



Farmers and herders conflicts

How can projects in the Sahel and Lake Chad region support the prevention and resolution of farmer-herder conflicts?

Altai Consulting for the European Union – September 2022



Funded by
the European Union



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This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union through the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). Its contents are the sole responsibility of Altai Consulting and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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EUTF MONITORING AND LEARNING SYSTEM (MLS)

The EU Trust Fund (EUTF) Sahel and Lake Chad (SLC) Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) was initiated in October 2018 and is being implemented by Altai Consulting. The overall objective of the MLS is to strengthen the EUTF interventions in the SLC region through the creation of a monitoring and learning system, which should provide an evidence-based approach for programming and implementing interventions.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by Eric Davin, Justine Rubira and Garance Dauchy.

The authors of this report are grateful to all the different respondents from A2N, ACF, AFD, *Afrique Verte Internationale*, AICS, AMASSA, APSS, AVSF, British Council, COGINTA, DRC, HD Centre, HI, IOM, LuxDev, OECD SWAC, Promédiation, RBM, Save the Children, SDC, Search for Common Ground, UNHCR, University of Cape Coast, URD, US Fish and Wildlife Service and VSF Belgium, as well as staff from the EUDs in Mali and Burkina Faso who took time to answer our questions.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project
AFD	<i>Agence française de développement</i>
AICS	<i>Agenzia Italiana per la cooperazione allo sviluppo</i>
ATPC	<i>Assainissement total piloté par les communautés</i>
AVSF	<i>Agronomes et vétérinaires sans frontières</i>
CILSS	<i>Comité inter-état de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel</i>
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (also EUTF for Africa)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MLS	Monitoring and learning system
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NLTP	National Livestock Transformation Plan
OECD	Organisation for economic co-operation and development
PES	Payment for environmental services
RBM	<i>Réseau Bilital Marobé</i>
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SLC	Sahel and Lake Chad
TLU	Tropical Livestock Units
TTT	Transhumance Tracking Tool
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Case study methodology

This case study focuses on the question: **‘How can projects in the Sahel support the prevention or resolution of farmer-herder conflicts?’** It aims to identify innovative approaches, by both EUTF and non-EUTF programming, to reduce farmer-herder conflicts. The case study relied on a thorough desk review and secondary research to better understand the contextual background and help respond to the research questions. Thereafter, 51 high-level key informant interviews with the staff of implementing partners (IP), the European Union (EU) and relevant external stakeholders provided deeper insight into the research questions and the related experiences and findings of local and international actors.

Causes and dynamics of conflicts

Pastoralism is a way of life and a livelihood that relies on livestock and mobility to efficiently exploit the rangelands. There are an estimated 100–268 million pastoralists in Africa. Views on pastoralism have evolved towards an understanding that pastoralism is a productive way to exploit rangelands and contributes to a crucial but undervalued portion of the economies of Western African countries.

Pastoralists are increasingly vulnerable to agricultural expansion and climate change effects, reducing available resources and thwarting their mobility patterns. In addition, pastoralists often do not reap the benefits of a growing livestock market. Their vulnerabilities are further increased by institutional marginalisation, a lack of access to services, and poor representation in governance institutions.

Such vulnerabilities have increased the frequency and the violence of conflicts between farmers and herders for access to, and control of, resources. In addition, pastoralists are often associated in national narratives with criminal and terrorist activities, as non-state armed groups play on long-standing frustrations to recruit young herders in their ranks. Pastoralists also suffer disproportionately from generalised insecurity in the Sahel and Lake Chad (SLC) region, as they are targeted by both terrorist and counter-terrorism activities and account for an estimated 60% of the displaced populations in the region.

Frameworks and policies

Regional bodies have adopted legislations in support of pastoralism and transhumance, including the Free Transhumance Protocol of the ECOWAS which, until recently, was the only regional free movement agreement specifically targeted at transhumance. However, regional and continental organisations do not support transhumance and pastoralism in all their publications and sometimes refer to pastoralism as a relic of the past, notably in agricultural policies.

Sahelian countries have increasingly adopted overarching pastoral legislations in the last two decades. However, policies and legislations from past eras are still common, especially in the Lake Chad Basin region. Because of the strong links between pastoral regulation and land rights, pastoral codes are often tied to land tenure, which can make the adoption of overarching or national regulations complex.

Activities of the EUTF and other donors

Sixty-two EUTF-funded projects (€540.4M) implemented at least one activity specifically targeting farmer-herder conflicts or pastoral livelihoods. **This represents 31% of the projects currently funded by the EUTF and 27% of the funding.** Most relevant EUTF-funded projects tend to **mainstream farmer-herder relations in their activities rather than specifically target them.**

The number of initiatives implemented and funded by external donors related to farmer-herder conflicts has increased in recent decades, due to increased awareness among donors and partners of the various topics that impact these conflicts and the vulnerabilities created by them. **The World Bank, the AFD and the SDC** are three major donors for projects related to pastoralism in West Africa.

Main findings

Conflicts have been taking place between farmers and herders in the region for decades. The collapse of conflict resolution mechanisms and incendiary narratives around pastoralism have increasingly caused local resource conflicts to be solved violently. The **reinforcement of existing community-based committees and traditional conflict management systems** was identified as the main best practice to support peaceful conflict resolution. This requires local actors and localised conflict analysis to understand underlying conflict drivers.

Most partners believe that civilian solutions alone are limited when it comes to protracted conflict situations. They have, therefore, tried to implement activities to **reinforce the security infrastructure**. However, this requires a significant amount of funding and trainings, and it could paradoxically result in increased occurrences of human rights abuses. To help rebuild the relationship between pastoralists and the state, it may be beneficial to: support security units to **fight against cattle theft; commit to the accountability of security forces**; and build **communication channels between security forces and pastoralist populations**.

The lack of resources and of peaceful natural resource management is a main cause of local conflicts between farmers and herders. Partners identify two main best practices to address resource conflicts: **build new infrastructures; and support existing peaceful resource management mechanisms**. Innovative actions to involve pastoralists in the protection of the environment could also be considered.

Most partners point out the need to rebuild an architecture of service provision or create conditions for people to access services, while in mobility. This requires the design of **innovative methods to adapt service provision to mobility**, possibly by borrowing best practices from the response to COVID-19 and by supporting services to be **dispatched to remote areas and along mobility routes**.

Conflicts in mobility especially arise when the fluidity of herds' movements is jeopardised. **Partners all noted the need to demarcate and improve transhumance corridors as a first step to reduce conflicts. It also entails reinforcing border crossings, through trainings of agents and the professionalisation of border police**. The rationality of pastoral movements is a key feature of the adaptability and resilience of pastoral livelihoods. Several tools, like the SIGSAHEL, inform pastoralists about resource availability, conflicts and epizootic events, ensuring mobility relies on informed decisions.

Identifying the displacement of pastoralists is challenging and needs to rely on herder associations who hold sufficient knowledge to interpret data. **The response provided to displaced pastoralists also needs to be adapted to the specificities of pastoralism**. This includes providing veterinary services and livestock grazing areas, as well as ensuring that host and displaced populations can cohabit peacefully.

Partners have noted that laws regulating pastoralism are often **lacking or, when they exist, are poorly implemented**. Support to the implementation of legal provisions at the national and local level must be accompanied by a reinforcement of pastoral institutions. Ensuring the implementation of laws also entails supporting the **inclusion of pastoral voices in national dialogues**. Partners all noted that reinforcing pastoral associations was an efficient way to ensure legitimate actors have the capacities to advocate for pastoral issues.

While the livestock sector is an important contributor to the region's economies, it is highly **under invested** and relationships between farmers and herders suffer as a result. Providing market information to pastoralists can ensure they are informed actors of the value chain and **revenues are not captured by intermediaries**. Supporting the **commercialisation of milk products** as well can empower women while ensuring an increase in pastoral revenues.

Shifting interventions from a programme approach to a territorial one could allow partners to implement a more completed and multisectoral approach. This must rely on an increased coordination of actors, and better information about pastoral livelihoods and conflicts.

1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In the last few years, conflicts between farmers and herders have increased in intensity and frequency in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. In 2020, 2,039 people were killed in events in which one of the two parties was identified as pastoralist. Farmer-herder conflicts in the Sahel and Lake Chad are widely considered to fuel larger insecurity in the region. To support future programming in the SLC region, the MLS conducted a case study on EUTF-funded activities related to pastoralism and farmer-herder conflicts.

1.1 CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

Activities related to farmer-herder conflicts and pastoral livelihoods vary widely across the EUTF's countries of intervention and cover a wide variety of interventions (land rights, social cohesion, infrastructure construction, etc.). While some projects are specifically targeted to address one or several aspects of farmer-herder conflicts, projects implemented along transhumance corridors and pastoral lands may also impact conflicts, depending on the inclusion of pastoralist populations in the activities.

Considering this wide array of activities impacting farmer-herder conflicts, the objective of this case study is to identify innovative and interesting approaches adopted by EUTF-funded projects and other interventions that could be implemented in the future in the SLC region. This case study focuses on the following question: **'How can projects in the Sahel support the prevention or resolution of farmer-herder conflicts?'** and the below research questions.

Table 1: Research questions

Thematic areas	Questions
Causes and dynamics of conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main causes of conflicts between farmers and herders? • What are the main pastoralist areas and the main transhumance routes? • How do farmer-herder conflicts interact with conflicts and displacement dynamics in the SLC region?
Policies in the SLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have national and regional policies impacted pastoral livelihoods and routes? • How are the rights of pastoralists and farmers protected? • What different policies have been developed in recent years?
EUTF and non-EUTF programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities does the EUTF fund in relation to farmer-herder conflicts? • Who are the other donors involved in programming related to farmer-herder conflicts?
Best practices and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the best practices and lessons learned from both EUTF and non-EUTF interventions on the resolution or prevention of farmer-herder conflicts in the SLC region? • What are the best practices and lessons learned from EUTF and non-EUTF interventions to include semi-nomadic and pastoralist populations in activities and mitigate the risks of their marginalisation? • How can future EU programming further address farmer-herder conflicts and their consequences, and what relevant geographical and thematic areas should be further covered by EU interventions?

This paper particularly focuses on pastoral-related programming rather than agriculture-related programming considering the already large body of research and extensive programming in favour of

agriculture and agricultural livelihoods. However, vulnerabilities of pastoralists and farmers alike influence conflicts and both are represented here.

1.2 CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

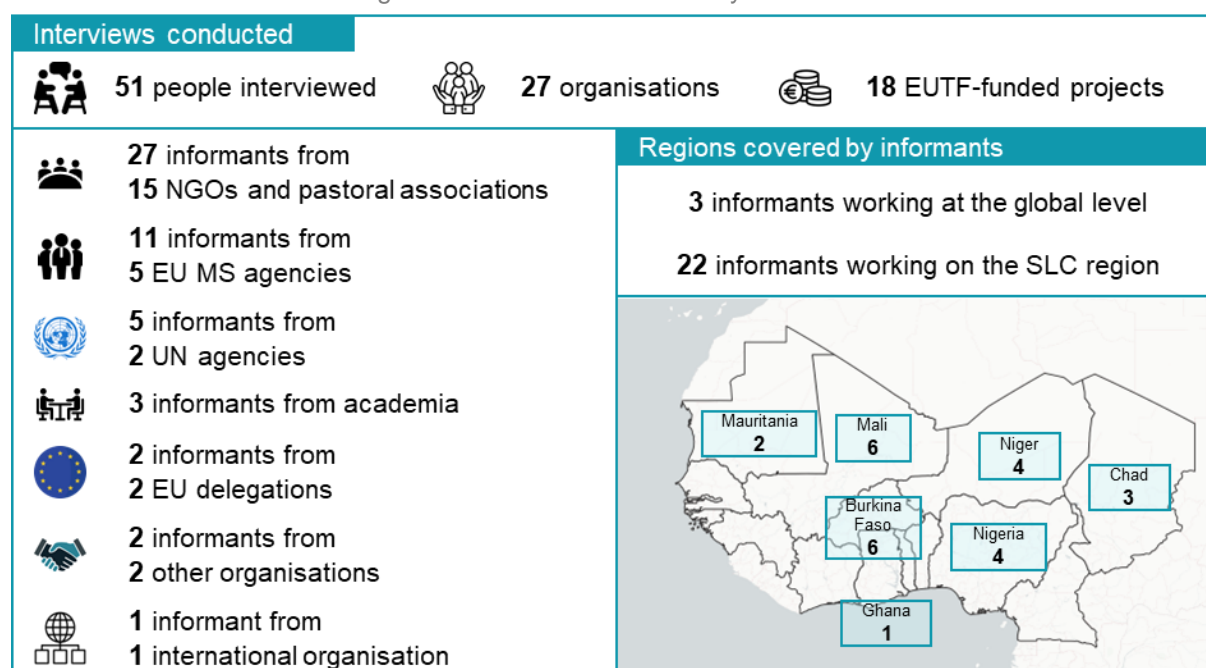
The case study was based on secondary research and key informant interviews (KII):

- **Secondary research** allowed for the identification of the specific vulnerabilities of pastoralists, the policies regulating pastoralists' mobility in the SLC region, and the different types of activities implemented to resolve and prevent farmer-herder conflicts.
- **Key Informant Interviews** were carried out by the consultant with implementing partners (IPs), EU delegations and external focal points (researchers, senior staff from non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) to collect insights on the research questions and gather viewpoints on activities aiming to resolve and prevent farmer-herder conflicts.

1.3 CASE STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

The case study took place from January to December 2021. A total of 51 high-level interviews were carried out during that time.

Figure 1: Overview of case study interviews



1.4 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

This study covers a large array of themes and geographies and attempts to produce recommendations for future EU programming that could be replicated throughout the SLC region, in all thematic areas. While the findings are corroborated by informants, other studies and reviews, no survey of beneficiaries was conducted on either theme or region.

A second phase of this study could be conducted, focusing on a thematic area or region of special interest to the EU. Such a study could include a beneficiary survey.

2. CAUSES AND DYNAMICS OF CONFLICTS

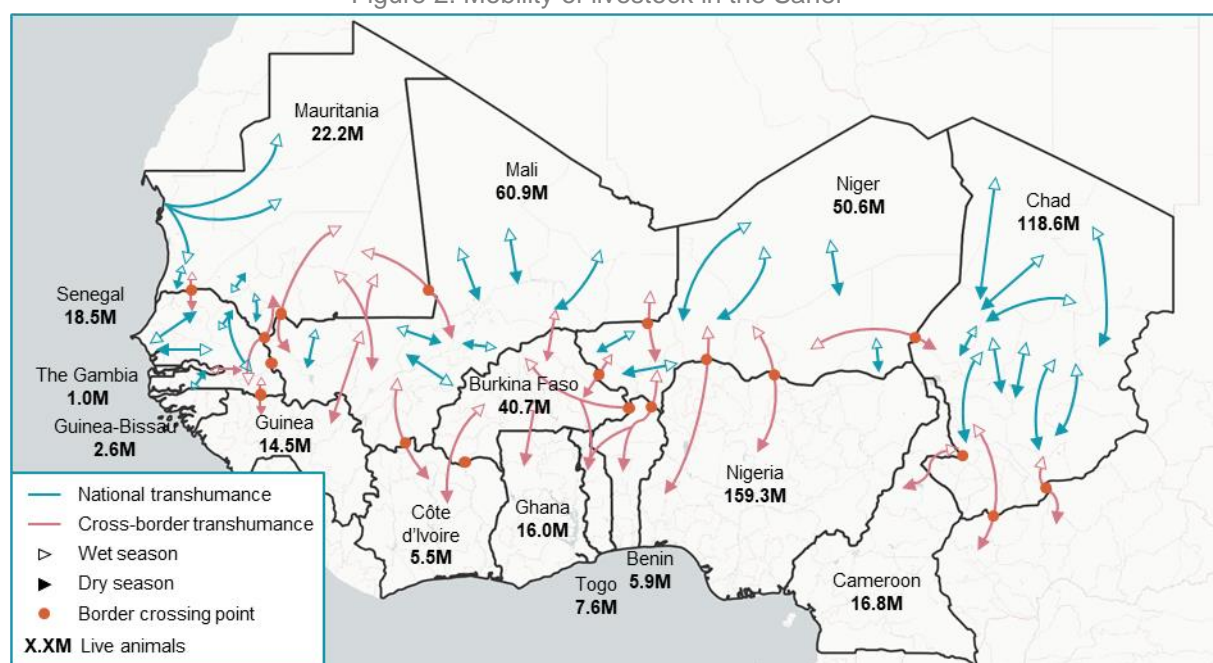
2.1 PASTORALISM IN THE SAHEL AND LAKE CHAD

2.1.1 WHAT IS PASTORALISM?

Pastoralism is both a way of life and a production system which relies on livestock and the use of strategic mobility. Pastoralists mostly reside in semi-arid and arid environments, where mobility is a necessary response to variability of rainfall and allows herders to maximise access to and use of grazing and water resources. Mobile livestock herding can be nomadic, following irregular movements depending on resource availability, or transhumant, following established routes in regular and cyclical movements. In the Sahel, most pastoralist populations now practice some degree of agro-pastoralism (keeping crops and livestock simultaneously), at least during rainy seasons, spent in their home areas.¹

The movement of pastoralists in the Sahel generally occurs from north (rangelands) to south in the beginning of the dry season, and from south to north in the wet season. This pattern ensures sufficient high-quality grazing around the year: Vegetation in the northern fringes is nutritious but scarce while, in the southern parts, cattle can graze on a higher volume of biomass, albeit of lower quality.² Movement happens along transhumance corridors, which can be primary (international), secondary (national), or tertiary (local).³

Figure 2: Mobility of livestock in the Sahel^{4,5}



Transhumant pastoralists often retain a home base, where they spend part of the year, in between mobile periods. **Women play a crucial role** in the home zones, where they manage part of the herd and are often in charge of the sale of milk.

¹ See all definitions in the Annex.

² World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

³ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ OECD, 'An Atlas of the of the Sahara-Sahel - Geography, Economics, Security', 2014.

