside Oke Ako; the degree of assimilation to Yoruba culture is shown by the style of dress, and the prominent role of women as spokespersons for the community. Many of these settled FulBe now only speak Yoruba.

The Borgu'en suffered high death rates in their herds and to restock, they began to herd cattle for wealthy Yoruba landowners and businessmen. Then, around twenty-five years ago, i.e. 1990, the same wave of herders from the North as reached Oyo also arrived in Ekiti. Some came only seasonally, others settled, but

Photo 1. Newspaper report of Ekiti State conflict

**PUNCH**  
feature  
AUGUST 24, 2012 68

**Suspected Fulani herdsmen and farmers in some parts of Ekiti State have been having a running battle of sort. But the face-off may escalate, as some farmers are daily losing their crops to cattles, reports FEMI MAKINDE**

**Ekiti farmers and marauding herdsmen**

**Not satisfied with the destruction by the cattle, Okunola, who narrated how his farm was ravaged said the herdsmen came back and set fire on the remaining crops on the farm'**

**S**OME farmers in Ekiti are currently growing in pain. The pains are occasioned by the loss of their crops to the cattles of the suspected Fulani herdsmen who invade their farms from time to time.

Except urgent steps is taken, crisis may erupt anytime soon between the farmers and the 'unwanted' guests on their farms.

The destruction of farms by herdsmen is not limited to Ekiti State and this has almost become a daily occurrence in many parts of the country.

At all, some farmers have been attacked by herdsmen in about 10 villages in Ogburuso, Oyo State and killed on the spot.

On February 4, one Umar Abdulahi in Bauchi State was attacked by his farm by some herdsmen who pretended to be looking for their lost cows. The marauders were said to have asked Abdulahi the whereabouts of their cows and he answered in the negative. The men were said to have immediately brought out a machete and hit the farmer on the head.

He became unconscious and his attackers left him believing he was dead but a Good Samaritan who saw him raised the alarm and he was rushed to a hospital. He survived it but he lost an eye.

Early in the year, crisis erupted between the Ishi Caila community in Nkannu West Local Government Area of Enugu State and some Fulani herdsmen. Some youths in the community engaged the Fulani herdsmen in a bloody fight for destroying crops but owing to some farmers and even molesters, some women.

The fear of herdsmen may prevent some of those who have the interest in farming from taking the risk of planting crops which may be easily destroyed by cowans. This is not a good development for the nation which is struggling to become self-sufficient in the area of food production.

Ekiti State Government is seriously urging people of the state to move from subsistence farming to commercial one but many farmers are scared of going into large scale farming because of the fear of losing what they tried to to the herdsmen and their livestock.

A farmer in Ife-Ekiti, Mr. Bamidele Okunola had in 2011 approached First Bank Pl. and Amove Microfinance Bank

Okunola stated that he was expecting to realise at least N5 million from the sale of the farm produce which he said were almost ready for harvest before the invasion of the farm. He appealed to Governor Kayode Fayemi to assist him, saying he was on the verge of losing his house to the bank.

He had said, "I am appealing to our governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, for his assistance on this matter because I used my house as a collateral in obtaining the loan. My family members and I have not catch anything today and that is to show you the extent of the hardship. Please, kindly assist me to pay off the loan. I am back to square one."

Soliciting for government assistance, Okunola said he had intimated the Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mr. Babajide Arowosafe, about his loss.

Two other farmers who have suffered huge losses from the invasion of their farms described their their losses as 'unbearable'.

One of the farmers, who identified himself as Olatide Ogundeji, said the impact of these rampaging crows is more felt by those of us around Ife-Ekiti, and Ife-Ekiti.

Ogundeji said the herdsmen, when arrested always found a way of coming out to cause more havoc.

He also alleged that some of the herdsmen, apart from destroying farm lands, also engaged in robbery especially on Ife-Ife Road. He, however, said farmers in the area might be forced to find their own way of safeguarding their farms if security agents fail to guarantee the safety of their lives and crops.

Arowosafe said that the problem of unguarded grazing had become a problem in the state but he added that the state government was looking for a way to solve the problem.

The commissioner said, "For anybody going into large scale farming, insurance with Nigeria Agricultural Insurance Corporation is required. The farmer said that he insured his farm but I discovered that his premium was not paid up to date.

The man is overwhelmed with the loss and said that he would commit suicide if he were unable to pay the debt. If he had insured the farmland, he would not have been in the present situation.

But to guard against this in the future, the state government is strengthening a ranch land at Oke-Ako where cattle rearers could go to graze their livestock. We have acquired about 2,000 acres of land and we have started to plant grass for the livestock."

He said that the farmer had expected to be given money the moment he got to his office but he explained that the government was only ready to assist him by giving him land to farm and inputs to use on the farm.

According to him, farmers enjoying this benefit from government are expected to pay their loans after selling their farm produce.

Arowosafe observed that the issue of unguarded grazing was a national problem, saying it need to be urgently addressed to prevent clashes between farmers and herdsmen. According to him, herdsmen are always quickly released by security agents because there is no law in place to charge them.

He, however, said the state House of Assembly was working on a bill that would outlaw grazing on farmlands. "When it is eventually signed into law, it would then become a crime for anybody to graze on anybody's farm," he added.

With the cases of destruction of farms caused across the country by herdsmen, one begins to wonder when unguarded grazing will stop in Nigeria.

One of the major causes of this problem is the porous borders in the country and it is believed that some of the marauders pretending to be herdsmen come into the country from Chad, Niger, Mali and beyond. The security agencies must step up their efforts at controlling the influx of foreigners, especially with the security situation in the country.

Source: Punch newspaper, 2012

many were not farmers. These herds have integrated with the local community and their leaders are often the officials of the local office of pastoral associations such as Miyetti Allah. It was with the arrival of seasonal transhumants from Northern Nigeria about 2006 onwards that problems really began. It is not only Yoruba farmers who suffer, as the settled FulBe are also victims of the nomadic herders. However, because farmers often are unable to distinguish between different FulBe groups, the settled FulBe are often blamed for their actions. Photo 1 shows a newspaper report from as far back as 2012, which lays out the major issues. The situation has only deteriorated since that date.

**Photo 2. Fulani community at Oke Ako**



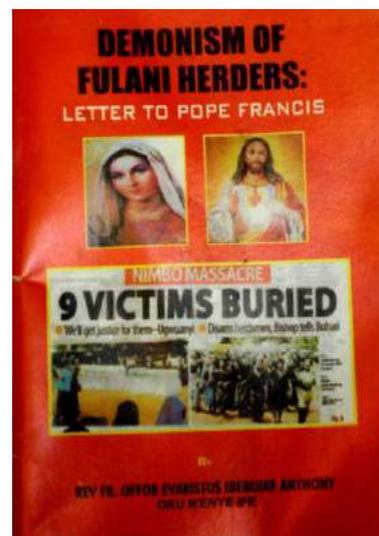
Source: Own photo

#### 4. Theories to explain the upsurge: rational and fantastic

##### 4.1 Popular theories

Accounting for this upsurge in communal conflict is not easy; Nigeria is a country where ‘facts’ cited are often difficult to verify. Wild unsupported claims circulate freely both in print and a variety of social media and these can often be solemnly repeated by academics and government officials. A sample of beliefs about the conflicts expressed in interviews include the idea that the pastoralists are ‘purely wicked’ and may be inspired by Satan, that they are part of an Islamic plot to overturn Nigerian Christian civilisation, that they have political ‘godfathers’ in the north who allow them to escape prosecution, that they bribe the authorities huge sums to turn a blind eye to their activities. Photo 3 shows the cover of a short book published in Enugu in 2016 by a Catholic priest, accusing the Hausa/Fulani of being agents of Satan. The scale of their supposed depredations is often wildly exaggerated, as ‘post-truth’ politics reached Nigeria well before the rise of Donald Trump and the Brexit campaign.

**Photo 3. Demonism of Fulani herders**



Source: Offor (2016)

Democracy in Nigeria does not prevent politicians from making use of these oppositions to serve their own ends. Conflicts that begin over access to resources are easy to politicise. Local politicians seeking the votes of farmers can use these events to ramp up accusations. Very commonly they seek to frame the conflicts as religious, Islam versus Christianity, especially in the Tiv and Igbo-dominated areas of central and eastern Nigeria. It is easy to manipulate the media into insinuating that the FulBe are the vanguard of an attempt by Islam at forcible conversion of Christians. This is much less significant in the southwest, where the split between Christianity and Islam is around 50/50 and it is far more difficult to play on fears of Islam.

Another accusation regularly levelled at the FulBe by farmers is the use of fewer, younger and less experienced herders, leading to potentially more episodes of crop damage. Unfortunately, this is almost certainly true. While pastoralists always take care to train their children to manage stock at a young age, it has not previously been standard to send children as young as seven on lengthy seasonal transhumance. The younger men who herd the cattle are tempted to spend increasing amounts of time in towns, and they may

hire displaced teenagers, sometimes with no experience of herding. Leaders of the settled FulBe in the southwest are also increasingly troubled by these practices, as often they are blamed for damage caused by the transhumant herds<sup>2</sup>.

Research in Benue and Plateau State illustrated the very distorted coverage of the conflict in those states. Partly because the scale of the conflict is still significantly less violent in the southwest, media coverage is also less hysterical. Photo 1 shows a not uncommon newspaper report on the conflicts in Ekiti State.

## 4.2 Broader-scale explanations

### 4.2.1 General

There are thus wild, fantastical views which have little contact with reality, and local factors which probably do contribute the increase in violence. However, these are not the whole story, as more wide-ranging and fundamental hypotheses are required to account for the large-scale and dramatic changes are taking place across the region. Some or all of the following may have contributed to the recent push southwards;

- a) Demographic growth in the semi-arid zone depleting available land and pasture
- b) Degradation of pastures in the semi-arid zone, replacing digestible grasses with 'tougher' species
- c) Freely available veterinary medicines to protect cattle in higher humidity zones
- d) Improved telecommunications, making possible regular contact where households are split

Another hypothesis is that climate change was an important factor. This is difficult to assess, since publications on Northern Nigerian rainfall tend to analyse data to 2006, when there seems to have been a major collapse in accessible statistics. Beyond the borders of Nigeria, aggregate rainfall data for the Sahel does not support any sudden change around 2005.

The single most important driver of conflict is rising human population. In the past, human population densities were low and farmers and graziers each had enough space to operate. From the colonial era onwards, this situation has changed, largely due to improved human healthcare. The population of Nigeria was probably around 5 million in 1900 and is ca. 180 million today. Figure 1 shows estimated Nigerian population growth (1955-2015) and there is no reason to consider this trend will not continue.

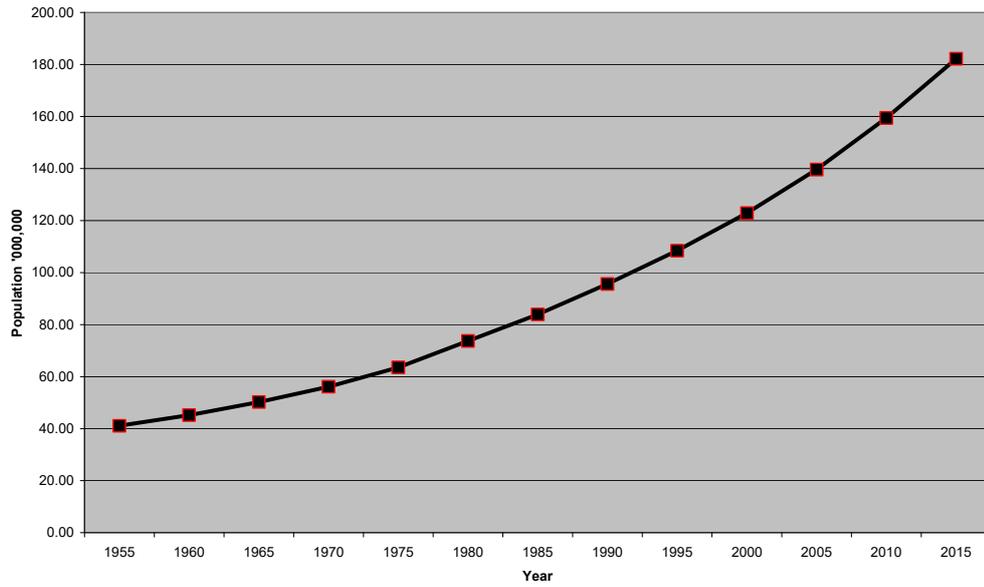
Human population has expanded without a concomitant increase in land productivity; farming systems in the semi-arid and northern subhumid regions are very similar to those of half a century ago. Rainfed sorghum and millet predominate in the drylands, intercropped with legumes. Hence there has been a massive expansion of farms and corresponding pressure on pastureland. Interviews with pastoralists in Kano State in 2010 suggested that they now had only two options, leave entirely or switch to purchased feed for significantly reduced herds (Blench 2010). A related phenomenon is degradation in pasture quality; if too much pressure is put on succulent and digestible pasture species by cattle and goats these will be replaced by tougher and less nutritious species, making the option of moving every dry season more attractive.