⁵ FAOSTAT, 'Live animals', consulted in November 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

2.1.2 AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO THE REGION'S ECONOMY

Pastoralism is estimated to be the main livelihood of hundreds of millions of people in Africa, with estimates ranging from 100 million¹ to 268 million people.² In the Sahel and Saharan fringes alone, 50 million people are estimated to rely on pastoralism for their livelihoods.³ In addition to a lack of consistency in data for overall numbers of pastoralists, there are few data estimates about the types of pastoralism practiced in the region (nomadic, transhumant, agro-pastoralist). The largest pastoralist group in Africa is the Fulani, which can be found in all countries of the SLC region. Nigeria hosts the largest population of pastoralists (estimated at 18 million people).⁴

Pastoralists provide a crucial and undervalued contribution to national economies in Africa. Pastoralists' share in gross agricultural product is generally higher than their proportion of the overall population. In Western Africa, the contribution of livestock to the agricultural GDP ranges from 5% in Côte d'Ivoire to 44% in Mali.⁵ According to other estimates, pastoralists' share in gross agricultural product is estimated at 32% in both Chad and Mali, 36% in Niger and as high as 83% in Mauritania.⁶ Pastoralists supply substantial amounts of livestock to domestic, regional, and international markets. However, many pastoral products are traded outside formal markets, indicating that the full contribution of pastoralism to economies may not be captured accurately by official figures.⁷

2.1.3 THE NEW RANGELAND PARADIGM

Views on pastoralism have evolved towards an understanding that pastoralism is a productive way to exploit rangelands. The 'new rangeland paradigm' is gradually replacing the previously dominant 'theory of the commons', which suggested that pastoralism causes desertification and overgrazing.⁸ This new paradigm recognises that pastoralism (and its mobility component) is a sustainable way to exploit the 38% of arid and semi-arid lands of the West Africa region, which tend to be unfavourable to crop production.⁹ Mobility also allows for constant adaptation to changes in climate and resource availability, enhancing the resilience of vulnerable populations living in dry areas. Finally, some studies also show that pastoralism is more productive than sedentary livestock ranching and that mobile herds produce more milk and have higher fertility rates than sedentary, ranched livestock.¹⁰

2.2 THE VULNERABILITIES OF PASTORAL LIVELIHOODS

2.2.1 GLOBALISATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS

Traditional patterns of transhumance movements in the Sahel allow for a complementarity between farming and livestock herding, often referred to as the manure contract. Herds remain in the northern ranges during the rainy season, grazing on the rich and short-lived pastures of the Sahel, while southern farmlands are cultivated. At the onset of the dry season, herds travel south, crossing farmlands after they have been harvested and feeding on crop residue. After the dry season spent in the south, herds move back north before seeds are planted, and their manure can be used as fertilizer. These movements, and the ensuing complementarity of livelihoods **are increasingly disrupted by**

¹ World Bank, 'Prospects for livestock-based livelihoods in Africa's drylands', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

² African Union, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, 'Policy framework for pastoralism in Africa: Securing, protection and improving the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoralist communities', 2010. Retrieved [here](#).

³ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Search for Common Ground, 'Criminality & reprisal attacks in Nigeria's Middle Belt', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ African Union, Ibid.

⁶ World Bank Group, Ibid.

⁷ IFAD, 'Engaging with pastoralists – a holistic development approach', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

¹⁰ ECOWAS and OECD SWAC, 'Policy Note: Livestock in the Sahel and West Africa', 2008. Retrieved [here](#).

agricultural expansion, urbanisation and demographic growth, globalisation, and environmental changes, causing tensions between farmers and herders.

2.2.1.1 Agriculture expansion and modernisation of economies

Demographic pressure in West Africa (where, in 2019, the population growth rate was 2.7%) has led to an **expansion of commercial agriculture**.¹ The shift from subsistence to commercial farming, supported by local and international land investments, has required the **privatisation of land tenure**. Communal ownership of pastoral land or informal usufruct rights are viewed as irrational by farmers seeking to intensify farming.² International investors are also rarely equipped or inclined to uphold customary land arrangements for herders and, instead, turn to value-driven exclusionary land rights.

The expansion of agriculture was **made possible by the mechanisation and modernisation of farming and irrigation techniques**. Mechanisation allows the **exploitation of remote and marginal areas where previously no crops would grow**, reducing available pastoral land for herders to graze.³ The expansion of farming also causes an encroachment of farmlands on transhumance corridors, disrupting mobility patterns. In addition, the modernisation of seeds and the development of off-season products has resulted in the progressive **abandonment of the fallow system**,⁴ further reducing available land for herders to pass through and graze on during transhumance, as fields are not left unsown anymore.⁵ For instance, in Nigeria, the introduction of drought-resistant and exogenous seeds like corn and maize has enabled farmers to farm all year round disrupting the traditional equilibrium between farmers and herders.

International and national investment in **resource extraction industries** is also reducing available land for both farmers and herders in the region. Oil mining in the Niger delta of Nigeria has led to a reduction of pastoral land,⁶ and the expansion of gold mining in Burkina Faso has caused herders to migrate, to avoid chemical poisoning and accidents. In Niger, between 2008 and 2014, almost 28,500 km² of land were lost to ranching, extractive industry concessions and illegal land deals.⁷ With crop farming increasing in the region, space for livestock has shrunk; livestock density per hectare of land increased by 41% between 2006 and 2016.⁸

While population growth and urbanisation is also increasing the populations' consumption of meat, the pastoralists do not benefit from the new opportunities. Attracted by the expansion of the livestock sector, a growing number of intermediaries have entered the livestock value chain and prevent pastoralists from profiting from the increased demand (see Focus Box 1).

In addition, **regional dynamics** prevent pastoralists from Sahelian countries from accessing growing markets in coastal countries. The **globalisation and liberalisation of West African markets** has caused local livestock sectors to suffer from increased levels of competition. For instance, in Ghana, imported frozen products have decimated local poultry value chains. Between 1992 and 2002, the domestic supply of Ghana's poultry requirement decreased from 95% to 11%.⁹

Finally, **inequality among pastoralists** is further endangering livelihoods for the most vulnerable. In Africa, the wealthiest 1% of pastoralists own between 9% and 28% of the Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU) stock,¹⁰ while 80% of pastoralists live below the poverty line.¹¹ This trend started during the droughts of

¹ Worldometers, 'Western Africa, population', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

² FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

³ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ The fallow system is the practice by which arable land is left without sowing for a period.

⁵ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ ICG, 'Side-lining the Islamic State in Niger's Tillabéry', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ OECD, 'Herders vs Farmers: resolving deadly conflict in the Sahel and West Africa', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ IPS, 'Trade Ghana: the chilling effect of frozen poultry imports', 2006. Retrieved [here](#).

¹⁰ World Bank, 'Prospects for livestock-based livelihoods in Africa's drylands', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

¹¹ The minimum number of tropical livestock units (animals, TLU) for a person to live above the poverty line is estimated at 3 to 4 TLU per person. According to this metric, 80% of pastoralists live below the poverty line, owning 1.2 to 2 TLU per person.

the 1970s and 1980s, when vulnerable pastoralists were made to sell parts of their herds to survive, often at very low prices. These sales concentrated cattle ownership among an increasingly smaller number of persons, often political and military urban elites.¹

Focus Box 1: Intermediaries in the livestock sector, the case of Burkina Faso²

The increased commercialisation of the livestock sector is creating space for intermediaries and middlemen (collecting traders, exporting traders, butchers, brokers etc.) who are reaping most of the benefits of the sector's expansion. In Burkina Faso, according to a 2014 study, the prices to end consumers of goats and sheep were 1.6 and 1.75 times higher, respectively, than the sale price paid to the herder. Most of the margin benefitted traders and retailers.

Pastoralists are often located in remote areas, far from export buyers. They therefore must rely on traders and collectors for sales and information (on prices, the market situation, etc.). In addition, pastoralists' market rationale is not necessarily geared towards higher revenues; for pastoralists, livestock can act as a wallet, meaning they will sell cattle when they need liquidity. However, other actors of the chain (e.g., agro-pastoralists who also have crops) view their cattle as an investment and sell when prices are high and advantageous.

2.2.1.2 Environmental changes

While the direct impact of climate change on pastoralist livelihoods is debated (see Focus Box 3), desertification, extreme climatic events and variability of rainfall have an impact on the resilience of herders and by extension, on the relationship between farmers and herders.³

In the semi-arid areas of West Africa, in the 1990s, the desert was expanding at an estimated rate of 5km per year. In northern Nigeria alone, 350,000 km² are estimated to have been lost to the desert between 2014 and 2020.⁴ **Desertification results in a loss of resources**, further increasing the vulnerabilities of pastoralists. Pastoral areas are especially affected by malnutrition and food insecurity as a result.⁵ Over time, desertification is **disrupting the mobility of pastoralists**: As the Sahel expands, herders are forced to move further south to find resources for themselves and their cattle. In Chad, pastoralist populations' have started moving more and more towards the south, increasing demographic pressure and tensions in the southern part of the country. **Extreme climatic events, happening at a heightened frequency**, are also affecting pastoralists' livelihoods and movements.⁶ In the region, the combined effects of drought and rains are reducing soil fertility, putting added stress on populations, and increasing tensions and competition over dwindling resources.⁷

The increased variability of rainfall recorded in the region in the last decades is also causing movements to start at **more variable times**. Herds will start transhumance earlier in the year and may cross farming areas before the harvest, which can result in the destruction of crops and conflicts between farmers and herders.⁸

2.2.1.3 Sedentarisation and diversification of livelihoods

The practice of transhumant and nomadic pastoralism is receding as populations are both pushed and pulled towards **diversification and sedentarisation**. Pastoralists have been pulled towards growing

¹ RBM and Mathieu Pellerin, '*Entendre la voix des éleveurs au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest : quel avenir pour le pastoralisme face à l'insécurité et ses impacts*', 2021.

² Clingendael, 'Between hope and despair: pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

³ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Search for Common Ground, 'Transnational dimensions of conflict between farmers and herders in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ ID4D, '*Le pastoralisme, un facteur de stabilité essentiel dans le Sahel*', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ Solidarités international, 'The Sahel in the midst of climate change', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

cities and have been settling down through ranching or by sending their herds on transhumance with hired herders.

Sedentarisation through ranching requires the acquisition of exclusive grazing resource rights (privatisation of land) and relationships between pastoralists can become tenser as a result.¹ Another trend is the **professionalisation of herding**, whereby owners of large herds employ herders to take their cattle on transhumance. These **absentee pastoralists** are often urban political and military elites, well-off traders and sometimes traffickers, who, lacking trust in banking systems, buy large herds to launder money.² They increasingly arm their employed herders to protect the herds from bandits.³ Absentee pastoralists, who started appearing after the droughts of the 1980s, are now present in most urban centres of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and northern Nigeria.

There is also an **increase in the practice of agro-pastoralism**, from pastoralists partially settling down and starting crop farming as well as from farmers buying cattle and poultry to complement their revenues. This convergence in livelihoods increases tensions as farmers and herders **compete for the same lands**. In Burkina Faso, pastoralist groups have contributed to agricultural expansion by settling down and planting crops, sometimes on transhumance corridors, increasing conflicts with both sedentary groups and other pastoralists.⁴ In Tahoua (Niger), conflicts have increased since the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, as herders who lost their cattle transitioned to small agriculture.

Focus Box 2: The end of pastoralism?

The vulnerability of pastoral livelihoods to global issues like globalisation and climate change suggests that pastoralism may no longer be viable. Multiple projects are working on providing pastoral populations with sustainable alternative livelihoods, and some governments favour ranching and sedentary practices of livestock herding.

It is worth noting, however, that a share of pastoralists has always moved away from pastoral livelihoods. The pastoral population grows by 2.5 to 3 percent each year, and growing numbers cannot all be absorbed by pastoral areas. People leaving pastoralism are therefore a normal phenomenon.⁵ In addition, pastoralism is increasingly recognised as the only way to exploit resources in arid and semi-arid areas where no crop production is possible. This tends to show that some form of pastoralism is likely to always exist in these areas.⁶

Finally, pastoralism, which naturally adapts to this variability through flexible strategies (flexible land tenure, herd diversification, strategic mobility etc.), is still widely viewed through a lens of fragility and scarcity, the same lens that could be driving the narrative of the end of pastoralism. In East Africa, in Turkana (the northern Kenya drylands) a study of the Turkana herders showed that pastoralism is successfully adapting to the effects of climate change, globalisation and changes in the economy. The report makes the case that policy restrictions are the main source of vulnerability for pastoralists, and that pastoralism is not only well positioned to face environmental changes but could also have an important role in teaching global lessons on the management of uncertainty and variability in the context of climate change.⁷

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Search for Common Ground, 'Transnational dimensions of conflict between farmers and herders in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ African Union, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, Op. Cit.

⁷ REF, 'Resilience in Action, Local practices and development/humanitarian policies - A review of resilience in the drylands of Turkana', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

2.2.2 INSTITUTIONAL NEGLECT AND MARGINALISATION

2.2.2.1 Marginalisation of pastoralists

In spite of its important contribution to the economies of the region (see section 2.1.2), the livestock sector in West and Central Africa receives a very small share of national budgets, sometimes as little as 1%.¹ In recent decades, the vision that vegetal agriculture is the only path to food security has resulted in increased investments in the subsector, to the detriment of the livestock sector.

In 2003, at the African Union General Assembly, heads of state endorsed the Maputo Declaration on agriculture and food security in Africa, pledging to allocate **at least 10% of national budgetary resources to agriculture** (including the livestock subsector) and rural development policies.² While Sahelian countries are among the rare countries on the continent to respect this threshold, the amount allocated to the livestock subsector within the agricultural budget is estimated to be greatly inferior to the recommended 30%.³ Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal allocated an average **10% of agricultural funds to the livestock sector** between 2001 and 2011.⁴

There is also **little transparency** about the beneficiaries of the budget allocation (agro-pastoralists, pastoralists, new actors of the livestock sector, ranchers...). However, the vision of pastoralism as a livelihood in decline seems to direct livestock-related funding towards **ranching and sedentary livestock herding rather than pastoralist livelihoods**.⁵ Such institutional neglect is compounded by **mistrust between governments and pastoral communities**. While governments may hold a negative perception⁶ of mobility as anti-modern, archaic, and disorderly,⁷ pastoralist communities reject the imposition of governance that clash with traditional structures and identities, causing pastoral populations to mistrust their national governments.⁸

2.2.2.2 Lack of access to services

Pastoral areas are often **remote and underdeveloped zones where state presence is limited and service provision scarce**. Pastoralist populations, therefore, have limited access to basic services (health, education, etc.), state and administrative services (land tenure services, civil registration, security services, justice system, etc.), and services related to their livelihoods (veterinary health, credit and banking institutions, insurance providers, etc.).

Service provision for pastoral populations is also **difficult to organise** between different local authorities. In Niger, the management and maintenance of pastoral water infrastructure is the responsibility of the regional councils. Such councils are located far from the infrastructures and cannot follow closely the execution of contracts or maintenance. Communes, which would be closer and better able to follow such issues, lack legitimacy in managing infrastructures that do not only benefit their constituents but also mobile populations.

Finally, some services are **not adapted to mobility** and pastoralist livelihoods. Schooling is difficult for pastoralists' children, who sometimes leave their home areas for more than four months a year. Curricula are often also not adapted to pastoralist livelihoods: The teaching language in francophone countries widely remains French, which is rarely spoken in pastoral and remote areas. In a 2017 study, only 3-4% of the pastoral youth of Burkina Faso's Sahel region were attending school.

¹ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

² African Union, 'Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security', 2003. Retrieved [here](#).

³ APESS, 'Le financement public dans l'élevage au Sahel depuis 10 ans : un double sous-investissement', 2014. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Over the decade however, the share of budget allocated to the livestock sector seems to have increased. In Mali, spending increased from 4% to 18% between 2000 and 2010.

⁵ APESS, 'Le financement public dans l'élevage au Sahel depuis 10 ans : un double sous-investissement', 2014. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ This negative perception is present in some governments as well as donors. EU Member States tend to have a similar perception of mobile populations in Europe.

⁷ IIED, 'Farmer-Herder conflict in Africa: re-thinking the phenomenon?', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

2.2.2.3 Governance and representation crisis

Pastoral societies are also made vulnerable by a **lack of representation in national and local institutions**. This limited political representation is exacerbated by remote physical location, mobility and mistrust in institutions. This prevents pastoralists from having a voice in national debates and being able to advocate for policies adapted to their needs and to the specificities of mobile livelihoods.

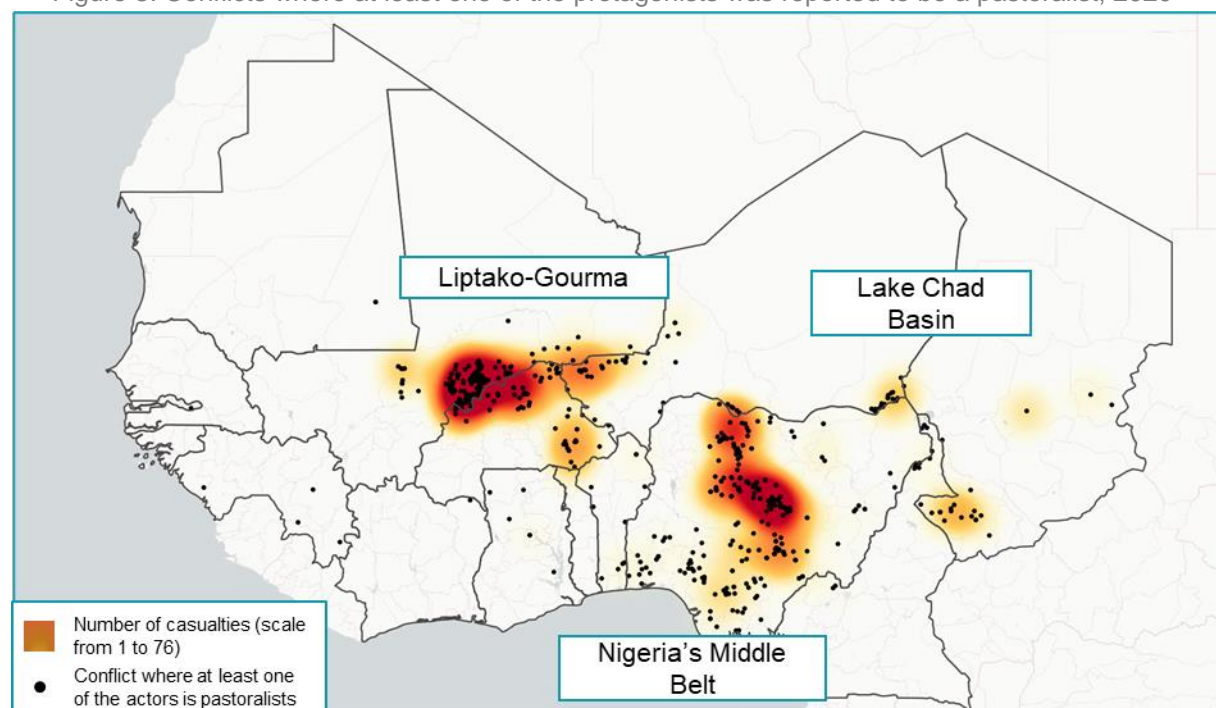
Locally, **customary and statutory systems are undermined by endemic challenges of rural governance** (corruption, impunity, politicisation). In the Liptako-Gourma for instance, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have broken down in part as the population lost trust in leaders involved in land sales and property speculation associated with the privatisation of land.¹ In addition, development plans which tend to benefit a handful of powerful and privileged people have put a strain on good governance at the local level.