The constraint on moving to the subhumid zone was previously the trypanosomoses, following bites by tsetse flies, and other skin diseases associated with higher humidity, such as dermatophilosis. Cutting down vegetation across the Nigerian Central Zone has meant that tsetse habitats have disappeared, making available significant new areas for grazing. The Nigerian state originally exercised tight control over veterinary care and blocked access to proprietary medicines while providing a predictably inadequate service. However, now almost all animal medicines are available from private suppliers, and pastoralists are adept in administering these. Indeed, a frequently-cited motivation for promoting literacy among their young people was the ability to read printed instructions on packets of medicines. Improved veterinary care has increased cattle survival rates and crucially, allowed them to be herded in subhumid areas where animal mortality was formerly high.

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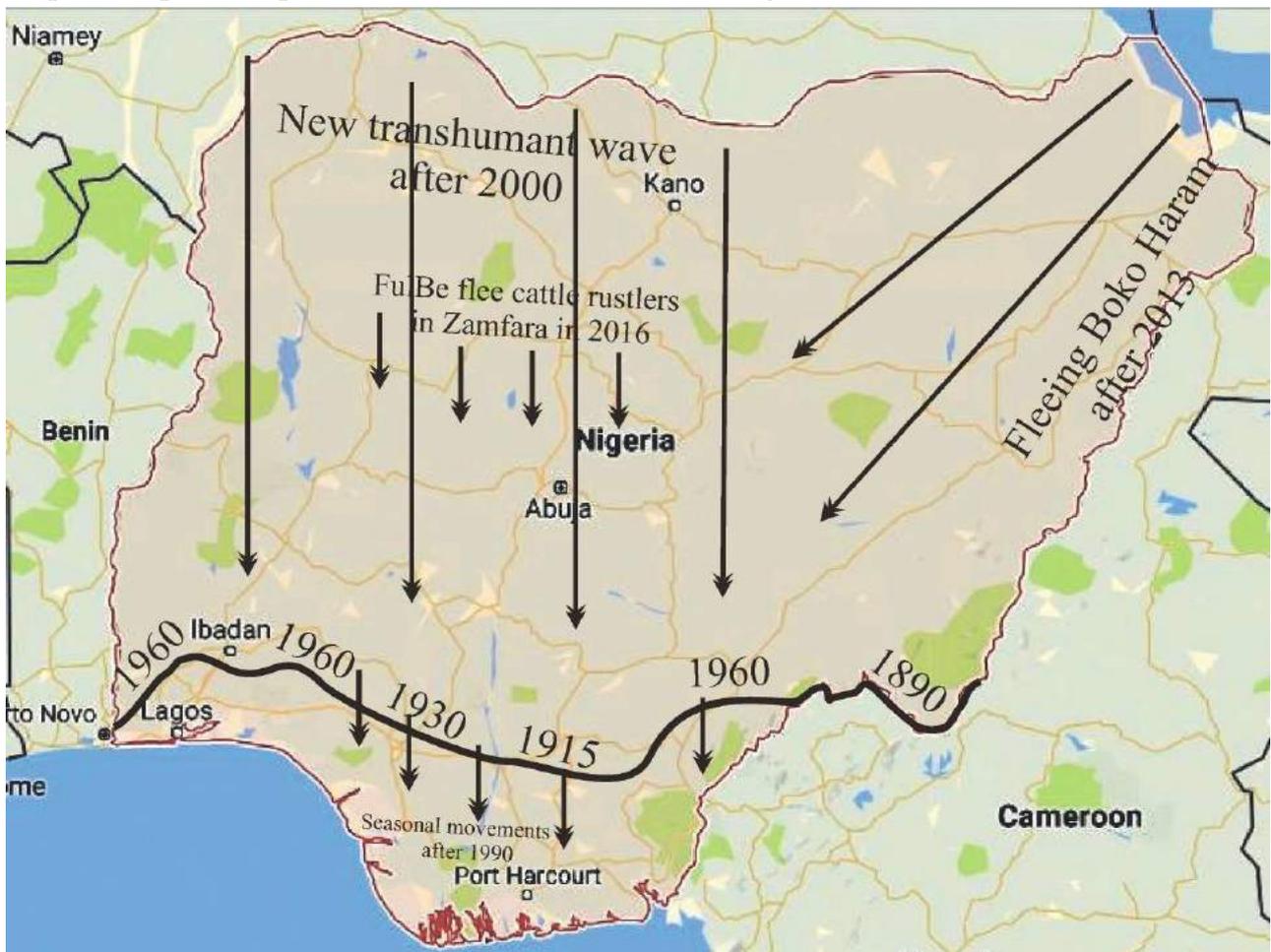
<sup>2</sup> The Sarkin Fulani of Ogbomoshò told us that the local FulBe community have begun to try and prevent this by 'capturing' these children and trying to trace their families.

Figure 1. Nigerian population growth (1955-2015)



Source: Creative Commons [Wikipedia]

Map 3. Composite map of FulBe movement southwards in Nigeria



Source: Drawn by author

Insecurity is also a driver for pastoralists to leave their home area. Extra pressure was placed on grazing land in Plateau and Benue States through FulBe fleeing attacks by Boko Haram in the northeast. Zamfara State has become a centre for cattle rustlers, causing many herders to move away and it is likely they too will be putting additional pressure on pastures further south.