2.3 PASTORALISTS, CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

A lack of access to resources and the increased vulnerabilities of farmers and herders have strained relationships, leading to an increased frequency and intensity of agro-pastoral conflicts. Between January and February 2021, among the incidents recorded by the early-warning system of RBM (*Réseau Bilatéral Maroobé*, pastoral organisation) in West Africa, 35% were attacks by armed groups, and 29% agro-pastoral conflicts.² This section examines how the vulnerabilities of pastoralist societies have intensified conflicts and violence at the local level and how pastoralists interact with larger scale conflicts in the region.

2.3.1 VULNERABILITIES ARE INCREASING OCCURRENCE OF DEADLY LOCAL CONFLICT

Figure 3: Conflicts where at least one of the protagonists was reported to be a pastoralist, 2020



Conflicts around resources, which have always existed, are now **increasingly violent, as endogenous resolution mechanisms and non-violent mediation are impaired by economic changes, the**

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² RBM, 'Bi-monthly bulletin on information watch and impact of COVID-19 on pastoral households', January 2021.

intensification of competition around resources and a governance crisis. This trend of violent resolution is further compounded by an incendiary narrative around pastoralist societies, which are often associated with criminal and terrorist activities. While the number of fatalities from farmer-herder conflicts is difficult to assess, in 2020, ACLED reported 646 events causing 2,039 fatalities, in which one of the two parties was identified as pastoralists.

It is worth noting that some scholars consider the use of the terminology 'farmer-herder conflicts' to be simplistic as it implies that farmers and herders are watertight categories (even if farmers can have herds, pastoralists can keep crops, etc.), and it does not fully capture the diverse drivers and consequences of conflict in the region. It could also suggest that conflicts are inevitable because of clashing identities or socio-professional situations, which is not accurate.¹

2.3.1.1 Intensification of conflicts over access to resources

While resource scarcity is certainly a strain on farmer-herder relationships, scarcity itself is not alone the cause of conflict. Indeed, conflicts occur in places of abundance of resources as well. As such, conflict may be more due to **access to and control of a resource**, rather than merely the existence of the resource.²

Such conflicts have been intensified by the **privatisation of land and the failure of traditional systems to negotiate access to resources.** The traditional system of negotiated, flexible and non-exclusive access to resources has given way to exclusive and individual land use and control.³ Direct control of resources is often awarded to sedentary populations (farmers), while mobile pastoralist populations have secondary rights, causing tensions which can lead to violent conflicts.⁴

Customary agreements on the use of resources have also been jeopardised **by changes in mobility patterns.** Groups using similar routes every year develop relationships with sedentary residents, adopting customary agreements around the use of resources over time. As patterns change, pastoralists may go through localities where they do not know the hosts (and do not speak the language), making the negotiation of agreements impossible and small disputes harder to resolve.⁵

In addition, the expansion of farming land causes the encroachment of farms onto pastoral areas and transhumance corridors. Encroachments disrupt the fluidity of movements which can lead to the divagation of cattle onto farming areas, causing damage to crop and leading to conflicts.⁶ To ensure better fluidity of movement, pastoral areas and corridors **are meant to be demarcated and equipped** with water points, bridges, transit and resting areas, grazing enclaves, veterinary and human health centres. However, such areas and services are often non-existent or poorly designed: In Chad for instance, while the transhumance and resting areas (*points de stationnement*) officially exist, they are not signalled enough and farms have encroached on them. In addition, knowledge on flows is insufficient for such resting areas to be adapted to flows and they are often (when existing) too small to accommodate large herds, which are then at risk of grazing on non-designated pastoral areas, causing conflicts with farmers.

Diversification and the introduction of new farming techniques have strained the symbiotic and complementary relationship between farmers and herders known as the *manure contract*.⁷ For instance, in Nigeria, the introduction of **artificial fertilizers** reportedly altered the relationship, as newly introduced crops (maize, sugarcane, Irish potatoes) do not require manure and produce no useful crop

¹ IIED, 'Farmer-Herder conflict in Africa: re-thinking the phenomenon?', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

³ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ African Union, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, 'Policy framework for pastoralism in Africa: Securing, protection and improving the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoralist communities', 2010. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict: tools for prevention and response', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

residues for cattle feed.¹ In Nigeria, where conflicts between farmers and herders are the most violent of the region, the relationship between farmers and herders is sometimes so damaged that some farmers reportedly **burn their fields after harvests to destroy any residue.**²

Focus Box 3: The impact of climate change on conflict³

While environmental changes are important contextual factors to conflict dynamics between farmers and herders in the Sahel, the direct effect of disasters on pastoralist populations is debated. In the Liptako-Gourma, **some actors seem to challenge the perceived impact of climate change on insecurity in the region and the narrative that the area is the scene of 'climate wars'**, i.e., that climate change-related increases in temperatures trigger droughts and floods and, in turn, jeopardise agricultural production and cause increased poverty. Poverty is then exploited by armed groups to recruit, causing insecurity in the area. Framing the insecurity situation as a result of climate change helps attract funding from international donors (by associating two fashionable triggers) but may be **over-simplistic and ignore deeply rooted socio-economic and political factors.** For instance, while the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s had a measured impact on poverty, and decimated herds in Mali, conflict was also tied to social factors. Farmers, who recovered faster from the droughts, invested their surplus in livestock and employed Fulani herders as herdsmen, which caused tensions between the two communities. Such tensions were compounded by the Malian government's prioritisation of modernising agriculture, causing frustration among pastoralists.

Climate change undeniably has contributed to the transformation of agro-pastoral systems and, by extension, to the intensification of conflicts. Establishing a direct relationship between climate change and growing violence, however, may prevent policymakers and actors from formulating appropriate responses to phenomena caused by a combination of more complex factors.

Finally, new actors reduce the possibility for conflict resolution and increase the intensity of conflicts. Large-scale and commercial investments (both international and national) in farming or livestock, have led to a decrease in farmers and herders' decision-making power **to resolve conflicts peacefully and negotiate compensations.** Farmers whose land belongs to investors and herders employed by absentee pastoralists are rarely able to negotiate for cattle killed or crops trampled. The conflict resolution capacities of authorities, and the trust in their rulings, are also eroded by the actions of wealthier land and cattle owners who have enough stature to influence, corrupt or pressure local authorities to resolve conflicts in their favour.

2.3.1.2 Incendiary narratives are exacerbating conflicts

In some regions, **pastoralists are framed as 'aliens' or foreigners, reinforcing a divide between sedentary and mobile populations which exacerbates tensions.** Mobile pastoral communities have often removed themselves from village politics but, in a context of increasing resource competition, this distance has morphed into mutual intimidation. The narrative of the 'foreign' herder is reinforced in countries which receive an influx of international transhumance.⁴ In Nigeria, which receives and sends international transhumance flows, the indigenous versus foreign narrative is especially present. This narrative, which appears at the local and national levels, as well as in **international news and in donor or implementing partner countries,** presents conflicts as religious- or ethnicity-based and may

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Criminality & reprisal attacks in Nigeria's Middle Belt', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

² This not only prevents the herds from grazing; fire also depletes the soil of nutrients, making it more prone to erosion and less fertile for crops.

³ ICG, 'The central Sahel: scene of new climate wars?', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

prevent actors and governments from developing appropriate interventions based on socio-economic factors of conflict.¹

2.3.2 PREDATORY PRACTICES AND NEW FRINGE PASTORALISM

A lack of access to services, limited formal education opportunities, limited market development and inequality within the livestock sector are exploited by non-state armed groups (NSAGs), which sometimes take on social regulation and conflict mediation roles. Most pastoralists are also victims of NSAGs and counter-insurgency efforts, further increasing their vulnerability.

2.3.2.1 Involvement in criminal activities

Research results are divided on the extent of pastoralists' involvement in illicit activities and religious extremism. Referred to as 'new fringe pastoralism', the idea, real or perceived, that pastoralists are deeply involved in criminal activities and religious extremism has an impact on exclusionary identity politics and the spread of the previously discussed incendiary narrative. Many interviewees mentioned the Global Terrorism Index of 2014, which established 'Fulani militias' (once referred to as 'Fulani herdsmen') as the 'fourth deadliest terrorist group' in the world² as an example of dangerous rhetoric, a generalisation which wrongly frames the Fulani ethnicity (composed of an estimated 18 million people) as a homogenous group and organised terrorist movement. While there are instances of pastoralists engaging in criminal activities, and of terrorist movements using propaganda specifically aimed at pastoralists, the relationship of pastoralists with NSAGs and criminal activities is more complex.

Insurgent movements have built support by **appealing to grievances and ethno-religious identities**, as is the case of Malam Dicko in Burkina Faso (leader of Ansarul Islam) or of the Katiba Macina, in Mali. These groups cater to young pastoralists' feelings of marginalisation. The Katiba Macina was created by Amadou Kouffa in 2012 on the basis of Fulani history: The name Macina refers to a XIXth century Fulani State, and Kouffa, a Fulani marabout, communicates in Fulani. In addition, the group's ideology is rooted in Fulani grievances about the erosion of pastoral resources in the inland Niger delta region of Mali and the marginalisation of pastoral communities.³

Pastoralists also join NSAGs as a **protection measure**. In Douentza and in the Ménaka-Tillabéri region (Mali), Fulanis joined the group Al-Mourabitoun early on, to ensure their protection against the Daoussahaq Berbers.⁴ The latter were reportedly taking advantage of their affiliation with the MNLA⁵ to solve long-standing conflicts in their favour.⁶

Such involvement or recruitment of pastoralists in NSAGs **varies across countries**. In Nigeria, interactions between farmer-herder conflicts, pastoral marginalisation and NSAGs seem **more tenuous**, as Fulani pastoralists are not reported to have joined Boko Haram in large numbers. This could be a result of the Nigerian Fulanis' strong hierarchical system, whose leaders distanced themselves from the extremist group early on.

Extremist groups may also act as **regulation authorities**, replacing the State where it is absent or failing. The Katiba Macina, and before that, MUJAO, have established areas where they impose their law and recruit on the narrative that they will bring change,⁷ solve conflicts that have been poorly mediated, or address issues on land tenure and resource access that have not been addressed. In Tillabéry (Niger), locals reportedly perceive the ISGS (Islamic State in the Greater Sahara) as a ruling

¹ Clingendael, 'Cattle, Conflict and Commerce: rethinking European interventions on pastoralism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

² Institute for Economics and Peace, 'Global Terrorism index', 2015. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 'Africa's Pastoralists: A new battleground for terrorism', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ ISS, 'Extrémisme violent, criminalité organisée et conflits locaux dans le Liptako-Gourma', 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad.

⁶ RBM and Mathieu Pellerin, 'Entendre la voix des éleveurs au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest : quel avenir pour le pastoralisme face à l'insécurité et ses impacts', 2021.

⁷ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

authority, competent in resolving land disputes, and protecting the population against cattle theft. Occupying the space of failing local authorities, NSAGs are slowly becoming **indispensable in all local peace and conflict mediation negotiations**.¹

While the lack of opportunities for the youth, coupled with the asset that pastoralists' knowledge of the terrain represents for traffickers has led some pastoral populations to also join **organised criminal networks**,² there is little evidence that this concerns more than a very limited number of pastoralists.³

The idea that pastoralists are disproportionately involved in NSAGs and criminal activities **leads to rackets and violence from vigilante and self-defence groups** as well as security forces against nomadic populations. Arrests and mass executions of nomadic populations have multiplied in recent years in the region.⁴

National and international armies have played a role in the ethnicisation of the conflict by relying on some ethno-political groups as allies. In Niger, for example, security forces have strongly relied on Arab Tuareg groups to fight NSAGs. The perception that the armies were fighting alongside an ethno-political group against another homogenous ethno-political group has reignited long-standing tensions between Peuls and Tuaregs. Niger suspended its work with ethno-political militias after realising it had triggered conflicts in 2017 and 2018.⁵

The ethnicisation of the conflict has also resulted in the creation of community-based self-defence groups, in Mali and Burkina Faso (where they are recognised and encouraged by the government) and to a lesser extent in Niger.⁶ In Burkina Faso, the Koglweogo and the *Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie*, both almost entirely comprised of sedentary members, are believed to use the guise of counter-terrorism operations to solve long-standing land conflicts. In most of the region, self-defence groups are aggravating the conflict, causing added insecurity and human rights violations.⁷

2.3.2.2 Pastoral livelihoods are vulnerable to predatory practices

Although only a small minority of pastoralists has joined NSAGs, most pastoralist groups are suffering from the crisis and conflict in the region. The sale of **stolen cattle is central to conflict economics** and an important source of funds for all the actors involved (extremists, bandits, self-defence groups, etc.). The practice, which is well established at the border between Mali and Niger, has expanded to the entire Liptako-Gourma region since 2012.⁸ Security forces involved in counter-terrorism activities also contribute to the loss of cattle through corruption schemes, exactions and rackets.⁹ **Protection measures adopted by livestock owners**, including the solicitation of armed protection from self-defence groups and changes in mobility patterns, increase the risks of conflict.

Conflict and insecurity also **prevent access to pastoral areas throughout the region**, further reducing the quantity of available resources. In the Liptako-Gourma area, almost all the pastoral lands are partly inaccessible because of insecurity.¹⁰ The evacuation, as a counter-terrorism measure, of the Lake Chad islands, which were an important source of pasture in the area, has reduced available grazing land

¹ RBM and Mathieu Pellerin, Ibid.

² FAO, *Burkina Faso, Mali et Niger : Plan de réponse régionale*, 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

³ UNECA, 'New Fringe Pastoralism: conflict and insecurity and development in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ CNDH-Niger, *Rapport de mission d'enquête, d'investigation, de vérification et d'établissement des faits relatifs aux allégations portant sur la disparition de 102 personnes dans le département d'Ayorou, région de Tillabéry*, 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ ICG, 'Side-lining the Islamic State in Niger's Tillabéry', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ ICG, *Sud-Ouest du Niger : prévenir un nouveau front insurrectionnel*, 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ RBM and Mathieu Pellerin, *Entendre la voix des éleveurs au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest : quel avenir pour le pastoralisme face à l'insécurité et ses impacts*, 2021.

⁸ ISS, *Extrémisme violent, criminalité organisée et conflits locaux dans le Liptako-Gourma*, 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ RBM and Mathieu Pellerin, Ibid.

¹⁰ RPCA, *Pastoral situation in the context of COVID-19*, 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

along the transhumance route for herders. Similarly, the securitisation of the border between Niger and Nigeria has reduced the possibility for locals to access water points.¹

2.3.2.3 Thwarted mobility patterns and forced displacement

Insecurity and violent conflict around border areas are making some established transhumance corridors more dangerous. **This is forcing pastoralists to adopt new routes, sometimes exacerbating conflicts between farmers and herders.**² For instance, in the Lake Chad Basin, one of the three main transhumance corridors, linking Borno State (Nigeria) to Darfur (Sudan) has become too dangerous to use for transhumance. The other two corridors are therefore overcrowded, resulting in tensions between transhumant and sedentary populations.

Insecurity can also cause forced immobilisation and the sedentarisation of pastoralists. In the Liptako-Gourma area, and particularly in Mali, transhumance is not safe anymore and large numbers of pastoralists have abandoned their semi-nomadic patterns. Similarly in Burkina Faso, pastoralists have chosen paths and resting areas that are closer to safer urban centres. As farmers follow the same pattern and farm closer to towns, the concentration of people and herds in and around urban areas causes more tensions as populations compete for a smaller amount of land and resources.

In situations of conflict, pastoralists report that **they now choose transhumance routes solely to avoid insecurity.**³ This means that movements are not following rational paths and that the new rangeland paradigm (see 2.1.3) does not apply.⁴ In addition to causing added tensions in areas where populations concentrate, insecurity reduces the productivity of pastoralist livelihoods, also decreasing the time resources have to regenerate and leading to land damage.

In coastal countries, the view that pastoralists are causing insecurity has led governments to adopt **policies than can restrict transhumance**, thwarting mobility patterns. For example, in the Benue state of Nigeria, when an open grazing ban was implemented, it caused an influx of pastoralists in the neighbouring state of Nasarawa and intercommunal violence intensified as a result.⁵

While it is sometimes **difficult to define forced displacement for mobile populations**, it is estimated that 60%-70% of displaced populations, internally or across borders, are pastoralists in the Horn of Africa and in the Sahel.⁶ Data on the forced displacement of pastoralists is complicated to estimate, **as herders may be more likely to be hosted by communities, they know along the routes than in camps**, especially when moving in small numbers. They are also **less likely to register as refugees**, because of mistrust in institutions and States. Finally, even for pastoral populations in refugee or IDP camps, data on livelihoods is not consistently recorded and the exact number of pastoralists is not known.

Pastoralists who have been displaced by insecurity and are registered (and residing in refugee sites) often **have lost most or all of their herds**, causing added livelihood constraints. While efforts have been made by countries and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to host pastoralists and their herds, insecurity sometimes prevents pastoralists from keeping their cattle.

¹ Jeune Afrique, 'Peuls et djihadisme au Sahel : le grand malentendu', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² FAO, 'Burkina Faso, Mali et Niger : Plan de réponse régionale', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Clingendael, 'Between hope and despair: pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ ICG, 'The climate factor in Nigeria's Farmer-Herder violence', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ UNECA, 'New Fringe Pastoralism: conflict and insecurity and development in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

3. FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES ON PASTORALISM

Land tenure regimes and administrative subdivisions of the colonial era, which were mostly left unchanged in the first decades of independence in West Africa, fragmented pastoral areas. The association of pastoral livelihoods with desertification (the theory of the commons) as well as liberalisation and structural adjustment policies further disengaged the State from pastoral-related interventions.