Map 3 shows a composite of the processes driving FulBe herders south, with dates as far as these can be established. It includes information from the present survey, the study in Benue in February/March and published literature. Nonetheless, it is far from complete, and for some states the information remains little more than guesswork.

Pastoralists are typically flexible in their household arrangements and it seems this has been further encouraged by the mobile phone. Widespread national coverage and relatively cheap communications became available in Nigeria around the mid-2000s, and the capability to keep in touch with herders many hundreds of kilometres distant may have calmed the misgivings of household heads in staying at home while their animals were in the care of younger sons. As with parents, children and the internet in the developed world, reassuring statements by children to parents cannot be assumed to be truthful.

## **4.2.2 Grazing Reserves and stock routes**

### **4.2.2.1 Grazing Reserves**

The concept of Grazing Reserves derives from the colonial model of forest reserves, gazetted zones where settlement was excluded, to act as reservoirs of natural vegetation. After 1960, some of these were converted to Grazing Reserves, with the intention of encouraging pastoralists to adopt a more settled lifestyle, and access services such as schools and clinics. For some decades, government invested in these reserves, putting in roads, water-points and other infrastructure and compensating farmers obliged to move out. However, by the 1990s, this had largely stopped and the process of gazetting reserves (i.e. giving them formal status) ceased completely.

Table 1 summarises the status of Grazing Reserves in Nigeria. Although they are in principle quite numerous, only one-third are gazetted, and an ungazetted reserve has essentially no legal protection from invasions by farmers. No recent survey has been undertaken to assess the status of these reserves, and even the gazetted ones may well be partly settled. The second aspect of the data is that the grazing reserve system reflects an era when pastoralism was predominantly a northern phenomenon. Many southern states with a substantial pastoral population today have few or no reserves.

### **4.2.2.2 Stock routes**

The system of stock routes, *burti*, dates back to the colonial era, and was designed to formalise existing pastoral migration paths in order to minimise conflict with farmers. This system has been maintained for a long time, and broadly speaking was respected. It was given a further boost with the funding of the National Livestock Projects Department (NLPD) which was to gazette and beacon these routes. NLPD was given additional funding to complete the mapping of stock routes in 2012, but legal responsibility for maintaining the stock routes was given to the states. There are basically three main types of stock routes;

- ❖ Primary stock routes: are the National Transhumance Routes (NTR) which are interstate and connect to international boundaries.
- ❖ Secondary stock routes: are intrastate routes connecting the various grazing areas within a state (across all local governments) and feed into the NTR.
- ❖ Tertiary stock routes: are the intra Local Government stock routes

Studies on transhumance routes by National Livestock Project Division (NLPD) under the Second Livestock Development Project (SLDP) have shown that encroachment on all three categories is high. Most of the farmer/pastoralist conflicts have arisen as a result of the disappearance of the Stock Routes. The NLPD identified the North-western and Central NTRs to their southern limits in Oyo State for the North-western NTR and in Kogi state for the Central NTR. The North-eastern NTR segment stretches from Borno to Ogoja, Cross River State.

**Table 1. Grazing Reserves in Nigeria**

<b>State</b>	<b>Grazing Reserves</b>	<b>Gazetted</b>	<b>Not Gazetted</b>	<b>Total (Ha)</b>
Adamawa	69	31	38	196,416
Bauchi	42	27	15	250,822
Benue	10	0	10	38,500
Borno	56	15	41	463,024
Gombe	23	4	19	76,378
Jigawa	2	2	0	13,555
Kaduna	7	1	6	129,112
Kano	2	2	0	900
Katsina	2	2	0	147,000
Kebbi	24	1	23	560,000
Kogi	5	1	4	20,775
Kwara	17	1	16	147,340
Nasarawa	7	7	0	128,000
Niger	18	2	16	104,309
Plateau	8	1	7	132,000
Sokoto	15	8	7	88,783
Taraba	39	9	30	137,800
Yobe	28	17	11	263,208
Zamfara	37	6	31	669,212
FCT	4	4	0	16,000
Oyo	2	2	0	10,000
Ogun	1	1	0	12,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>3605134</b>

Source: Federal Livestock Department

A functioning system of stock routes is an essential element in reducing conflict between herders and farmers and with the rise in human population it has become more important, not less. If such a network was fully functional it would be a valuable tool in reducing conflict, but unfortunately, these routes exist only in theory in many places. Since the states are controlled by politicians elected by farmers, they have little interest in maintaining the system and in some cases have openly declared they do not accept it.

#### **4.3 Culture clash: varying concepts of land ownership**

An important reason why conflicts persist is the differing concepts of land ownership and access in farming and pastoral societies. Broadly speaking, when a pastoralist grazes an area every year, and his rights are accepted by other pastoralists he considers he 'owns' the portion of land. However, for farmers, who practise both shifting cultivation on rainfed lands and dry-season horticulture, only clearing and farming the land constitutes ownership. As the need for arable land increases, farmers are clearing grazing land ever more frequently. Inevitably when a pastoralist returns to his traditional grazing land and finds it under crops, he is aggrieved, and the cattle often enter the farm either by accident or indeed intentionally.

#### **4.4 Prescription drug abuse**

There are also more specific explanations, which may partly contribute to the increasing fatality of the clashes. The use of prescription drugs such as Tramadol was mentioned in many interviews and clearly plays a role in tipping potential conflict situations into actual violence. Nigeria has no prescription system and once a druggist has a licence, he or she may sell almost any commercial drug to customers quite legally. Both pastoralists and traditional leaders consider this is an important factor in further exacerbating aggrieved youth<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> This may seem a stereotypical complaint by elders about youth, but it is worth remembering that deaths from prescription drugs in the United States now far exceed those from traditional illegal drugs.