Recent decades have seen an evolution of policies and frameworks on pastoralism, with (mostly) Sahelian countries adopting legislation in support of strategic mobility. Regionally, the African Union's 2010 first pan-African policy on pastoralism describes pastoralism as the most sustainable economic activity in the rangelands. However, the 2010s saw a rift developing between coastal and Sahelian countries, the former adopting legislation more protective of their own growing livestock sectors and increasingly viewed as conflating pastoralism with insecurity.¹

3.1 REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1.1 CONTINENTAL LEVEL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

3.1.1.1 The African Union policy framework on pastoralism

The African Union (AU) Commission developed a **Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa** in 2010, following consultations with various stakeholders and regional assessments of pastoralism. The framework recognises the rights of pastoralists to access services and to take part in political affairs. It is explicit in its support to strategic mobility and, therefore, stresses the importance of regional approaches and bilateral agreements around pastoral mobility.²

However, some actors point out that the open approach to strategic mobility laid out in the policy framework is not the overall philosophy of the AU. For instance, the **Livestock Development Strategy for Africa** (2015-2035) supports a shift towards ranching and suggests that the remaining transhumant livestock could be oriented towards a niche organic meat market.³

3.1.1.2 The ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance (1998)

The ECOWAS **Protocol on Transhumance** was adopted in 1998 and was, until recently, the only free movement agreement specifically targeted at transhumance activities on the continent.⁴ The ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance was adopted to safeguard regional livestock mobility. It recognises the economic value of transhumance and authorises free passage to animals and their herders across the borders of all member states. International transhumance must follow rules that were laid out in the protocol with the **aim of regulating movements, protecting animal health and avoiding conflicts.** Herders must be issued an International Transhumance Certificate (ITC) by authorities in the origin country, which indicates the destination of the herd and serves as proof of animal vaccination. The protocol also regulates the ratio of cattle per herder (one herdsman for 50 heads of cattle, at a minimum). Transhumance needs to follow the routes defined by member states, and each host country is responsible for establishing dates on which transhumance is allowed.⁵

¹ Grain de Sel, 'Une brève histoire du pastoralisme dans les politiques publiques', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

² African Union, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, 'Policy framework for pastoralism in Africa: Securing, protection and improving the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoralist communities', 2010. Retrieved [here](#).

³ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ IGAD's member states endorsed a transhumance protocol in late 2020.

⁵ ECOWAS, 'Decision A/DEC.5/10/98 - Relating to the regulations on transhumance between ECOWAS member states', 1998. Retrieved [here](#).

However, the Protocol **focuses on control more than flexibility**¹ and neither mentions access to resources nor recommends the involvement of pastoralists themselves in its implementation (choice of dates, choice of routes, etc.).²

As a whole however, the ECOWAS position is not particularly open to transhumance. The implementation regulation of the Protocol (2003) refers to pastoralism as a relic of the past while the Strategic Action Plan for the Transformation of the Livestock sector in ECOWAS favours ranching and defines transhumance as a 'major problem of the subregion'.³

In addition, not all member states share a positive view of international transhumance. In April 2018, ECOWAS ministers, faced with concerns over growing insecurity in the Sahel and conflicts between herders and farmers, met to consider changing international transhumance rules and tightening cross-border movements.⁴ Coastal states (Nigeria, in particular) appear to favour a renegotiation of the Protocol as they increasingly link pastoralism with insecurity in national legislations.

Finally, the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance suffers from challenges in its implementation. Border points and transhumance infrastructures are lacking, and the ITC is not available to all herders, who do not necessarily know where to obtain it. The delivery of ITC certificates was further impeded by the COVID-19 pandemic: In Burkina Faso, as decentralised services were operating at reduced capacity throughout most of the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of certificates for transhumance and the provision of vaccination services slowed down movement.

3.1.1.3 N'Djamena and Nouakchott Declarations (2013)

The 2013 N'Djamena declaration on the contribution of pastoral livestock herding to the security and development of the Saharo-Sahelian areas, is a common declaration by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sudan, affirming the importance of pastoralism from a security standpoint. It states that pastoralism, 'as one of the main legal and peaceful activities in the [area], forms a crucial line of defence against insecurity in the region'.⁵ The Declaration also recognises the importance of the reinforcement of pastoral livelihoods' resilience and acknowledges the role of pastoralism in economic and social development as well as in land and environmental management. Finally, the Declaration underlines the importance of including pastoralists in local and national governance mechanisms.

The high-level Nouakchott summit followed the N'Djamena Declaration and included Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal as well as regional organisations (CILSS, ECOWAS, WAEMU) and international donors (World Bank and FAO). The **Nouakchott Declaration on pastoralism – Mobilizing jointly an ambitious effort to ensure pastoralism without borders (October 2013)** reaffirmed the importance of pastoralism and of the resilience of pastoralist populations to the security of the region.

3.1.2 BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

West African countries have also entered bilateral agreements on transborder transhumance. Mali appears especially active in this regard and has signed bilateral transhumance agreements with most of its neighbours. **Most bilateral agreements are signed between Sahelian countries**, which are departure and transit countries of transhumance, and there are few agreements between coastal states (receivers of transhumance) or between coastal states and Sahelian states.

¹ FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

² ECOWAS, Ibid.

³ FMM West Africa, Ibid.

⁴ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ 'N'Djamena Declaration on the contribution of pastoral livestock herding to the security and development of the Saharo-Sahelian areas', 2013. Retrieved [here](#).

Cross-border transhumance agreements are also being discussed at the local level: In July 2021, a meeting in Niamey supported by the PRAPS (World Bank-funded programme, see 4.2) set out the basis for an agreement on transhumance between the Diffa region (Niger) and the Lac region (Chad).¹

3.2 NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS²

3.2.1 PASTORAL CODES

Sahelian countries have increasingly adopted over-arching pastoral legislation in the last two decades. After Niger's first Rural Code in 1993 (and the 2010 ordinances to implement it further), Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania all adopted comprehensive pastoral legislation (respectively in 2000, 2002 and 2003). However, the trend seems limited to Sahelian countries. Coastal countries, like Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria or The Gambia do not have over-arching national legislation on pastoralism.

Policies and legislations from past eras are still common, especially in the Lake Chad Basin region. In Chad, for instance, no national legislation has been passed to address the specificities of pastoralism since independence. A Pastoral Code was adopted by the Parliament in 2014 but was subsequently blocked by the Government and the Constitutional Court. In Cameroon, a pastoral code is being debated since the 2000s, but has not yet been signed into law.

Because of the strong links between pastoral regulation and land rights, pastoral codes are often tied to land tenure, which can make the adoption of over-arching or national regulations complex. A pastoral code project has been designed in Senegal, for instance, since 2014, but has not yet been adopted, reportedly due to delays in the adoption of the land tenure reform. In Nigeria, where land rights are controlled at the state or local council level, regulation on transhumance and pastoralism remains controlled at the state level: Four states (Ekiti, Edo, Benue and Taraba) have, thus, passed restrictions on open grazing since 2016.

3.2.2 TRENDS IN PASTORAL LEGISLATION

3.2.2.1 Mobility rights

Pastoral legislations differ between countries, primarily in their approach to mobility rights. As explained above, **Sahelian states, of more variable semi-arid climate, are more inclined to allow and even facilitate mobility and flexibility,** while coastal states, with a less variable sub-humid climate, tend to be proponents of ranching (sedentary livestock herding) and fixed grazing areas. Niger's 2010 Ordinance on pastoralism, which recognises mobility as a fundamental right, is viewed as a best practice in allowing flexibility of movement. The State has no right to grant private land concessions in the pastoral zone (a delimited area of the country) if they prevent mobility for pastoralists.³

In other cases, however, the protection of mobility has been accompanied by a push for sedentarisation, as is the case in Burkina Faso: While the Pastoral Law of 2002 protected the mobility of livestock, a 2007 application decree emphasised the promotion of ranching, sedentarisation and the modernisation of traditional livestock herding.⁴

In coastal countries, mobility is increasingly seen as a source of insecurity, and countries have adopted policies to control and restrict transhumance. In 2019, Nigeria launched a ten-year National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) meant to reduce the movement of cattle and promote

¹ APESS, 'En gestation, un accord bilatéral sur la gestion de la transhumance entre la région de Diffa (Niger) et la région du Lac (Tchad)', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

² For more information on pastoral laws in each country of the SLC region, please refer to country reports of the State of Migration Governance, Altai for the EUTF, 2021.

³ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict in the Sudano-Sahel: a review of the literature', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Clingendael, 'Between hope and despair: pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

ranching and sedentarisation. While laws to limit mobility to certain areas restrict the flexibility (and, therefore, the adaptability) of pastoralists' livelihoods, some researchers think they could also help reduce conflicts between farmers and herders. However, these need to be implemented effectively and linked to sufficient investments in pastoral resources.

Focus Box 4: The NLTP – Open grazing vs. ranching in Nigeria

The National Livestock Transformation Plan aims to reform Nigeria's livestock system, by curtailing open grazing to reduce risks of conflict between farmers and herders. The plan intends to establish ranches and public grazing reserves and improve services around them. The NLTP suffers from political and popular divisions, as governors are perceived as either pro-herder or pro-farmer and populations perceive the plan as either benefitting one or the other. While the NLTP is still in very early stages of implementation, there are already fears that it may not take sufficiently into account the cultural implications of sedentarisation and, therefore, not be followed by all transhumant herders. In addition, studies have shown that bans on open grazing in states like Taraba and Benue have simply increased pressure and the risks of conflict in neighbouring states (like Adamawa).

Reserves for grazing have also been created in the past with little success, as the local population feels little ownership over them, farmers are opposed to giving away land, and herders feel more at risk of cattle theft and epizootic diseases in delimited and concentrated areas. Nigeria had already created grazing reserves in 1965 and Ghana had created state-based ranches. In both cases, herders complained of the lack of access to services (water, forage, fodder) within the confines of the reserves, as the State seldom undertook the upkeep and maintenance of the zones.¹

3.2.2.2 Access to resources and land rights

In West and Central Africa, **access to resources for pastoralists often heavily relies on land tenure laws**, and the approaches differ greatly between countries, often depending on the degree of decentralisation and institutional support for pastoralism.

In Niger, for instance, where the legislation on pastoralism is considered among the most advanced in the region, pastoralists were granted land use rights over the entire pastoral zone (north of the 300-400 mm isohyet) in 1993, and this was reaffirmed in 2010 when the entire pastoral land (the zone as well as transhumance corridors, pastoral enclaves, grazing lands, etc.) was classified as public domain, protecting it from occupation by agriculture.² The Rural Code of 1993 has also strengthened pastoralists' control of resources in their home areas, by creating *terroirs d'attache* where pastoralists can apply 'priority of use rights' on natural resources.

Some countries, like Mali, have also supported the elevation of customary law to the same status as national law. Since 2017, pastoralists can own customary land certificates and land can be collectively used and owned by communities. Newly established land commissions can facilitate consultations on land issues (Agricultural Law). In addition to the duality of customary and State law, Mali's strict decentralisation policy gives significant power to traditional and local authorities to manage the use of resources and gather stakeholder support.³

In contrast, in Chad, customary ownership of land is not recognised and the applicable law on land ownership, dating back to 1967, imposes a strict productive land use clause, which may discriminate against pastoral use in favour of farming.

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Responses to conflicts between farmers and herders in the Middle Belt of Nigeria: mapping past efforts and opportunities for violence prevention', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

² FMM West Africa, 'Regional policies and response to manage pastoral movements within ECOWAS', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

³ FMM West Africa, Op. Cit.

Land protection has also had consequences for farmers and herders, as is the case in Burkina Faso, for instance. The 1997 Forestry Law, as well as the privatisation of protected areas and hunting reserves in the 1990s, have led to the eviction of communities and restricted access to land for both farmers and herders. NSAGs are thus able to recruit amongst these communities by committing to restore their access to lands.¹

3.2.2.3 Access to services

Few countries have specific provisions for access to services catered to the needs of nomadic populations, and most existing initiatives are supported by external actors. For instance, in Mali, the mobile health teams supported and funded by AVSF were included in the Algiers Agreement, signed between the coalition of groups in the north and the central government. In Chad, the AFD supported the PASTOR programme, which aimed at providing education for nomadic populations.

Programmes also lack financial and human resources, which jeopardizes their efficiency, as is the case for the Nigerian Commission for Nomadic Education. The Commission was established in 1989 with the goal to socially integrate pastoralists through the provision of mobile basic education and livelihoods skills. The education is tailored to the specific needs of pastoralists (modernisation of techniques of rearing cattle, dairy processing, vaccinations, etc.). However, the programme suffers from a lack of adequate funding, human resources and infrastructures, preventing it from achieving its targets:² Since the establishment of the Commission, fewer than 46,000 people have graduated, out of an estimated 3.3 million nomadic children in need of education.³

3.2.3 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PASTORAL LAWS

Pastoral laws in West Africa are often unevenly implemented, as decentralisation is not effective, and users are not aware of their rights. Poor inclusion of pastoralists in the design of the laws at the national level sometimes separates these frameworks from the realities faced by the population, thus increasing distrust between populations and the State.⁴ In addition, decentralised services' inexistence and/or poor capacity to implement, explain, and sensitise the population to these laws present an obstacle to their implementation and to populations' buy-in. In Niger, while the legislation to protect the rights of nomadic herders is viewed as one of the strongest in the region and was adopted following an inclusive process of discussion, pastoralists lack the knowledge to enforce their rights⁵ and the code is scarcely implemented.

Focus Box 5: The impact of COVID-19 prevention measures on pastoralism⁶

COVID-19 prevention measures put in place in West and Central African countries had dire direct and indirect impacts on the mobility resilience of pastoral populations. In May 2020, when borders closed, pastoralists returning from coastal countries were stopped at the borders. The high concentration of livestock at the border points increased the risk of conflicts (especially as May is the beginning of the crop year, and fields were being planted) as well as epizootic diseases. In February 2021, the early-warning system put in place by RBM identified 1.5 million animals and 57,000 herders blocked along transhumance corridors. Of them, 43% were stopped for security reasons and 30% were blocked by COVID-19 restrictions. The closure of markets also put a strain on pastoral economies.

¹ ICG, 'The central Sahel: scene of new climate wars?', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² Search for Common Ground, 'Responses to conflicts between farmers and herders in the Middle Belt of Nigeria: mapping past efforts and opportunities for violence prevention', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

³ NCNE, 'Results', consulted in November 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Clingendael, 'Cattle, Conflict and Commerce: rethinking European interventions on pastoralism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

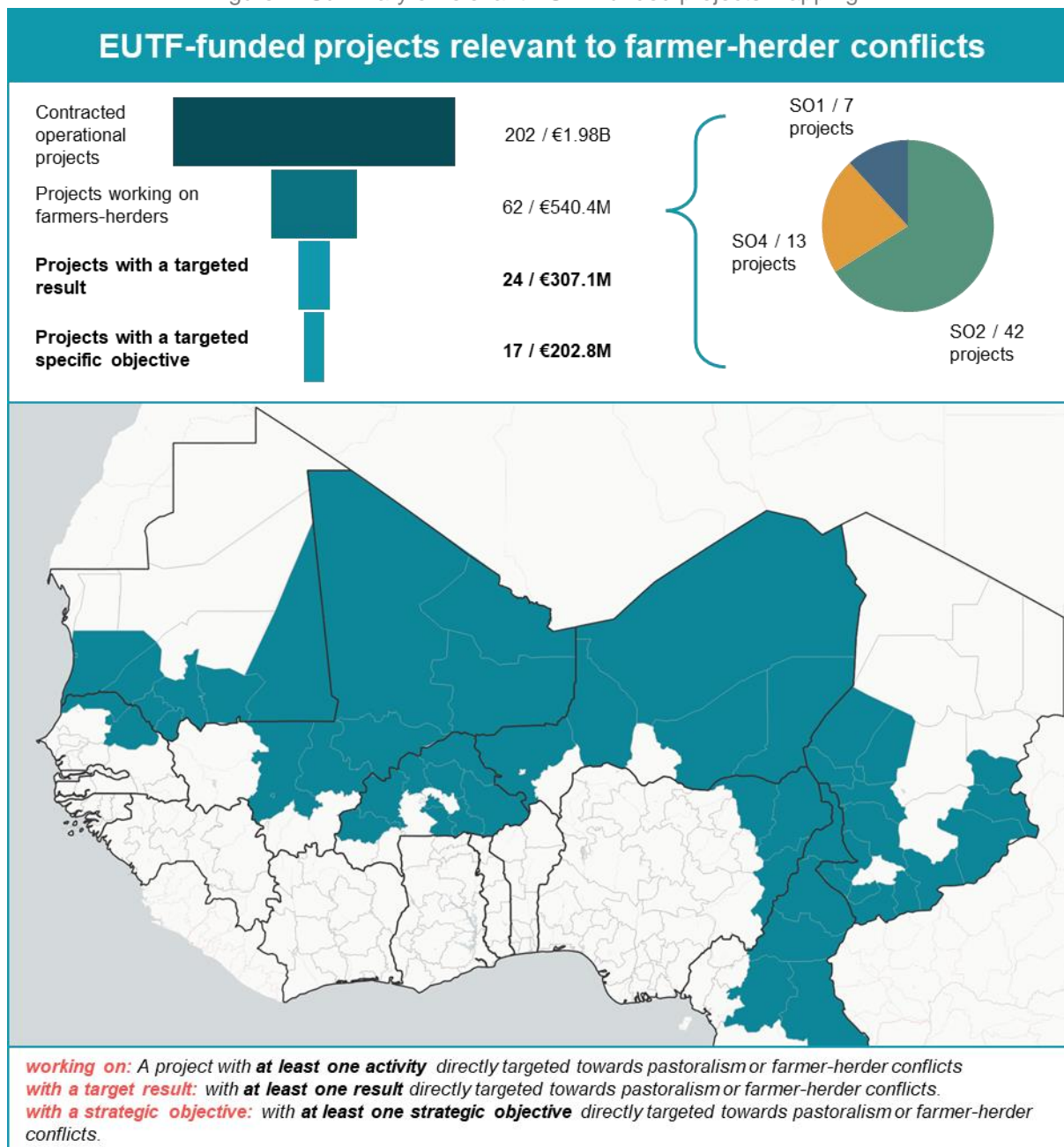
⁵ ICG, 'Side-lining the Islamic State in Niger's Tillabéry', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ RBM, 'Bi-monthly bulletin on information watch and impact of COVID-19 on pastoral households', January 2021.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE EUTF AND OTHER DONORS