#### **4.5 The growth of cattle-rustling**

In almost every interview, the increased incidence of cattle-rustling was mentioned. This is often associated with kidnap, where a young herder is snatched and held for ransom. Given the lack of herding skills among farmers, it is credible that the rustlers consist of gangs which include FulBe who have lost their cattle, in association with thieves, and connect to networks which can transport the stolen livestock the large markets in the south, where they rapidly disappear. Government response has so far been ineffectual, as the rustlers live in remote areas and are hard to catch by conventional means. Nonetheless, the stolen cattle must be fed into the marketing system and transported past checkpoints. If such cattle can move freely, this does not provide confidence that action is being taken. The unchecked growth of this practice, the suspicion that the powerful people behind it are being protected, all adds to the climate of distrust. Many interviewees pointed to Zamfara State as a central base of organised gangs of rustlers, and this has also began a centre for kidnapping, as pastoralists have fled the area.

### **5. Security issues**

#### **5.1 Police**

Given that these episodes involve loss of life and property, it might be thought that the Nigerian police would have a role both in keeping order and the prevention of further episodes. By and large, the police play little or no role in security incidents, and the army is called in directly. This can be a risky strategy, as the army are not trained to deal with civilian incidents and their current concerns are events in the northeast. In a striking incident in the Oke Ako area of Ekiti State, a violent attack in 2015 caused the police to evacuate all the stations in the area, and these remain deserted up to today.

#### **5.2 Army**

The Nigerian army has been much occupied in the northeast in recent years although it keeps a presence throughout the country. In recent times, however, they have been called both to conflicts in the Central Zone, and to oversee post-conflict meetings. There was a general consensus in interviews that the situation has much improved, at least in terms of response time, since the government of Present Buhari took over. However, interviewees also noted that the skills of local commanders were extremely variable, some being much more adept than others at peacebuilding.

#### **5.3 Informal sector**

##### **5.3.1 Pastoralist organisations**

###### **5.3.1.1 Miyetti Allah**

Miyetti Allah (the name means 'I thank God' in Fulfulde) is the oldest and most well-established pastoral organisation in Nigeria and the only one to have branches in every state. It exists to lobby government on issues related to pastoralists, particularly the FulBe. It was founded in the 1960s, but seems to have been an ineffective talking shop for many years. However, in the 2000s, it was mired in a series of scandals and lost the trust of many pastoralists, which is why alternative organisations were founded. Elections in early 2016 have replaced all the leaders and its members are currently watching to see if reform has taken hold. Miyetti Allah is certainly the main body representing pastoralists in peace-building exercises, but in some states it is perceived as only representing a subset of northern pastoral clans.

There is another clear problem with Miyetti Allah, which is that because of the Nigerian culture of respect, members tend to choose elderly pastoralists as leaders. In the past, when experience of herding counted, this may have been effective, but there is clear evidence that many of its current leaders simply do not grasp the rapid social and technological changes which are transforming the world of pastoralism. Mobile phones, the internet, economic changes, access to prescription drugs and the changing attitude of settled and urbanised populations are often not well understood. Their capacity to build bridges with other CSOs who might become more sympathetic if there were better communication remains weak. Too often they counsel return to a picturesque past which is irredeemably gone, stifling more flexible responses in the present.

### 5.3.1.2 Other associations

Since around 2000, the problems with Miyetti Allah and the growing realisation that pastoralists need more formal structures to represent their interests has stimulated the foundation of new, more local and responsive Pastoral Associations (PAs). This is not only the case with FulBe herders, as the Shuwa Arabs and Koyam have also formed an independent body, Al-Haya which operates in the northeast. Table 2 shows a consolidated list of PAs currently operating in Nigeria, with dates for their foundation and notes on their sphere of operation;

**Table 2. Pastoral Associations in Nigeria beyond Miyetti Allah**

Name	Date	Notes
Kawtal Hoore	2001	Founded in 2001 in Kaduna State as a response to the perceived ineffectiveness of Miyetti Allah and it currently operates in five states in the Central Zone. Unfortunately it has tied itself rather closely with the fortunes of specific political parties, which has the consequence that it is not trusted by other pastoral groups.
MOBGAL	1992	Formed, also in Kaduna State, after the Zangon Kataf crisis. Like Kawtal Hoore, it presents an alternative to Miyetti Allah, but may not be very effective.
CORET		Also based in Kaduna, is a rather different body from these others. Largely donor-funded, it aims to increase co-operation between pastoral organisations throughout West Africa. Its officers therefore spend much of their time at meetings in countries outside Nigeria. It is thus hard to gauge its effectiveness.
Jamu Natti	2103	Founded to represent the interests of the Borgu'en herders of the Yoruba-speaking area
GAN	2015	Founded in Oyo State to represent non Borg'en FulBe in the southwest
Tabita Pulaaku	ca. 2001	Operates in Adamawa and Taraba States. Formed as a self-defence organisation to track down rustlers and bandits

Some of these are very recent and are just beginning to establish links with the administration and one another. Others have been mired into supporting political factions which are predictably untrustworthy. Nonetheless, all of them now support education for their children and create bodies with whom to enter into dialogue.

### 5.3.2 Vigilantes

One of the responses to the increased insecurity has been the formation of vigilante groups. These are informal groups, often including hunters, armed with a variety of mostly antiquated weapons. Members are mostly voluntary and paid only by community contributions, although in some places Local Government contributes to their costs. Such groups have been formed in a wide variety of places in North-Central Nigeria with more or less official sanction. In the long run they are dangerous to peace, since they tend to be armed and consist of younger men. In a state like Ekiti, the vigilantes explicitly represent the interests of the Yoruba farmers and have no brief to keep the peace in the event of pastoral incursions.

## 6. Making progress

### 6.1 Steps towards a solution

To make effective progress requires a series of steps;

*Diagnosis.* Discover more precisely the situation is in each area and the forces underlying conflict.

Circulate analysis for consultation

*Testing of diagnosis.* The analysis of the issues must be circulated to the stakeholders for comment, disagreement and then revision. This is typically done in workshop format, but this may not work in conflict situations

*Training.* Local groups empowered to undertake similar analyses themselves

*Identification of stakeholders.* Local groups must identify all the stakeholders and be able to explain their role in either inciting or reducing conflict, as well as officials at every level

*Identification of solutions.* Solutions must be region-specific; they must address the problems identified.

Generic solutions have proven to be of limited value.

*Implementation.* Whatever the solution under discussion it has to be tested and implemented. This will take time and resources and these must be budgeted.

*Evaluation.* Did it work? How well? Is it sustainable?

*Write-up/lessons learnt.* Often the hardest part; to finalise the process in a report useful to others

*Dissemination.* If something useful has been learnt, how can it be disseminated? New technology can be useful here; smartphones, short videos, Youtube etc.

*Keeping on top of a dynamic situation.* Things are constantly changing in Nigeria and there is no guarantee the problems will not recur with new players.

## 6.2 Analytic versus narrative reports

Long-term solutions require effective analysis and this is often sorely lacking in Nigeria. There is a general assumption that conflict resolution and peace-building are desirable and they have accumulated considerable resources. But the continuing violence argues that they are only temporary solutions. Reporting in Nigeria is usually narrative; suitable for agricultural extension but of limited value in a humanitarian situation. Unless reports dig down to the drivers of conflict, proposed solutions are of no proven value. It is better to try and prevent future conflict than simply to keep on trying to patch up the situation after the event.

The workshop held in Abuja 31st October to November 4th was a preliminary attempt in training co-ordinators and field officers in the preparation of analytic reports, which attempt to get away from simple narrative framed in development-speak. The powerpoints associated with the workshop are submitted separately, as is the report on the workshop in Appendix III.

## 6.3 Constructing regional solutions

The mobility of pastoralists is such that this is a regional issue. FulBe herders typically move between grazing areas, regardless of administrative boundaries, and the rise of instability has further accelerated this trend. FulBe also split their herds and families, so that part of the herd may be in one state, while the young men are with the larger group of animals somewhere else. In recent times, the mobile phone has become an indispensable tool in co-ordinating these dispersed activities. Any effective solution to the issues outlined in this report will therefore depend on the development of a more regional perspective, not confined to the boundaries of diocese, province or state.

## 7. Proposals for action

### 7.1 Where can a CSO act directly?

The forces that underlie the growth of conflict between herders and farmers in the Nigerian Central Zone have been allowed to develop unchecked due to a weak policy environment. NGOs and CBOs should use advocacy to try and change the situation, but this may involve security issues over which they have little influence. Nonetheless, they can engage in several key arenas, most notably in-depth regional conflict analysis, forward policy thinking, and support to pastoralist-friendly policies. Probably the most difficult conceptual problem is convincing the established farmer blocs that resolving these issues is in their own interest, especially in the new Nigeria that is developing. Non-formal institutions have the freedom to try new technological solutions which government will never implement. This section covers issues where a CSO can act directly.

**Photo 4. Cactus (*Euphorbia*) fencing on the Jos Plateau**



Source: Author photo

### 7.1.1 Live fencing

In most parts of Africa, farmers do not fence their fields, as it is costly and laborious to maintain. Also, until education became widespread for children of primary school age, they were commonly sent to guard the fields against wild animals and other crop pests. But intrusion by livestock has not been a problem in the southern Central Zone until recent times. However, in areas where livestock and crops have long been intertwined, farmers have used live fences to control access. Industrial fencing is expensive, but live fences are a cheaper option and leguminous plants can also improve the soil. The 'cactus', *Euphorbia kamerunica*, is widely used on the Jos Plateau to prevent livestock from eating crops (Photo 4).

Establishing live fences could much reduce the incidence of crop damage by cattle. If cattle entered such a fenced field, then the herders could hardly claim it was an 'accident'. The issue is to find an ecologically suitable species, which can easily be propagated, has thorns or other features to deter livestock and ideally is also nitrogen-fixing. Photo 5 shows the thorny *Caesalpinia bonduc*, *ayo*, which meets these requirements. This is not the only option, there may be other better species, including those which have useful fruits, such as the physic-nut, *Jatropha curcas*. CSOs/NGOs can surely play a role in researching appropriate species for each ecological zone, demonstrating how they can be planted, and integrating these into their agricultural extension programme.

Photo 5. Thorny plant, *Caesalpinia bonduc*



Source: Author photo

### 7.1.2 Information sharing

Although Nigeria has quite effective telecommunications and internet, capacity to connect different individuals with key skills and information is poorly developed. Little is known about events and policy in areas outside the immediate concern of individual projects. However a broader vision is essential in dealing with pastoralists, where remote events frequently affect local interactions. For example, if the region is affected by waves of transhumant pastoralists coming long distances, a lack of knowledge of the context of these movements make finding a likely solution more difficult. For example, it is no use holding a reconciliation or peacebuilding event with local settled FulBe if the trouble makers are 500 km further north. We found that local JDP offices usually had never met the leaders of pastoral associations in the same town. An extended effort should be made to contact pastoralist leaders who have been excluded from the process of community dialogue.

More effective information sharing systems need to be created. The first step is to build a list of names, locations, and phone numbers of individuals who are significant in the local political and social nexus. Key information, such as the organisation they represent, their language skills and availability need to be included. This should be circulated as widely as possible and updated regularly. This will include a wide range of stakeholders and will be a key tool in 'early warning' systems. In particular, it was found that traditional leaders played an important role in both reconciliation and exacerbation of conflict. Building a database of such leaders and their influence as well as dissemination of lessons learnt is another part of developing early warning systems. More broadly, this should not be confined to states or dioceses, but should be widely shared across the Central Zone.

### 7.1.3 Media work

#### 7.1.3.1 Spreading reliable information

Both farmers and pastoralists entertain wrong information about one another and tend to propose highly impractical solutions to current problems. Most typical are plaintive comments that we should return to the former period of collaboration, co-operation and peace. Such days will never return and only realism is a

practical response for fixing the problems. In addition, rumours and false accusations have a tendency to circulate rapidly, exacerbating distrust between the two communities. There seems little doubt that insurgents and bandits play on this by using what must be quite exaggerated versions of FulBe dress to give the impression the herders are the attackers. Government plays no role in correcting this unchecked propaganda. It is therefore of considerable importance to use whatever media is most effective in countering some of the more exaggerated claims.

Nigeria is a quite connected society, where the internet and smartphones play a role in social interaction among urban populations. However, this technology is almost useless in rural areas, where the problems recur. It seems then that radio is the only way to reach such populations, and that broadcasts must be in the vernacular, and in a style that convinces hearers of the sympathy of the speaker. Peacebuilding organisations have so far made little use of this cheap and effective method of countering false assertions.