4.1 EUTF-FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Figure 4: Summary of relevant EUTF-funded projects mapping¹



As of November 2021, 62 EUTF-funded projects (€540.4M) implemented at least one activity specifically targeting (53 projects) farmer-herder conflicts or pastoral livelihoods or taking these into account (9). **This represents 31% of projects currently funded (contracted and operational) by the EUTF and 27% of the funding.** However, these 62 projects are part of 27 programmes (out of 107),

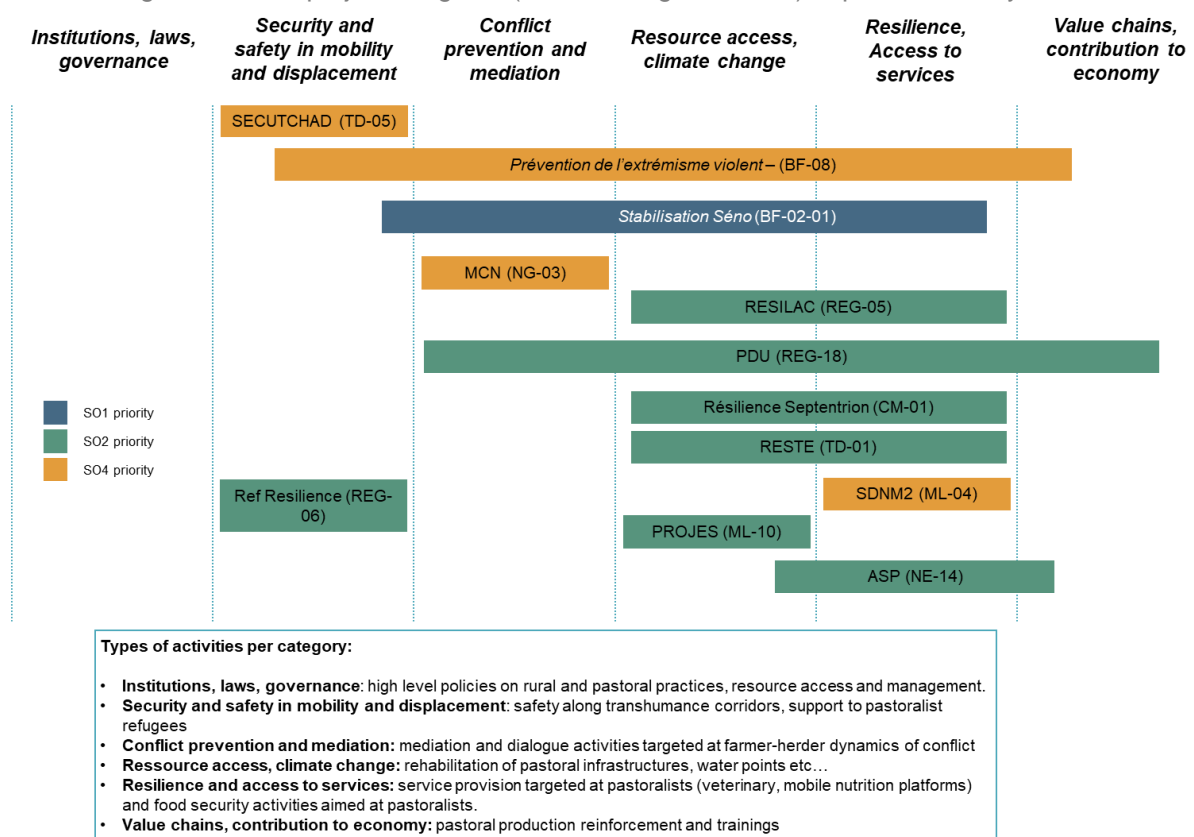
¹ Status and budgets are accurate as of November 2021, at the time of review. A full list of projects considered relevant, as well as an explanation of the review process can be found in the annexes.

including the PDU programme which was designed almost entirely to deal with farmer-herder relations and pastoralist resilience. Twenty-three of the 62 relevant projects (€141.9M) are already completed.

Most relevant projects are implemented in Sahelian countries, and only a few projects were identified as relevant in coastal countries, including in Nigeria, although it is a centre of farmer-herder conflicts.

Most relevant EUTF-funded projects tend to include considerations on farmer-herder relations throughout their activities, rather than specifically targeting them. The topics influencing farmer-herder relations are wide-ranging, as studied in the previous sections. This may explain why most projects that are considered relevant do not have a result or specific objective targeted at pastoralism or farmer-herder conflicts themselves. (Of the relevant projects, 38 do not have a specifically targeted result or objective.) Even projects with dedicated objectives do not focus solely on the causes and consequences of farmer-herder conflicts.

Figure 1: EUTF projects targeted (with one targeted result) at pastoralism, by theme



While diverse activities are implemented by projects on the topic, **farmer-herder conflicts are mostly mainstreamed in the resilience projects** (42 relevant projects of a total of 63 SO2-priority projects).¹ In the security and conflict-prevention aspects, 13 EUTF-funded projects implement activities related to farmer-herder conflicts. Seven relevant projects are focused on employment creation (SO1). While mobility is a primary component of pastoral livelihoods, no SO3 (migration management and governance) project was identified as relevant in this review.

Most EUTF-funded projects that are relevant to the farmer-herder conflicts implement activities covering a wide range of aspects, in a transversal way. Most of them include activities on the

¹ EUTF-funded SLC projects are classified as belonging to one of four strategic objectives: SO1 – Greater economic and employment opportunities; SO2 – Strengthening the resilience of communities and particularly the most vulnerable, including refugees and other displaced people; SO3 – Improved migration management in countries of origin, transit and destination; and SO4 – Improved governance and conflict prevention and reduction of forced displacement and irregular migration.

strengthening of local resource management systems as a first step to prevent conflicts between communities. These interventions are accompanied by activities to reinforce the resilience of pastoral and farming populations, including building infrastructure, providing livestock and giving trainings. Few projects implement activities to support the commercialisation of livestock or the strengthening of value chains or implemented activities aimed at supporting the mobility of pastoralists.

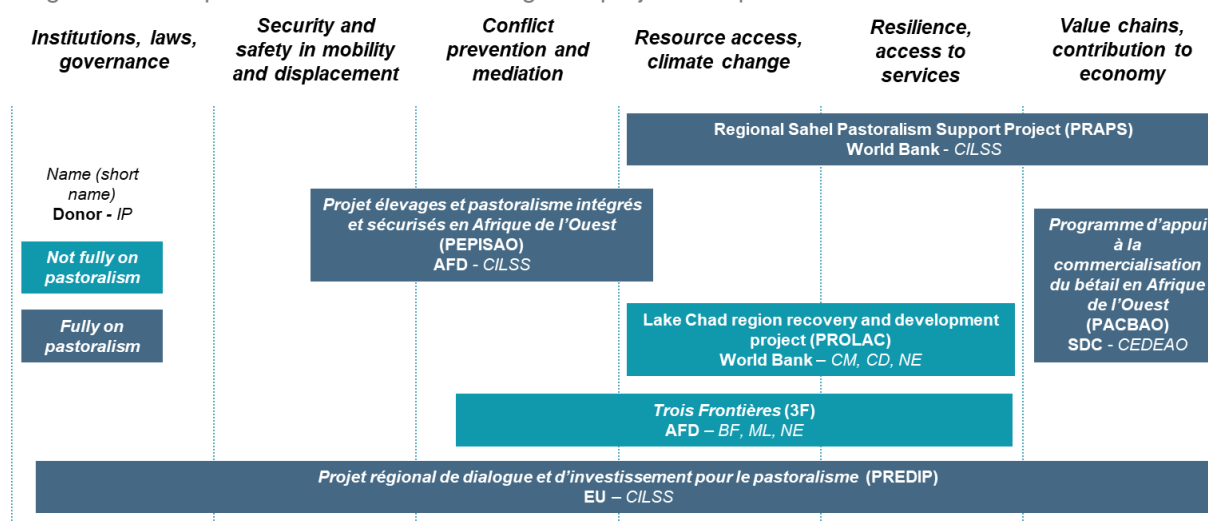
Most projects tend to focus on agro-pastoralists rather than transhumant or nomadic pastoralists. This can be explained in that agro-pastoralists are probably more numerous in the region,¹ and nomadic and transhumant pastoralists are more difficult for partners to reach. In addition, of a total of 1,079,786 people reported to have received food-security assistance (as of June 2021, data from the MLS, EUTF common indicator 2.4) for whom the livelihood was known, 44% were farmers, 43% agro-pastoralists and 13% pastoralists. It is also worth noting that 16 projects (of 39 reporting information under this indicator) did not provide detailed information on the livelihoods of their beneficiaries (farmer, pastoralist, agro-pastoralist).

According to some implementing partners (IP), the large amount of funding provided by the EUTF has increased the geographical coverage and sustainability of existing initiatives. It is the case of the PDU HD project, which supports mediation networks in the Sahel. The project started in 2014 (funded by Danish and Dutch funds) on the countries of the tri-border region (Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso) and was able to increase its activities to include Mauritania and Chad in 2019 after receiving EUTF funding. EUTF-funding has also supported the building of larger amounts of infrastructures than would have been possible with smaller funding, possibly increasing the sustainability of activities.

4.2 OTHER ACTORS

The number of initiatives carried out and funded by external donors related to farmer-herder conflicts has increased in recent decades, as a result of increased awareness among donors and partners of the variety of topics that impact these conflicts and the vulnerabilities created by them.

Figure 5: Examples of non-EUTF active regional projects on pastoralism and farmer-herder conflicts



The World Bank is a key actor in projects supporting pastoralism in West Africa. The Bank tends to focus on resilience and resource access for pastoralists, as a way to reduce vulnerabilities and eventually conflict. **The AFD has also been a long-standing donor for pastoral-related projects.**

¹ As explained in 2.1.1, there is little data available on the specific type of mobility in which each pastoralist engages; however, agro-pastoralism seems to concern a wider part of the pastoral population.

While most projects used to focus on infrastructure construction, the agency has recently started to implement more activities on peacebuilding and social cohesion.

The SDC is a key partner of local pastoral organisations: Through the provision of direct support, the Cooperation has built the capacities of RBM and APESS (both regional pastoral organisations) to influence policymaking and has ensured they possess systems that are strong enough to be selected as implementing partners by external donors. The SDC, through its Pastoralism subgroup, has also led several **research projects** on pastoralism (e.g. the learning exercise CapEx in 2016). Finally, the organisation uses this knowledge and the trust of organisations to support projects in domains like commercialisation, and value chains of the livestock sector.

NGOs, such as Search for Common Ground, also tend to be **very active in conflict prevention** in West Africa, as is the Henry Dunant Humanitarian Centre (funded by the EUTF through the PDU programme).

International actors have also supported the building of tools to support programming in relation to pastoralism. For instance, ACF leads the SIGSAHEL, which analyses resources in pasture and water throughout the region as well as the movements of pastoralists and publishes monthly national and regional reports.

Finally, in Sahelian countries, international donors provide a large amount of direct budget support to states' agricultural budgets. For instance, in 2010, foreign donors provided 86% of Niger's agricultural budget.¹

¹ APESS, 'Le financement public dans l'élevage au Sahel depuis 10 ans : un double sous-investissement', 2014. Retrieved [here](#).

5. MAIN LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICES

5.1 CONFLICT MEDIATION AND RESOLUTION

Conflicts between farmers and herders have taken place for centuries, and populations **have developed traditional and customary resolution techniques over the years**. However, as explained previously, these conflict management techniques are unable to cope with the current level of violence in the Sahelian countries, and some have partially or entirely collapsed. As a result, localised conflict situations remain unresolved and sometimes degenerate into violent confrontations or feed into larger conflicts. **Partners and researchers have underlined the importance of addressing these local conflicts**, and regret that a significant majority of the security response (large security actors, such as MINUSMA, etc.) has focused on regional groups, overlooking local conflicts.

According to interviews and research, the principal best practice in programming in response to local conflicts revolves around the **reinforcement of existing community-based committees and traditional conflict management systems**. Most partners have identified the **building of a peace architecture at the local level**, a key aspect of addressing and mediating local conflicts.¹

5.1.1 LOCALISED CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND UNDERSTANDING

The development of localised knowledge and understanding of the situation is widely noted as a pre-requisite to mediate, resolve, and prevent local conflicts. Understanding the ramifications and the actors of micro-conflicts ensures better sustainability of activities and provides possibilities for the resolution of larger frustrations.

Conflicts between farmers and herders tend to be caused by several frustrations and drivers, which are not similar between regions. Partners have noted the importance of utilising **localised knowledge to target more efficiently the dividers and the commonalities** in each context, and to **concentrate conflict mediation activities on the geographic areas** (markets, etc.) where they will be the most effective. In addition, **regularly conducted conflict scans** provide up-to-date knowledge of the situation and enable programming to be adapted accordingly.

Developing and updating conflict scans requires expertise, time and resources, while adapting programming to the dynamics at play requires flexibility in project implementation. Search for Common Ground reported that, in Yemen, a **conflict sensitivity hub**, funded by the UK Government, was established as a resource centre for projects that lacked expertise or localised knowledge of the conflicts. Partners could benefit from consultants and toolkits to reinforce the conflict sensitivity of their projects. However, while conflict sensitivity in programming has developed in recent years, it may sometimes remain a demand from the donor, and not systematically be included in programming, which also undermines the flexibility of programmes to adapt to changing situations.

5.1.2 ADDRESSING AND MEDIATING LOCAL CONFLICTS

Supporting **dialogue between communities** and creating the space for the parties to discuss and resolve issues through conciliation as an alternative to violence is the main aspect of activities aiming to address local conflicts. Building relationships between leaders of different communities is viewed as an efficient way to soothe relations between groups, even if the creation of such spaces requires long-term funding and may not yield tangible results.

¹ Clingendael, 'Cattle, Conflict and Commerce: rethinking European interventions on pastoralism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

5.1.2.1 Formal or customary justice?

Local authorities may offer a space for the resolution of conflicts but also face challenges in doing so. Local authorities lack the financial and human resources necessary to efficiently address complex local conflicts, and building their capacities is difficult. In some countries, decentralisation and the strengthening of local state services can lead to more real or perceived corruption, for instance. The turnover in local authorities may also prove a challenge to the long-term impact of interventions. Projects noted that, when working with authorities as a part of conflict mediation activities, **it was important to include a large number of people, to mitigate risks around the lack of skills or resources of a single individual as well as for staff turnover.** In some areas, however, where the state has almost entirely collapsed, working with local authorities must be accompanied by a sustained intervention to support the return of all state services, in order to first rebuild the relationship between the population and the state.

Finally, sustainably mediating local conflicts often relies on **finding compromises** and ensuring that no frustrations are left unaddressed, as this could lead to further tensions. Formal justice systems determine a 'winner' and a 'loser' rather than providing possibility for compromise. **In this context, relying on customary authorities and traditional leaders, rather than local authorities, might be more efficient.** Traditional leaders hold legitimacy and credibility within the community, sometimes more so than civil servants. In addition, traditional conflict management relies on **participatory mechanisms**, where both parties can express their points of view, making the decisions more likely to be followed by both parties.¹ **Building the capacities of traditional leaders**, thus, is an important part of rebuilding and strengthening local peace architectures and ensuring the fairness and quality of the existing systems.

5.1.2.2 Reinforcing existing committees

As explained above, mechanisms for conflict management have been developed over time and tend to be dormant rather than inexistent. **Most partners have expressed that supporting existing systems is more efficient and sustainable than creating new committees.** Indeed, putting in place new committees as part of interventions is considered poorly efficient, as these committees falter, discontinue meeting and stop functioning at the end of the project and of the funding.

Developing a localised understanding and knowledge of actors is very important to the **identification of existing or formerly existing committees and conflict resolutions mechanisms.** In cases when no mechanism can be identified, partners have found that first convincing the actors of the importance of a mechanism and then letting them choose the members and organisation is more efficient than building a committee following external rules. **Overall, most partners have underlined the need for projects not to be the precursor of committees.**

Inclusion of vulnerable groups

Mechanisms need to be reinforced to withstand possible conflict and violent extremism. Partners identified the **inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups** as a main best practice to support the efficacy, sustainability and reach of the committees.

Both customary and formal conflict resolution mechanisms tend to be exclusive of women and youth. However, women have been identified as a resourceful group to support the end of conflict and violence, as well as an important player in early-warning systems.² Youth are the most at risk and the most involved in conflict as well and are less likely to implement decisions if they are adopted by groups that do not consider their points of view. **The inclusion of women, especially in areas where armed jihadist groups are present, is very challenging for partners,** and requires an understanding of what

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Responses to conflicts between farmers and herders in the Middle Belt of Nigeria: mapping past efforts and opportunities for violence prevention', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

² Clingendael, 'Cattle, Conflict and Commerce: rethinking European interventions on pastoralism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

is culturally acceptable in different regions. However, partners like Search for Common Ground noted that identifying women role models to slowly reach other groups and include them in conflict resolution mechanisms, enhances their efficiency.

Overall, the inclusion of marginalised communities in committees (resource management, peace and conflict-resolution) **requires time to train and convince the various stakeholders**. However, some partners have also attempted to make **inclusion more structured and data-based**. To this end, HD Centre has developed four criteria of inclusion for their mediation networks: geographic (people need to be from diverse areas in the intervention zone); socio-professional (representatives from herders, farmers, fishermen etc. must be included in the networks); socio-ethnic (varied ethnicities, even if they are of the same socio-professional background); and gender.

Ensuring the sustainability of committees

Ensuring that reinforced committees will continue operating at the end of the project is one of the main challenges of partners. Groups like these might not be adapted to mobility and wither during transhumance. **Partners identify that setting in place or reinforcing communications methods between different actors ensures better efficiency**. This can be achieved by reinforcing the digital literacy of stakeholders and providing them with the equipment (phones, etc.) or through understanding and supporting existing communication methods (e.g., scouts or messengers).¹

To ensure the sustainability of committees, partners also all noted that **no direct financial support should be provided to committee members**. Indeed, it is widely understood that, if projects fund the meetings of the committees, the members are more likely to stop attending when the project is complete. The creation of endogenous funding systems, therefore, can support the financial stability of the committees. The PDU HD project has supported its mediators' networks to put in place communal contribution systems. Another possibility, like that implemented by SECUTCHAD in Chad, is to advocate for local authorities to dedicate their budget to fund the committees. However, this is also challenging, given the lack of resources of most local authorities.