Mobile phones began to be widespread in Nigeria from 2005 onwards, and they remain relatively cheap and practical, with good national coverage. Smartphones are common in urban areas, and Nigerians are enthusiastic adherents of social media. However, in rural areas, perhaps surprisingly, a lack of literacy among both herders and farmers has meant that the importance of mobile phones is restricted to voice calls. Even so, access to a phone now plays an important role in herders' lives. The primary use of the phone is for information concerning grazing and water, something individuals previously would travel long distances to find out. Market prices are an important secondary use, since FulBe economy depends on the sale of small stock for meat. The potential of the smartphone for circulating security information as well as correcting exaggerated claims in the media, as well as linking together pastoral leaders in widely dispersed places has yet to be realised.

#### **7.1.3.2 Vernacular radio broadcasts**

Nigeria now has a thriving vernacular radio environment. In many states, broadcasts are made in all the major languages of the state. Television is also common, though far more variable from one state to another. However, to reach rural areas, radio is by far the most important medium. Both private stations and the Federal Radio broadcast in local languages. The JDPs in the southwest, especially Ekiti, do make sporadic use of this medium, but only in Yoruba. It is clear that far more effective use of radio to broadcast to rural areas would reach a large audience which cannot be contacted by direct visits.

### **7.2 How can a CSO act to influence policy?**

#### **7.2.1 When no direct action is possible**

CSOs such as the JDPs cannot engage with policing roles that should be the remit of the security services. However, they can suggest strategies that have a better chance of success based on more in-depth background knowledge. In particular, security strategies need to get away from being purely reactive and move towards pre-emptive operations.

#### **7.2.2 Control of transhumants**

The research showed clearly that the recent wave of transhumants is causing many of the problems attributed to the Fulani as a whole. A key element in a media strategy would be to spread awareness among farmers of the different categories of Fulani, allowing them to focus on the actual problem rather than introducing blanket regulation, as in Ekiti State, which only harms local relations.

A relatively simple strategy for reducing conflict and crop damage could be implemented by use of the FulBe family system and the bottlenecks through which herds pass when reaching the southwest. There is little doubt that the families of young herders in the semi-arid north are unaware of the risky behaviour indulged in by their children. Cattle are valuable, and their actions are putting the herd at risk. Ensuring that the authorities can easily contact the herders' families would immediately put pressure on the household to minimise disruptive behaviour and reduce the use of inexperienced herders.

Herds which migrate south of the Niger-Benue system, must always use one of two bridges to cross the river, at Jebba and Lokoja. Swimming cattle across the river is no longer an option, except in some of the

shallow areas of the Upper Benue. These bottlenecks would make it easy to enumerate herds crossing, and ensure that no transhumants cross without leaving their phone number and a valid family phone number. Both the herder and the herd could have a valid ID and if they are involved with community trouble, the authorities could more easily contact their household and underline the potential to forbid the herd from crossing the following year, as well as making elders responsible for crop damage and violent affray. If implemented, this would undoubtedly reduce incidents, because the whole family would have to face up to the misbehaviour of their children.

### 7.2.3 Ranches, grazing reserves and stock-routes

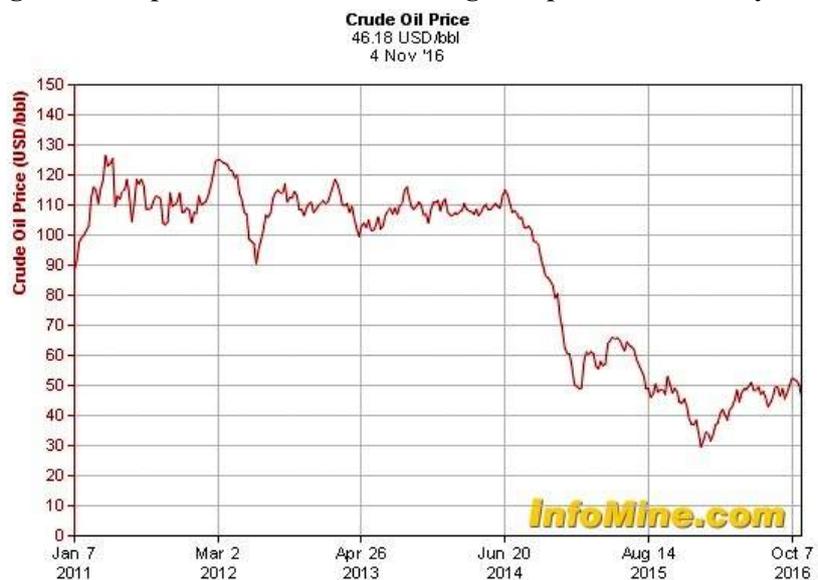
The forces that underlie the growth of conflict between herders and farmers in the Nigerian Central Zone have been allowed to develop unchecked due to a weak policy environment and lack of a coherent government strategy. Water access, stock routes and grazing reserves have fallen into disuse or been blocked, often with the active connivance of state governments. If pastoralism is to thrive in Nigeria, then these will have to be revived and their legal status consolidated. Pastoralist make effective use of patchy resources, supply meat and milk and provide a source of renewed soil fertility. It seems logical to try and evolve a system of co-existence and co-operation, rather than conflict and opposition. This is now increasingly difficult because of entrenched positions on both sides, and a culture of revenge, which is blocking attempts at conflict reduction.

There has recently been much informal talk over moving the herders to a ranching system, apparently on the Australian or Uruguayan model. This is to ignore the fact that these countries have stable systems of input supply, a large land mass in relation to the population, and systems of land tenure which are maintained by the rule of law. Carving out areas large enough to make ranching effective in Nigeria would be politically impossible in the high-density states where the problems have arisen. Ranches have historically failed in Nigeria, except where they are owned by wealthy individuals who are not troubled by normal economic considerations.