Finally, ensuring the sustainability of peace committees also relies on the **elaboration of conflict resolution rules**, that are shared with and understood by all (e.g., establishing fixed compensation for killing cattle etc.). These agreements, as well as measures adopted to prevent conflicts (prohibiting night grazing, etc.) should be agreed upon by all actors, ensuring that each group polices itself. To give these agreements the force of law, they should also be signed by the local authorities. **Written records of agreements are an important tool to avoid the escalation of violence**.

5.1.3 PREVENTING LOCAL CONFLICT

5.1.3.1 Early-warning systems

Peace committees can also be efficient resources for early-warning mechanisms and conflict prevention. **Their first role is to adequately identify threats and possible conflicts before they happen**. Members of peace committees need extensive training to identify threats. A challenge identified by partners is that committees tend to focus on existing conflicts and are harder to mobilise on prevention (e.g., identifying that a minor encroachment on corridors may escalate into a conflict). In Nigeria, the MCN project has reinforced Community Sensitivity Partnerships, which meet monthly to specifically identify threats. These meetings leverage the local knowledge of the committee members and may also identify quick prevention work (e.g., delimitating a corridor), which can curtail the escalation of conflict.

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict: tools for prevention and response in the Sudano-Sahel', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

The identification of threats relies on **extensive knowledge of the situation**. For instance, connecting peace committees with data collection tools on movements, enables communities to be warned of the arrival of herds. IOM's Transhumance Tracking Tool in Adamawa (Nigeria) is linked to an early-warning system reinforced by Search for Common Ground (funding by ICSP), ensuring communication between data gatherers and communities.

Committee members must also be trained to respond to threats. This includes supporting the development of relationships between communities, authorities, and security forces, if necessary, especially in conflictual environments like Nigeria. Establishing communications channels and training stakeholders to know **to whom and where to report threats** is important to prevent the escalation of conflicts.

5.1.3.2 Sensitisation

Local conflicts between farmers and herders are often worsened by incendiary narratives, spread locally and nationally by different actors. As part of their conflict prevention activities, most partners have included sensitisation activities to curtail these narratives and attempt to reduce conflicts. While it is difficult to assess the impact of sensitisation activities, some targeted actions are considered efficient to reduce conflict.

Several projects (PEV in Burkina Faso, PDU, Radio Jeunesse Sahel) have supported the training of **journalists in conflict sensitive reporting, with the aim to prevent the spread of incendiary narratives**. Even if little data exists on the impact of such initiatives, radio is the first source of information for youth in the Sahel and seven out of every ten young people listen to it regularly.¹ It is therefore important that journalists challenge the narrative that conflicts between farmers and herders are religious, ethnic or political only, and reduce potentially toxic simplification on the radio.

Research also points to the fact that **traditional days and cultural heritage activities are a good practice in the sensitisation and prevention of conflict**. In Burkina Faso, the PEV DJAM project found that events where multiple communities present their culture, craft and heritage helped rebuild ties between the communities. Search for Common Ground also found that cultural heritage activities are efficient in preventing conflict, provided that specific effort is made to include mobile communities.²

Finally, **research on the effect of pastoralism on the rangelands** and on the economic value-added of pastoralism can support a change in narratives: at the national level, to advocate for governments to reduce conflation between pastoralism and insecurity; and at the local level, to convince local authorities to facilitate pastoralist-related activities.

5.2 SECURITY AND STABILISATION

While 'small peace' interventions at the local level are important to prevent the escalation of local conflicts into generalised violence, most partners believe the civilian solution alone is limited when it comes to protracted conflict situations, like in the Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad Basin.

5.2.1 REBUILDING THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

Partners, therefore, have tried to implement activities to reinforce the security infrastructure in areas of conflict. However, this presents both programmatic and strategic risks. First, it is challenging for development actors to coordinate with military actors on the ground. While some partners mentioned Alliance Sahel as a possible space to start initiatives which ally development and military actors, the mechanisms of the fund appeared heavy for flexible development programming.

¹ OIF and Institut Kantar, 'Analyse de la consommation média des jeunes dans la région Sahel', 2020.

² Search for Common Ground, 'Pastoralism and conflict: tools for prevention and response in the Sudano-Sahel', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

Rebuilding the security architecture requires a large amount of funding and trainings but can help protect the pastoralist population. Security forces need to have access to remote areas, which requires equipment (vehicles), infrastructures and funding. In Mauritania and Chad, Nomadic or Camel Corps are considered good practices to police and securitise remote areas. These nomadic security forces, often using camels as a means of transportation, are efficient in both accessing remote zones and deterring thieves and attacks. In Chad, COGINTA, an NGO specialising in good governance of the security sector, has reinforced the Nomadic corps as part of the SECUTCHAD project (EUTF). The partner, however, regretted that working with the unit was difficult with EUTF funding, which is not adapted to working with the military.

However, increasing the securitisation of the conflict and the presence of security forces could also trigger a new source of conflict. Indeed, some partners fear the presence of security forces often leads to a reinforcement of the feeling of impunity as civilians are killed rather than tried, and security forces may be authors of exactions. This leads to further worsening of the relationship between security forces and communities. Partners have noted that activities in favour of the security actors, therefore, require long-term investments on training of the security forces, and a commitment to the reinforcement of the accountability of the security sector.

5.2.2 REBUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SECURITY FORCES AND THE POPULATION

In addition to trainings and accountability, partners stressed the need to rebuild the relationship between the population and the security forces, both by **supporting the security forces in fulfilling their responsibility to protect the population and by rebuilding communications channels between them.** To this aim, the *Groupe Nomade* in Mauritania is often called on to provide services to the populations in remote areas, which has reportedly helped build back trust between pastoralists and the security forces.¹

One keyway in which partners mentioned the security forces could act to improve the protection of pastoralists is the fight against cattle theft. Training security forces to locate and recover stolen cattle could help appease tensions between security forces and pastoralists. This could be achieved by assigning new responsibilities to existing security units. For instance, GAR-SI officials have reportedly said that they are open to adapt their mandate to better serve communities, and ICG suggested in a 2020 report that they could tackle cattle theft.² However, in some cases, internal politics might make this complicated. In Chad, for instance, the SECUTCHAD project had negotiated the signature of a document, officialising the role of the Nomadic unit in the protection of pastoralists and pastoral infrastructures. However, the head of the unit wanted to include a judicial role, which COGINTA refused. The document had not been signed at the end of the project.

This would require **establishing or using existing communications channels between security forces in the region**, so that they can support the recovery of cattle once taken across international borders. This could also rely on existing community-based cross-border communications channels, which are sometimes able to localise stolen herds. Security forces could base their work on existing tools for tracking cattle, like the Radio Frequency Identification Device (by Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association and Datamars Switzerland) or CATRIS (Cattle Rustling Information System, by CITAD).

Relationships between security forces and pastoralist groups can also be resolved through dialogue, to some extent. The PEV Accra project (EUTF), implemented by Promédiation, aims to bridge the gap between communities and security forces, by setting up informal structures of communication about cattle theft or other common problems. To date, they have noted less resistance from the pastoral associations (APESS and RBM, which are associated with the project) to work with security forces than initially expected.

¹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, '*Contre le terrorisme en Mauritanie*', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² ICG, '*Side-lining the Islamic State in Niger's Tillabéry*', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

5.2.3 INVOLVING COMMUNITIES IN THE SECURITY RESPONSE

Another security response being discussed is the inclusion of communities and, more specifically, pastoralist communities in the security response. In some cases, this approach may yield results, if only because pastoralists have a specific knowledge of the situation and terrain. However, in some countries, civilian involvement in the security response has led to an escalation of violence. In Kajuru (Nigeria), Fulani and Adara have initiated dialogue to soothe their relationship and have created joint community patrols that help protect both communities from banditry.¹ However, in Mali and Burkina Faso, the protracted nature of the conflict and the failure of armies to protect civilians has pushed the latter to take arms to defend themselves and organise in militias and self-defence groups, which have **reportedly increased civilian casualties and violence.**²

Some actors are also weary of supporting the presence of civilians in the security response, as small arms proliferation is already cited as a key challenge and source of violent conflict in the region. Arming untrained civilians when the situation is still explosive could lead to an increase in fatalities and violence.

5.3 ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND PEACEFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

As explained throughout this report, a lack of resources and/or of peaceful natural resource management is a primary cause of local conflicts between farmers and herders. Among these, water resources and pasture areas tend to be key sources of conflict. Projects focus on two types of actions to address these resource conflicts: **build new infrastructures; and support peaceful resource management mechanisms.**

5.3.1 SUPPORTING RESOURCE ACCESS FOR POPULATIONS

Choosing where and which resources are needed requires a certain degree of inclusion, ensuring the **buy-in of the community along with the elected officials.**

First, projects noted the importance of **working within national or local development plans**, when existing, in choosing which infrastructures to build. In addition, working closely with authorities facilitates access to their vital knowledge of the terrain and of the situation. Working with local authorities is also an **opportunity to reinforce their capacities and legitimacy**, especially in remote areas. Projects have also noted that it offers an opportunity **to raise awareness among local officials about how to facilitate transhumance** (having fodder, providing corridors, not having a cattle market without a pasture, etc.) and why (cattle market taxes, income for the population, etc.). However, a number of partners noted that the **politicisation of some choices by elected officials** was a challenge in choosing the pieces of infrastructure that were most needed.

For this reason, partners have noted that it is important to allocate time and resources to **engage the communities themselves (including nomadic populations) in the decision.** In Niger, the PASP project, for instance, organised several meetings to determine, in collaboration with the population, the most critical priorities and needs. Involving nomadic populations can be challenging, and some projects noted that the most efficient way to engage them was to organise meetings on market days in the communal capitals, where most of the stakeholders are present. Another good practice noted in involving nomadic and pastoral populations was to **include pastoral associations in the discussions or as a relay for the mobile populations.** This also presents an opportunity to reinforce their capacities and legitimacy from the perspectives of both their members and the authorities. However, this inclusive approach is time-consuming and requires ample funds, and it may be especially difficult to conduct in hard-to-reach conflict areas. Partners regretted that the inclusive approach is sometimes counter-

¹ The New Humanitarian, 'Standing up to the bandits: a Nigerian community looks to forge its own peace', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² ACLED, 'Sahel 2021: communal wars, broken ceasefires and shifting frontlines', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

intuitive for donors funding short-term infrastructure projects in which rapid impact is required, as well as for beneficiary countries.

Partners have also noted that the inclusion of **local communities in the construction** is important to allow for greater buy-in and therefore maintenance and sustainability. This can be achieved through cash-for-work construction activities and the use of local contractors. However, it also requires the prior capacity reinforcement of local contractors to improve the quality of construction.

Most partners also noted the importance of **properly analysing possible negative consequences of building infrastructures (especially water) in some areas**. Indeed, activities that only follow the logic of increasing available resources can sometimes increase tensions and conflicts. New water points may attract too many cattle, destroying surrounding crops or environment. To mitigate that, AVSF builds solar powered water infrastructure (as part of the SDNM2 project), which provides water continuously, reducing the waiting time and therefore the destruction around the well. Some communities also prefer simple wells, as opposed to larger infrastructure, in order to reduce the risk of attracting too many herds. Another issue that can occur is the expansion of agriculture and the migration of farmers towards newly irrigated zones. To avoid these risks, most actors recommend that infrastructure programmes disseminate water resources on large areas, avoiding an influx of herds and humans on a single water point.

A key challenge to ensure the sustainability of an infrastructure is **designing an efficient maintenance strategy**. One best practice is to build infrastructure in a way that does not require immediate fixing when something is broken. For instance, AICS builds wells with a large enough diameter to allow traditional techniques of pumping water if the technology breaks, ensuring the target population still has access to water while waiting for repairs. Another lesson learned was that training people to fix the infrastructure is not always efficient, especially if the training is particularly specialised. Better outcomes are reported when projects **train already established mechanics or electricians**, who have an established business and will not need to be paid in advance to do the repairs.

Finally, partners have noted that having valorisation strategies around the infrastructure that is built is important to ensure sustainability as well. While SDNM2 focused on infrastructure construction, SDNM3 will have a strategy to ensure income-generating activities are supported around the buildings. For instance, supporting a livestock feeder as an income-generating activity implemented around the wells could allow the sales revenues to pay for the maintenance of the well.

5.3.2 SUPPORTING PEACEFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

As indicated earlier in this report, resource scarcity alone is not necessarily the main cause of conflicts. Local conflicts may arise around resource access in resource-abundant regions. Ensuring peaceful resource-sharing is, therefore, a main challenge to reduce conflicts between farmers and herders.

Partners have noted that one of the reasons for the encroachment of pastoral infrastructures and areas by agriculture is the **lack of knowledge of the laws in the population**. Therefore, projects have implemented sensitisation activities, raising awareness on the laws, and, at the local level, sensitising the population on the need to share the resources peacefully. While there is little data on the tangible impact of such activities, partners believe it helps build ties between communities (see 5.1.3.2.).

In the last few years, most infrastructure-building, resilience or conflict-mediation interventions have also included the creation of resource management committees in their areas of intervention to support peaceful resource-sharing. While it is considered a sign of increased conflict-sensitivity in interventions, as with the peace committees mentioned above, challenges remain around the sustainability and the potential duplication of efforts on these interventions. The best practices identified, similar to peace committees, include the **reinforcement of existing structures, especially in countries where such resource-sharing committees are required by law**. In Niger for instance, the *Pôle Rural* programme (EUTF) supported the reinforcement of COFOCOM, which are resource-sharing

mechanisms established by the *Code Rural*. This also ensures that the population has a qualified and legitimate body to turn to, rather than the police, in case of conflict.

However, similar to the reinforcement of peace committees, this approach presents challenges around the possible politicisation of bodies, the inclusion of vulnerable groups and the time and resources of projects. In some countries, existing structures may be corrupt or politicised and, in these cases, some partners have indicated that building independent structures may be necessary. In Mali, AVSF (as part of the SDNM2) has attempted to support traditional systems of resource management and include women and youth with sometimes little success. In addition, these local committees are often non-inclusive of transhumant or nomadic populations. Ensuring inclusion and reinforcing existing bodies takes time and resources that some projects lack. In Burkina Faso, the PEV DJAM and the PDU RECOSA both regretted the limited funds at their disposal to properly reinforce such structures. VSF (implementing PEV DJAM) developed an action plan for the creation of the law-required commission they are seeking to fund through other means.

Finally, **partners noted that the efficiency of peaceful resource management was increased through the officialisation of rules.** The AFD, which has been working on pastoral hydraulic construction for years, found that the negotiation of social agreements around the use of infrastructure improved the impact of the water points on the population. Similarly, in Mali, AVSF attempted to support traditional resource-sharing systems to agree on rules (time at the well per head, etc.) between the different users.

Partners also noted the importance of establishing these rules and relationships across borders. In Mopti, around the Aboufou pond, which is used by Malian, Burkinabè and Nigerian populations, HD supported the organisation of discussions between all leaders to draft conventions based on the traditional use of resources. This ensured the buy-in of all involved populations as every included leader then takes the responsibility to ensure the observance of the conventions among their respective community.

5.3.3 PROTECTING RESOURCES

Mitigating the impact of climate change on the availability of resources is important, as well as protecting the environment from further degradation. First, **it is important to understand the possible negative impacts of pastoralism on the environment and biodiversity.** As mentioned earlier, there is a need for more research on the impact of pastoralism on the rangeland. Anecdotal evidence tends to indicate that pastoralists' impact on the environment is either positive or benign, but there is a need for more global research. Illegal grazing and habitat encroachment are among the issues most reported by conservation and wildlife protection actors. In Mali, the Elephant Programme has worked on mitigating human-elephant conflict, through a community-based census of the elephants in Mali. The programme informs communities about the locations of elephants, ensuring that both can cohabit. In addition, they support sensitisation on conservation in schools, which also builds pride in the national heritage.

Efforts to protect the environment or wildlife have proved to negatively impact pastoralists in some instances, as conservation actors rarely collaborate with development actors and initiatives do not necessarily take all points into account. For instance, projects in support to the Great Green Wall initiative (an African Union initiative to stop desertification by populating 7,100km of land from Dakar to Djibouti) have caused the displacement of pastoralists from Northern Nigeria to the Middle Belt.¹ Rangers are also often the first line of law enforcement encountered by pastoralists, and they can be extremely militarised (e.g., African Parks rangers) to fight poachers. The encounters are often abusive and further strain the relationships of pastoralists with the state.

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Responses to conflicts between farmers and herders in the Middle Belt of Nigeria: mapping past efforts and opportunities for violence prevention', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

Some initiatives, mostly in East Africa, have endeavoured to recruit pastoralists in the effort to protect the environment and wildlife. In Kenya for instance, initiatives like the Northern Rangelands Trust engage pastoralist communities in the preservation of wildlife. These initiatives, however, are only sustained through tourism, which is inexistant in most of the conflict-torn Sahel. Initiatives like this could be built on, and piloted to adapt them to less touristic destinations, with the work conducted funded through payment for environmental services projects (see Focus Box 6.).

Focus Box 6: Payment for environmental services

Payment for environmental services (PES) is a practice by which landowners and resource users are paid to change their land management practices in favour of the public good. In Kenya and Tanzania, for instance, projects have paid livestock keepers to manage their lands to enable the passage and grazing of wildlife. By reducing livestock density, restricting grazing, maintaining open wildlife corridors and preventing poaching, landowners have a positive impact on wildlife and the environment. Other types of PES can be developed that involve pastoralists: In the Central African Republic, a project funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service recruits, trains and equips herder sensitisation teams to intercept herds and direct them towards the transhumance corridors, away from the Chinko protected reserve.

Rangelands, if managed properly, can sequester the carbon emissions of humans. However, more research and pilot projects are needed in the dryland regions of Africa to understand and identify how much of this carbon can be sequestered in the rangelands, the incentives that would convince pastoralists to modify their management practices and how carbon markets could fund such initiatives. In addition, as land is often collectively owned or used, designing mechanisms to determine the most efficient distribution of benefits would be necessary.¹ Some researchers emphasise that payment for environmental services only benefit land and property holding groups that are predominantly male. Despite these challenges, PES has the potential to yield both environmental and social benefits.²

5.4 ACCESS TO SERVICES

Most partners point out the need to rebuild an architecture of service provision or create conditions for people to access services while in mobility, with the aim to reduce frustrations and the marginalisation of the pastoralist communities. Some partners also pointed out that, in a context of rising displacement, piloting and designing approaches that provide services to people in movement could be replicated and adapted to displaced communities.

Primarily, **service provision needs to be adapted to the mobility of pastoralists.** Some initiatives have been developed to adapt services to the mobility of beneficiaries. Analysing and evaluating the potential for replication of these initiatives would enable the development of similar initiatives in the SLC region. Since 2005, AVSF has been supporting **mobile health clinics** in Northern Mali, providing services in both veterinary and human health. The route followed by the mobile clinics are decided by the community leaders, brought together to negotiate the patterns and the number of days spent in each community. AVSF believes this process of negotiation has also helped reinforce social cohesion. The mobile clinics were included in the Algiers accord of 2015, showing their importance in the eyes of the population.

A programme funded by the SDC and implemented by APSS, the PREPP, developed an innovative approach to **provide education for pastoralists** through the establishment of mobile literacy centres along the transhumance routes. Other mobile education initiatives could be developed, notably building on the experience of COVID-19 protection measures, which closed schools throughout the world.

¹ Agrilink, 'Herder-Farmer conflict undermines resilient pastoral systems in Africa's Sudano-Sahel', 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

² World Bank, 'Prospects for livestock-based livelihoods in Africa's drylands', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

Technology-based schooling (whether on or off-line) could be envisioned, and pilot approaches could also be replicated in broader variability contexts (conflicts and insecurity).¹

Judicial services also need to be made available to mobile populations, as impunity of security forces and civilians is escalating the cycle of violence and exacerbating the frustrations of pastoralist populations. In the DRC, the American Bar Association has supported a programme of mobile courts, whereby military and civilian trials are held in remote areas.²

The adaptation of services to mobility could also rely on the communities themselves. The PREPP, which ended abruptly due to internal issues, aimed to train transhumant herders as teachers, ensuring that the education was provided directly by community members. In hygiene, the approach *Assainissement total piloté par les communautés* (ATPC) is considered well adapted to nomadic and semi-nomadic populations. The ATPC approach encourages the population to analyse its own hygiene situation and collectively act to reduce dangers to the population's health.

Most partners underlined the need to not overlook departure areas, where women and children increasingly remain during the transhumance. Access to women for empowerment or women-targeted initiatives is also easier during the transhumance in the areas where women stay behind.

Service provision also needs to be adapted to specific aspects of pastoralism. For instance, the PREPP education programmes were taught in local languages rather than French (although French itself was also taught) and focused on aspects of pastoralist life (pastoralism laws, international transhumance certificate, etc.). Professional training focused on five identified professions in relation to pastoralism. Education needs to be adapted to specific issues that pastoralists have likely faced. Reinsertion programmes or education programmes that allow non-educated kids to return to the national education system, through accelerated training, were used by the PREPP programme. Partners also noted this could be adapted to situations where the children have been kept out of school by other reasons, like conflict or displacement. However, offering such accelerated programmes is only possible in countries where an option exists in law allowing these adapted programmes.

In addition, **services need to be made available in remote and pastoral areas (including transhumance corridors)**, where most pastoralist populations live. When possible, this requires strengthening decentralised services, local civil servants and local governance. However, this requires long-term funding and support and, in some cases, is prevented by the conflict. Services also need to be made available along the transhumance corridors, ensuring adequate service provision during mobility. Having services along transhumance corridors also helps prevent spill over and ensure people are using the correct corridors.

Finally, specific pastoral-related services, like veterinary services, need to be supported. The FAPIS programme supported the establishment of an interstate school on veterinary sciences and medicine, which trained public livestock agents.

Most partners also noted that **sensitisation of the populations to the importance of such services** is needed to ensure the buy-in of the populations, from traditional leaders, trickling down to children. The success of the PREPP is understood to have relied on the involvement of community leaders, who helped the programme convince the pastoralists of the importance of education for both adults and children.

¹ IIED, 'Farmer-Herder conflict in Africa: re-thinking the phenomenon?', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

² Columbia, School of International and Public Affairs, 'Awarding and enforcing reparations in mobile court judgments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', 2013. Retrieved [here](#).

5.5 MOBILITY AND DISPLACEMENT

5.5.1 FLUID AND RATIONAL MOVEMENTS

5.5.1.1 Ensuring the fluidity of movements

Conflicts in mobility arise when the fluidity of herds' movement is jeopardised. **Partners all noted the need to demarcate and improve transhumance corridors as a first step to reduce conflicts.** First, this is done through the **construction and demarcation of corridors** where they are called for by law and have been erased or encroached. PEV DJAM, in Burkina Faso, noted this activity requires extensive time to negotiate with farmers installed on the corridors, and to draft and sign agreements and ensure the buy-in of authorities. Corridors should be built with a verge of six to ten meters on each side of the actual path, to reduce risks of tramping crops. Partners also noted the need to **sensitise the populations** for everyone to be aware of the paths of transhumance, reducing future risks of encroachment. Finally, partners noted the need to ensure the **collection of adequate data to allow for tailored transhumance corridors.** This means adapting the number and size of resting areas to the number of herds while also adapting the path itself to the changing patterns of the herders as insecurity or climatic events alter movements. IOM's Transhumance Tracking Tool collects this level of data and was used in Chad to ensure the adequacy of corridors (see Focus Box 7).

Ensuring the fluidity of movements also entails **reinforcing border crossings.** Indeed, delays at the border increase the likelihood of cattle tramping crops, when the number of herds that are blocked grows. In addition, if herders attempt to avoid troublesome border posts, they often will resort to crossing farming land. Partners noted that, in the short term, such issues could be avoided by advocating for local authorities to provide dedicated and delimited resting areas around border crossings.

In the long term, however, the reinforcement of border management units and awareness-raising on transhumance rights could help ensure the fluidity of border crossings. This would involve working not only with law enforcement and local governments but also with communities and civil society, across border zones, and not only on border-crossing points. This sort of approach could also help border areas to develop through a virtuous cycle of positive cross-border dynamics, community interaction, growing trade and exchanges. As noted in the Lessons Learned from the EUTF exercise of the MLS, current EUTF projects implement few specific activities dedicated to mitigating corruption at border posts. Awareness-raising, trainings and monitoring tools could help reduce the occurrence of corruption at border posts. In 2019, IOM developed a Transhumance Guide in Chad, incorporated into the Government's training to ensure that border officials are aware of the herders' rights and duties.¹ In addition, **the rotation of personnel in border areas** is seen as favouring corruption. To address this, in Mali, the EU and IOM will support a programme to professionalise the border police, attempting to reduce rotation and movement of personnel. Ensuring the reduction of corruption at the borders can also help rebuild the relationship between pastoralists and government services, as the border police is often one of the only state services with which herders interact. Finally, partners noted that it was important to **reinforce the services providing the International Transhumance Certificate** (within ECOWAS) and other identification necessary for transhumance.

¹ IOM, UN and Chad Government, 'La transhumance transfrontalière sûre et ordonnées au Chad', 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

Focus Box 7: IOM's Transhumance Tracking Tool

IOM's Transhumance Tracking Tool is comprised of two data collection mechanisms: a flow registry data collection tool in locations of transhumance movements and an early-warning system by which key informants share information on transhumance events. Partners in Chad have noted that the TTT allows information to be shared with villages and partners implementing activities ahead of the transhumance movement, warning them of the arrival of herds and ensuring they have time to prepare to accommodate moving herds. The TTT could also be used for better protection along the border. For instance, in Chad, the TTT identified that 37% of the herders were children in December 2019. Sufficient means could ensure that child protection services are able to respond to an emergency or possible situations of indentured servitude.

5.5.1.2 Supporting information-based and rational mobility

As discussed throughout this paper, the rationality of pastoral movements is a key feature of the adaptability and resilience of pastoral livelihoods. This rationality is increasingly endangered by extreme climatic events and insecurity, as well as the lack of information. Several organisations have developed tools aimed to support data-based mobility of pastoralists. **SIGSAHEL, supported by ACF, conducts biomass, movement and pasture analysis**, and transfers this information to herders through local radios or focal points. This aims to ensure that herders have the necessary information to plan their route.

In Burkina Faso, VSF has also put in place a pastoral alert system, in collaboration with livestock agents of the decentralised services. Pastoralists can call a phone line that will provide them with information on available resources as well as on epizootic events, allowing them to avoid diseases.

Supporting the predictability of movements also includes providing information on the prices of cattle along the way. Another project, the STAMP, put in place the Garbal service (SNV, funded by the Netherlands Space Agency from 2015 to 2018 and then by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands from 2019 to 2021) which has 55,000 users. The programme provides information about biomass availability and quality, herd concentration and **prices of cattle along the way**, thanks to satellite information. Partners noted the involvement of pastoralists in the design of these tools; however, their inclusion to better adapt these tools to their specific needs was sometimes lacking.

5.5.1.3 The question of sedentarisation

Several actors have noted that initiatives that support the sedentarisation of pastoralists could help reduce mobility-related conflicts. As mentioned above, this is in line with the leading opinion in some countries (mostly coastal) that tends to conflate pastoralism and transhumance with insecurity.

One of the arguments in favour of ranching is that it could improve the efficiency of the livestock sector and that open grazing is not a sustainable livelihood. However, some studies in Kenya and Botswana, found that pastoralism produced 155%–158% more protein per hectare than commercial ranches. Similar data has been recorded in Mali and Niger.¹ However, more studies need to be conducted to confirm global or local trends.

If supported, sedentarisation can help improve the livelihoods of members, if initiatives provide adequate services and are built around pastoralism as a way of life, not just a livelihood. In Mauritania, in the 1980s, when fighting against terrorists, the Government supported the creation of small towns in the north, to gather families and concentrate rural populations. The goal was not to abolish nomadism, and most men remain semi-nomadic, but to ensure that populations have areas to converge to receive services, that could be defended from attacks.² By contract, in Benue State

¹ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

² Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 'Contre le terrorisme en Mauritanie', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

(Nigeria), when open grazing was prohibited, little effort was made to build veterinary services, feed distribution facilities, or other facilities in the ranching areas. As a result, herders tend to avoid the State altogether rather than establish ranches in the area.¹

5.5.2 FORCED DISPLACEMENT

As discussed above, **forced displacement of pastoralists is difficult to identify**. Partners noted that the *prima facie* status (e.g., for Malians in Niger) ensured that there was little delay in offering protection services to displaced pastoralists, as they can be placed under protection awaiting further determination. However, in cases of secondary or mixed movements and when no *prima facie* protection was accepted, UNHCR noted the importance to **work with herder associations to interpret data and information in monitoring movements**. For instance, in May, 5,000 herders were recorded coming into Maradi from Niger. Herder associations working with UNHCR Niger were able to alert the country teams that this movement was abnormal for this time of year, allowing the organisation to prepare its response. Similarly, in Mali, UNHCR is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to reinforce their capacity in analysis of the data collected.

The response provided to displaced pastoralists also needs to be adapted to pastoralism's specificities. In Intikane (Niger), when Malian refugees arrived with their herds, UNHCR created a '*Zone d'accueil pour réfugiés*' specifically adapted to pastoralists' needs, with a large hydraulic infrastructure and a market. The zone also allowed for the socio-economical strengthening of the entire area. However, they were only able to do so because of the buy-in of local authorities, as the governor of the region allowed the organisation to use a 100km² area for people to drive their herds in close transhumance. In addition, these zones need to be adapted to the number of people: As the situation in Mali and Niger worsens, the area now hosts many IDPs as well as refugees and is challenging to manage.

In Burkina Faso, UNHCR has established **mixed committees, including both host communities and refugees, to discuss issues and solve problems in a peaceful way**. Working on the securitisation of pasture areas and corridors helped build social cohesion and reduce tensions between pastoralist refugees and agro-pastoralist hosts. Similarly, adapting camps to the pastoralists population and opening the services to the host communities helped soothe relationships: UNHCR established vaccination systems and livestock feeding infrastructure in the camp and conducted common vaccination campaigns in and around the camp.

5.6 INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL INCLUSION

5.6.1 LAWS AND POLICIES

Partners have noted that laws regulating pastoralism are often insufficiently or poorly implemented. Primarily, the implementation of regional agreements, like the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance, needs to be monitored in each country. However, considering the number of countries and provisions, some partners noted that this would require the establishment of a dedicated commission at the ECOWAS level.

Secondly, **partners noted the need to support financially the governments to allocate resources to the implementation of laws**. This requires advocacy with the governments for the creation of budget lines for rural areas, and the support of state decentralised services. However, partners have noted that, in some countries where the services are concentrated in safer urban areas (e.g., Mali), reinforcing them might increase the feeling of marginalisation among remote populations.

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'The implications of open grazing prohibition & ranches establishment law on farmer-herder relations in the Middle Belt of Nigeria', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

As indicated, **the knowledge of laws is also a challenge noted by partners across the region.** Both end-users and service providers are not necessarily aware of the pastoral laws regulating movements, resources, or conflicts. Projects in the PDU (EUTF) have supported outreach campaigns on transhumance or resource laws, mostly through radio programmes.

Finally, **programmes must take the laws into account and write their activities depending on the different codes and frameworks that already exist and establish responsibilities.** For instance, if pastoral hydraulic infrastructures are a responsibility of the local authorities, activities building these infrastructures should ensure the relevant institutions are the partners. Similarly, and as stated previously, existing resource management structures should be reinforced.

Partners also noted the importance of supporting the institutions in charge of pastoralism issues, at the regional, national and local levels. The SDC has developed a programme to support the ECOWAS Agriculture Policy (ECOWAP) and the organisation of high-level meetings on peaceful transhumance. Through these meetings, the partners can advocate to ECOWAS members for the sustainability of pastoral livelihoods and the importance of reducing the vulnerabilities of pastoralists in order to reduce conflict in the region. ECOWAS could act as a leader to support innovative policies on pastoralism, especially by developing a positive view of pastoralism, including in economic terms.

At the national level, the AFD noted that reinforcing singular branches or individuals within institutions was less efficient and sustainable than activities that aim to reinforce entire institutions. In Burkina Faso, the agency has been supporting a project to reinforce the entire national water institution, for instance, ensuring that every project related to water implemented in the country can rely on a strong institution as a partner, without having to dedicate time and resources to training specific interlocutors within it. However, projects like this one take significant time to produce tangible results, which may go against the desires of donors in the Sahel to show results quickly.

5.6.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Most partners noted that strengthening pastoral associations was an efficient way both to ensure sustainability of programmes and support the inclusion of pastoral voices in the political scene. Support to pastoral associations requires financial support for their activities. This could also ensure that organisations are not co-opted by wealthier urban elite pastoralists.¹ At the local level, stakeholders also need to be reinforced to engage with authorities, advocating for policies that rely on the needs identified in remote and rural areas.

Strong pastoral associations can be instrumental in managing conflict when organised efficiently. In Benin, pastoral associations are reportedly very well structured and respected, include a wide membership, and are considered instrumental in managing conflicts. By comparison, in Ghana, herder associations are too fragmented and do not appear well organised enough to support land rights or to fight for pastoral issues. **The SDC directly supports pastoral associations, such as RBM and APESS, in their structuring,** through long-term direct funding and programming. This allows the organisations to be taken more seriously at the policy level, ensuring they can influence agricultural policies at the regional and national levels.

Pastoral associations, once structured and reinforced, can be a valuable implementing partner for programmes which aim to support pastoral livelihoods and peaceful relationships between farmers and herders. RBM had mostly appeared as a sub-contractor until the PDU (EUTF), where it is now a primary partner. Pastoral networks also ensure better access to remote and conflict areas for partners. This, however, depends on countries and existing pastoral associations: In Chad, associations are reportedly very politicised and poorly structured, making partnerships less attractive for donors and partners.

¹ FAO, 'Pastoralism in Africa's drylands', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

The inclusion of herders in local and national institutions will also support further acceptance and respect of laws by the communities. However, researchers warn that partners should be careful that including traditional leaders in state-led processes might lead them to lose credibility if processes fail or are not understood.¹

5.7 LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY

Support to pastoral livelihoods and the pastoral economy can help reduce the vulnerabilities of pastoralists, increase the value-added of the livestock sector, and reinforce relationships between farmers and herders. While the livestock sector is an important contributor to the region's economies, it is highly under-invested and relationships between farmers and herders suffer as a result.

5.7.1 REDUCING VULNERABILITIES

Pastoralists are among the poorest populations in the region, and the first economic support that is provided to them is mostly humanitarian and targeted at the most vulnerable populations. **Most partners noted that the gradual approach was most efficient at supporting vulnerable pastoralists.** Two PDU projects (PROGRESS and RECOLG) have been able to design gradual approaches of support, taking advantage of their relatively long-term approach (both four years). Gradual approaches for pastoralists may start with the distribution of a few goats, to support personal consumption, followed by cash transfers or kits and finally a large livestock distribution. While these approaches seem the most efficient to reinforce the livelihoods of pastoralists, partners noted that a long-term impact requires service continuity, and improvement of the conditions around the pastoralists to ensure that they do not fall back into poverty. Both projects noted the need to study and evaluate their approaches after a longer implementation period.

5.7.2 INCREASING REVENUES OF PASTORALISTS

Beyond humanitarian support, **partners have noted the importance of supporting the livestock sector's contribution to the economy**, as well as making sure pastoralists belong to the society economically as well as socially. Revenues of herders can be increased through gains in numerical productivity (e.g. reducing mortality and increasing vaccination services), gains in ponderal productivity (better feed and valorisation of agricultural subproducts), reduction of intermediaries in the commercial chain, more public investments in the livestock sector, and private funding adapted to the pastoralists' needs (access to credit, etc.). While these first two points were detailed in best practices mentioned to improve veterinary services (see 5.4) and access to resources (see 5.3), best practices for the other points are detailed below.