## 8. Trends

Nigeria has historically had a highly skewed economy, based predominantly on oil exports. The price of oil has been high for a long time, allowing the large-scale import of both food and manufactured goods. By some estimates, as much as 50% of food in Nigeria was imported until recently, including most milk and meat<sup>4</sup>. As a result, both agriculture and small factories have been allowed to fail<sup>5</sup>, and the government has no policy support for these industries, since many individuals have grown rich on import licences. The consequence is that both imported food and manufactured goods are becoming correspondingly more

Figure 2. Oil prices from 2011, showing collapse since January 2015



Source: Infomine.com

expensive. However, from around June 2014, the oil price began to fall precipitously, and seems to have stabilised at around one third of its former level (Figure 2). Few analysts think it will recover soon or at all.

<sup>4</sup> The import of frozen meat is technically banned, but nearly all the fresh meat sold in the major markets of southern Nigeria is from outside its borders, typically Niger, Mali and Chad.

<sup>5</sup> An excellent summary of this problem is at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35785426>

As a consequence, lack of confidence in the capacity of Nigeria to find alternative sources of revenue has led to a fall in the value of the Naira. Since the end of 2014, the Naira has nearly halved in value on the parallel market. There is no reason to consider it will not fall further still, as oil prices are likely to remain low.

As a consequence, lack of confidence in the capacity of Nigeria to find alternative sources of revenue has led to a fall in the value of the Naira. Since the end of 2014, the Naira has nearly halved in value. There is no reason to consider it will not fall further still, as oil prices are likely to remain low. The consequence is that both imported food and manufactured goods will become correspondingly more expensive. This might ultimately be good for local farmers, but in the short term will create problems, as to increase food production they will need government support.

However, their likely response is to bring still more land under cultivation, which will further exclude herders from grazing, especially along the banks of rivers, where dry season farms are now established. The obvious policy response should be to consolidate water access and stock routes while it is still possible, as pressure to turn these over to agriculture is only likely to increase. Civil insecurity in rural areas will act a major deterrent to farmers seeking to invest in improved agricultural productivity.

Another quite different and unfortunate outcome of the conflicts is the increase in child trafficking. The southwest of Nigeria has long been an area where business-oriented farmers are developing large-scale production to meet urban demand. However, the lack of modern technologies implies recruiting significantly more labour. Communities of Tiv, Ebira and even Togolese farmers can be encountered in states such as Ekiti and Ondo, working for Yoruba landlords. But a further strategy has been to recruit under-age labour among the IDPs. Seduced by promises of paid work, male children are transported by corrupt entrepreneurs, their mobile phones, if they have them, confiscated and they are put to work on remote farms (Kwaghchimin 2016). Female children, in an all too obvious parallel to Boko Haram, are forced into under-age marriages and kept locked up as domestic servants.

Security issues in other parts of Nigeria can and do affect the situation in regions very remote from the problems. Pastoralists are by definition mobile and their herds are vulnerable, so they inevitably flee conflict areas. Although the Boko Haram insurgency is the major problem for the Nigerian government, trouble on the Jos Plateau has also affected pastoralists. A typical response to attacks on the herds and camps is to move the family unit to a place of safety and to send the herds with young men or hired herders. As a consequence, this does reduce control over the herds, and they are more vulnerable to rustling. Especially since 2010, there has been a major expansion of cattle rustling and associated with kidnapping, which probably reflects a combination of youth unemployment and pastoralists who have lost their herds. The response has been to increase the power and scale of weaponry carried as well as the willingness to use it.

## **10. Where next?**

The rise of civil insecurity in the Central Zone of Nigeria has been seriously under-reported and its impact under-estimated, because the situation is more diffuse and less visible than with a clear-cut conflict such as is represented by Boko Haram. Nonetheless, there is every reason to think it is equally serious, and because of the zone-wide impact on food production, may have longer term consequences for food security. More informed Nigerian government recognition of the nature of the problem and wider international attention would be valuable in seeking long-term solutions.

A series of proposals are made for actions and policies which could be adopted by the JDPs. Capacity in individual JDPs is extremely variable, depending on experience, funding, and age of establishment. The first requirement is thus more extended training, in describing the local situation, developing solutions which are based on ground reality, and putting forward costed proposals to address the situation. In the light of this, the following topics will need to be explored in greater depth;

- ❖ Develop a more comprehensive network of connections with diocesan offices and the problems they are experiencing
- ❖ Expand training in analytic report writing to a wide range of partner individuals as well as developing schedules of reporting

Pastoralist-farmer conflict in the Nigerian Central Zone, 2016 Roger Blench Final Circulation version

- ❖ Develop a regional database of trusted interlocutors, especially among pastoralists and train officers in the use of this
- ❖ Develop and advocacy strategy based on a more in-depth analysis of the drivers of conflict
- ❖ Develop a media strategy, in particular for vernacular radio broadcasting and social media, to counter exaggerated and untrue claims
- ❖ A more systematic assessment of the role of traditional leaders in both reconciliation and exacerbation of conflict and dissemination of lessons learnt
- ❖ A more effective delineation and development of stock routes and grazing reserves
- ❖ Technical backstopping in the areas of live fencing and ranching
- ❖ Policy advocacy in strategies to identify transhumant herds
- ❖ Contact with the home areas of transhumant herds with a view to herd owners taking greater responsibility for the activities of their children

It was felt that trying to co-ordinate a project across the whole Central Zone would be too demanding and it would be more effective to divide the dioceses into groups to work together. Broadly speaking, the Benue State area and the southwest have a more coherent approach, whereas the other Central Zone States need to spend more time networking and exchanging experiences. As a consequence, more extended training would be needed in states such as Kogi, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Niger and Taraba. It is therefore proposed that;

- ❖ Working groups reflecting three major zones are established; the Southwest, the Benue region and the Central Zone
- ❖ They put together joint reports on the zonal situation in relation to conflict, incorporating insights from the reports and workshop
- ❖ These are reviewed and used as the basis for proposals to remediate the conflict situation in their zone, but with harmonisation and co-ordination with the other zones

Policy work is more long-term, more abstract and the results less easy to see. However, given the ineffectual nature of the responses of public institutions in Nigeria, it was felt that this remains a worthwhile goal. The teams were not always sure of the technical aspects of, for example, the problems with ranching systems. One possible strategy would be the preparation of technical papers on topics such as ranching and live fencing which would encapsulate the arguments in a bullet-point form and facilitate the presentation of policy advice.

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