5.7.2.1 Reduction of intermediaries in the livestock value chain

Intermediaries increasingly capture the margins of livestock sales. Most partners noted that **increasing economic knowledge among pastoralists** could support an increase in the revenues of pastoralists. The SDC-funded PACBAO project aims to reduce the power of intermediaries by improving pastoral and livestock institutions, notably on their knowledge of commercialisation, putting them in a better situation to inform their members. Researchers also noted that pastoralists could be trained to diversify their revenues and invest the different levels of the value chain.²

Partners have also put in place tools to increase knowledge of prices among pastoralists, supporting information-based economic choices. In Burkina Faso, the MODHEM (Mobile data for herd management and better income) provides information on market prices to herders.³ The SDC also

¹ World Bank Group, 'Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

² Clingendael, 'Between hope and despair: pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Clingendael, 'Between hope and despair: pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

supported an APESS-managed tool the *Bilan simplifié*, which supports pastoralists in calculating the best solution available to them, given the amount of cattle they have and current market prices. While such tools seem efficient to support appropriate economic choices, they appear very limited in reach.

5.7.2.2 Increased public involvement

Partners noted that it is important to support every (local, national) government actor to **realise the economic potential of the livestock sector**. This could help reduce the encroachment of pastoral spaces for other economies. For instance, in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, mining is viewed as an opportunity for growth, leading authorities to divest from the livestock sector and reduce pastoral areas. Ensuring that pastoralists belong to the society economically is also viewed as a priority by some partners. This could be achieved through the **formalisation of pastoral economies**, aiming to increase the state's involvement and develop the pastoral economy.

Most partners noted that more involvement and stronger **regulation of cattle markets** could support the development of livestock economies in a peaceful manner. Marking cattle, for instance, could help stop the sale of stolen cattle, and strengthening the organisation of markets could reduce tensions and conflicts, while ensuring fair pay for producers, regulating the roles of intermediaries, and supporting the sector in reaching standards of disease control and food quality and safety, in order to access international meat markets.¹

Finally, partners also noted the need to increase attention to the **regional livestock market**. This could go through the ECOWAS or the African Union or other regional bodies, by streamlining procedures for export and planning to allow the region to compete with other livestock markets (European for instance), by collectively renegotiating the rules of the World Trade Organization.

5.7.2.3 Attract private investment

The need to connect pastoral livelihoods to financial markets and products was noted by several partners as a way to ensure pastoralists are given the tools to serve as actors of the livestock sector. The SDC, through the PACBAO, is implementing a call for proposals to fund 16 pilot projects to help connect pastoralists to livestock value chains. The requests the partners received demonstrated significant interest in **access to insurance** and funding for the commercialisation of the sector. Linking pastoralists to value chains, however, requires a significant amount of time and research to establish trusting relationships with financial organisations. Generally, attracting private investment is challenging in non-secure areas. For instance, banks do not necessarily operate, making investments from the private sector impossible.

5.7.2.4 Commercialisation of derived products

The commercialisation of livestock products beyond the sale of cattle could also support revenues for pastoralists. For instance, PEV PASRAP has supported the milk value chain through trainings and kits. Partners noted that supporting milk transformation was also valuable as an activity to empower women. However, as stated before, there is a need to invest in the entire value chain, including milk conservation techniques, to ensure more wider reaching, more sustainable impact. This is a challenge, especially in conflict areas, where private investors do not want to risk losing an entire cold storage room infrastructure, for instance.

Other innovative techniques have been developed. In Burkina Faso, PEV DJAM installed a **bio-digestor**. Kids pick up and sell cow manure for pocket money to women who can cook with the methane, while the residue can still be used for vegetable gardening. The project also noted the lights powered by the methane allowed women to meet in the evenings, increasing social cohesion.

¹ Search for Common Ground, 'Criminality & reprisal attacks in Nigeria's Middle Belt', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

The project also developed activities **supporting hydroponics in areas where the soil was not suitable for pasture anymore**. This approach, which was appreciated by the beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, had also been implemented by Oxfam in Niger. The women are the main targets for the activity and can sell the pasture for the livestock. However, the partners found the seeds were too expensive for the population to sustain the activity without the subsidies.

The development of the livestock sector could help **rebuild a symbiotic relationship between farmers and herders** as well. There is a need to integrate the activities of farmers and herders and be careful about reconnecting economies.¹

As with most interventions targeted at pastoralist populations, partners noted that adapted economic support and techniques **could also target displaced populations**. Taking care of mobility or vulnerabilities can lead to developing interventions that are easily targeted to landless populations for instance.

5.8 PROGRAMMING

5.8.1 PROGRAMME DESIGN

As expressed throughout this report, farmer-herder conflicts are both the consequence and the root of several vulnerabilities throughout the SLC region. Most partners, therefore, noted that pastoral-related programming needed to **follow holistic approaches, working on different types and levels of shocks at a territorial level**.

Shifting interventions from a programme approach to a wide territorial one could allow partners to implement a more complete, multi-sectoral approach. The AFD is currently experimenting with the territorial approach in Menaka (Mali). Approaching the region as a whole and supporting activities that aim to resolve different layers of vulnerabilities conjointly could allow the agency to have a more sustainable impact on farmer-herder conflicts. While this approach is currently in its first steps, other actors noted that **increased coordination of the development actors** (loosely based on the model of humanitarian cluster systems) could also ensure partners work holistically on all different shocks.

While increasing funds are targeted at similar areas, actors have noted the need to work **at the regional level, ensuring there are no overlaps and that no topic is left unaddressed**. At the donor level, the United States Government has put in place an Africa Pastoralism Working Group, an inter-agency group which meets regularly to discuss interventions in relation to pastoralism. However, the group does not receive sufficient funds to be fully operational. At a local level, the Forum on Farmer and Herder Relations in Nigeria (FFARN) is a networks of academics and partners working on the topic of farmer-herder conflicts. The Forum meets regularly to exchange on needs and conduct research to support advocacy.

Pastoral-related programming also requires a reorganisation of how partners divide the activities among themselves. Partners noted that conflict sensitivity should be included in all activities, rather than partners implementing conflict-related activities on the side of resilience or economic activities. However, social cohesion is implemented by specialised partners. In the PDU, the ACOR consortia is organised in a way that enables the staff of Amassa (an NGO working on social cohesion among the consortia) to be hosted in the offices of the different partners, ensuring better cooperation between the social cohesion and resilience activities. **To include local authorities**, in Mali, the SDNM2 project was considered innovative and efficient thanks to its structure. As the donor, AFD established contracts with regional councils and sends NGOs to follow up on the activities on the ground. They found that the approach was very efficient and more sustainable.

¹ Clingendael, 'Cattle, Conflict and Commerce: rethinking European interventions on pastoralism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

Implementing pastoral-related interventions also requires **more extensive data collection to be able to correctly monitor trends and inform programming**. A FAO report found that the two most efficient data collection methods on the numbers of pastoralists were ground surveys (at enumeration points of water or vaccination) and qualitative surveys in livestock markets, which are challenging to conduct in conflict-prone areas, as well as aerial surveys.¹ Partners noted however, that for each data collection project, a herder association should be involved to ensure correct analysis and interpretation of raw data.

Another challenge in designing and preparing pastoral-related programming is the targeting. Most targeting tools for identifying beneficiaries are based on sedentary communities. Programmes try to sensitise populations to register for programmes when they arrive in a community but, when activities start, a number of pre-identified beneficiaries may have left or be difficult to reach. The SDC supported the development of the HEA targeting technique, which includes a more inclusive geographic focus (beyond traditional administrative subdivisions of communes, villages, etc.) and the inclusion of new indicators in vulnerability assessment questionnaires (e.g., the number of TLU owned), to better assess the vulnerabilities of pastoral households.

5.8.2 PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Projects often face difficulties in implementing activities in remote and insecure areas. Remote piloting of projects is difficult and requires time to train sub-contractors and partners. Programmes like the PEV DJAM rely on key resource persons on the ground providing them with information on a daily basis about the safety situation on the ground and the feasibility of activity implementation. However, in some conflict-torn regions, international partners need to be accompanied by military escorts, which is a challenge for implementation. Most partners noted that relying on solid pastoral associations and their networks for the implementation of projects in remote and insecure areas was one of the most efficient ways to conduct activities remotely.

5.8.3 PROGRAMME EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Monitoring the long-term impact of pastoral-related activities on conflicts is challenging as well. For instance, some partners worry that supporting herders to increase their revenues might make them more vulnerable to armed groups. Further, the impact of conflict prevention activities is relatively difficult to measure. Better identification of movements and follow-up along the routes are possible best practices that have been mentioned. However, this requires partnering with actors on the ground that have extensive knowledge of the terrain.

More research is also needed to understand the exact impact (ecological or economic) of pastoral activities on rangelands as well as the production differences between herding and ranching. This would allow to tailor activities more adequately and support advocacy programmes at the local, national and regional levels.

Learning from farmer-herder conflict interventions also requires more extensive sharing and scaling up of successful interventions. While farmer-herder conflicts differ widely across regions, most partners noted the need to support the replication of solutions that were efficient in regions which are starting to see an increase in conflicts. In regions on the periphery of conflict areas, solutions that have been successful in other regions could be implemented in a more preventive way. This also requires better coordination between development actors, so that short-term interventions are linked to longer-term or larger projects and pilot initiatives are scaled up by bigger donors.

¹ FAO, 'Guidelines for the enumeration of nomadic and semi-nomadic (transhumant) livestock', 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

6. AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

6.1 PROGRAMMATIC AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

The EU could consider mandating a second part to this study, focusing on a region, a theme or an area it wishes to look into in more detail. Such research could include a beneficiary survey.

6.1.1 CONFLICT MEDIATION AND RESOLUTION

While **localised conflict knowledge** requires time and resources, it is essential for the efficiency of programming.

- **Donors could support the allocation of time and resources to regular conflict scans** for projects that target conflict mediation and provide the flexibility to adapt to changing dynamics.
- A large donor, like the EU, could reinforce information-sharing within its funded projects (including within the EUTF), to ensure **resources are pooled and findings disseminated** (e.g., support the ongoing efforts of coordination between HD and other PDU implementing partners). Support for the creation of a 'pastoralist conflict sensitivity hub' could be considered.
- When projects identify larger frustrations that impact local conflicts, information could be shared so that other better placed partners can target these frustrations in their interventions, taking advantage of the large number of different projects that the EU funds and the localised knowledge of the conflict mediation projects.

Based on the localised knowledge of actors and conflicts, **reinforce existing and dormant traditional conflict mechanisms**.

- This reinforcement should be undertaken, following structured **criteria of inclusion**, ensuring that no group (especially women and youth) is left behind.
- Projects should focus on supporting the **development of endogenous funding systems** for committees and avoid providing direct funding.
- Support the digital literacy of members of committees and ensure they can communicate even during transhumance.
- Reinforce the capacities of members to identify threats and respond to them or report them.
- Support existing initiatives of linking data collection projects with early-warning and conflict prevention projects, on the model of the TTT/Search for Common Ground project.

While it is difficult to measure the impact of sensitisation activities, it is important that donors continue funding efforts that aim to **reduce incendiary messaging** which leads to the escalation of local conflicts into wider violence and frustration.

- Support the training of journalists in conflict-sensitive language, **including in Europe** in order to ensure that incendiary messaging is not shared widely.
- Support the organisation of cultural heritage activities, to rebuild ties between communities.
- Support research on the **real impact of pastoralism** on economies, climate, and society, and on the real involvement of pastoralists in conflicts.

6.1.2 SECURITY AND STABILISATION

Continue supporting the security forces in areas where it is possible, especially ensuring that remote areas can be accessed rapidly, for instance through **support to nomadic police forces**.

- Ensure long-term intensive deontology trainings and attention to accountability, with partners like COGINA that already specialise on the topic.

- Support the police and security forces to include **tackling cattle theft in their responsibilities**, possibly by supporting an extension of the roles of the GAR-SI units and by **reinforcing communication** between the security forces of different countries (e.g. through the WAPIS programme).
- Support an evaluation of the results and impact of the PEV Accra programme when implementation has concluded, assessing the possibilities of replication and scaling up the approach, if efficient.
- Support initiatives to reduce the availability of small arms in the region.

6.1.3 ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND PEACEFUL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Programmes need to build pastoral infrastructure, **involving all communities in the decisions** and studying all possible unintended impacts.

- Fund long-term infrastructure projects, directing sufficient effort towards the inclusion of communities in the decisions, analysis of all possible negative consequences of building infrastructure, and the maintenance and exit strategy.
- Support programmes to reinforce local contractors' skills and organizational capacities, allowing them to be contracted by large construction projects.

Programmes should support the reinforcement of peaceful resource management mechanisms.

- Support activities to **make the laws known and sensitise all stakeholders to their rights and duties**.
- **Reinforce the natural resource management groups required by law**, when relevant, while supporting the inclusion of women, youth and mobile populations in such groups.
- Support the **negotiation of social agreements** around the use of the infrastructure constructed.

Support better coordination of development and conservation actors to:

- Conduct further **research on the impact of pastoralism on the rangelands** and disseminate the results.
- Ensure initiatives for the protection of the environment and the reduction of human-wildlife conflicts do **not harm or displace pastoralist populations**. This could be achieved through further training of rangers.
- Develop innovative and pilot approaches to **involve pastoralists in the protection of wildlife and the environment**.

6.1.4 ACCESS TO SERVICES

Support initiatives to adapt service provision to mobility and research the possibility of replicating initiatives from other thematic areas (e.g. education during the COVID-19 pandemic) to pastoralism.

- Support the AVSF mobile health clinic model in Mali and evaluate its replicability in other countries of the region.
- Support the implementation of a new PREPP programme, if designed, and the development of similar educational programmes.
- Support pilot programmes for the provision of mobile justice services in remote areas, on the model of other examples from DRC, for instance, to support the accountability of security forces in pastoral zones.
- Support projects to ensure pastoral populations are sensitised to the importance of civil registration and have access to registration services.

Ensure the sharing of best practices between initiatives aimed at displaced populations, populations on the move and mobile pastoralists.

6.1.5 MOBILITY AND DISPLACEMENT

Ensure the fluidity of movements through the **sensitisation of populations, demarcation of corridors and reinforcement of border posts**.

- Support long-term programmes to demarcate transhumance corridors where they have been encroached, systematically conducting negotiations and explanations with farmers and local populations.
- Support the **training and reinforcement of border police**, ensuring they are aware of pastoralists' rights.
- **Support the services that provide the International Transhumance Certificate**, as well as sensitisations amongst pastoral associations about the need to carry proper identification when crossing borders.
- Support the scaling up of the IOM's Transhumance Tracking Tool, based on the support the EU has already provided to the DTM, and support the connection of the TTT with conflict-mediation partners and pastoral associations.

Support **coordination between the different tools** aimed to improve rationality of pastoral movements.

- Several different tools are operational in the region, using different datasets and dissemination methods. Support a mapping of the different tools, their differences, and the possible areas of cooperation.
- Support the scaling up of the tools, including better connection to the pastoral associations with the knowledge to analyse the data and the networks to disseminate it.

Support existing actors in displacement programming to offer suitable situations for displaced pastoralists.

- Support **analysis capacities** within UNHCR to interpret data on movements.
- Where possible, continue supporting the setting up of **large areas for displaced populations** that consider the needs of the pastoralists.

6.1.6 INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL INCLUSION

Support the implementation of existing laws, especially in remote and pastoral areas.

- Support outreach campaigns to **raise awareness of pastoral-related laws**.
- Ensure that pastoral-related programmes respond to items in local development plans and support the implementation of laws.
- **Directly support institutions that work on pastoralism**, like the livestock ministries or the veterinary training institutions, on the model of the AFD's capacity-building approach for entire institutions.

Encourage the participation of pastoralists in political dialogues and in national institutions.

- Directly support **pastoral associations** in their structuring, to ensure they can be selected as partners.
- Directly support pastoral associations to enhance their representation and their capacities to conduct advocacy activities.

6.1.7 LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY

Support vulnerable pastoralists to recover from shocks through a **gradual approach**.

- Support the evaluation processes of the gradual approaches implemented by the PDU, and assess the potential to scale up and replicate these approaches.

Support the livestock value chain, including the role of pastoralists within it.

- Conduct a mapping of the different tools in place to provide pastoralists with market information and study the possible overlaps and opportunities for scaling up.
- Support pastoral associations to be able to share information from the different existing tools about livestock prices in different areas.
- Support innovative approaches to the commercialisation of milk and fodder, including in programmes targeted at women.

Conduct research to understand the contribution of pastoralists to the economy and disseminate the results of this research among the different stakeholders.

6.1.8 PROGRAMMING

Adequate programming to reduce the vulnerabilities of pastoralists and farmer-herder conflicts needs to rely on better data.

- Support the collection of data on the number of pastoralists, their routes and their livelihoods. This could be achieved by reinforcing the analysis capacities of existing data collection tools.

Program design should consider the variety of issues that influence farmer-herder relationships and be holistic.

- Study the results of AFD's territorial approach and consider replicating and scaling it up.
- Support better coordination of the activities in areas of conflict, possibly through the Team Europe initiative.
- Support joint projects and the complementarity of projects, in which the conflict and situation analysis necessary for an adequate implementation can be led by specialised conflict-mediation NGOs, before the other partners launch their activities.
- Support the inclusion of conflict-mediation specialised NGOs in activities and the cooperation of different actors.
- Support the adoption of inclusive targeting tools for beneficiary identification in all projects implementing activities in pastoral areas.

6.2 STRATEGIC AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

6.2.1 REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL

- Support new discussions on the effects of initiatives for the protection of the environment (in particular in national parks) on local populations.
- Advocate with ECOWAS for the establishment of innovative approaches for pastoralists to own land. This could include, for instance, land banks where pastoralists could pay rent, and which could be used for organic farming after the transhumance.¹

¹ KII – KN Bukari.

6.2.2 NATIONAL LEVEL

- Support advocacy to further include customary and traditional mechanisms in formal law in the countries where it is not already the case.
- Support the design and implementation of education programmes adapted to mobility, in terms of programmes (adapted to pastoralists' preoccupations), language (in local language), flexibility (for children who were out-of-school to re-enter the national system) and mobility.
- Continue advocating for *prima facie* status for refugees.
- Advocate for an increased investment in the livestock sector and support regulation efforts of the cattle markets.
- Advocate within the institutions for the inclusion of conflict-sensitivity in agriculture related law-making.
- Advocate for a whole-of-government approach to pastoral issues, where people in charge of animal health, rural water development, education, pastures, etc. are not in fragmented institutions.

6.2.3 LOCAL LEVEL

- Advocate to the local authorities for the taxes from livestock markets to be redirected to livestock infrastructure.