

Transitioning from Humanitarian Relief to Long Term Development: Addressing the Herdsmen-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria

The Peace Project



Background Information

The struggle between herders and farmers in Nigeria over farmland and pasture is a serious and escalating conflict registering huge casualties and raising tensions particularly in the country's middle belt. Drought and desertification in the north have forced pastoralist herdsman to seek grazing lands further south resulting in competition over resources and clashes with settled farmers. The conflicts have taken on religious and ethnic undertones further polarizing communities and complication efforts to mitigate the violence.



Goals & Objectives

The overall goal of the project is to contribute to ending the herdsmen-farmers conflict in Benue and Nasarawa States in Nigeria.

The project is being implemented with the following objectives:

- (i) reduce the vulnerability of affected persons through community-based protection by enhancing ability of affected communities to identify and mitigate risks and threats while ensuring that there is no interruption in livelihoods and productive activities;
- (ii) support livelihood and empowerment of community members through targeted initiatives to promote farming and livestock activities and establish synergies between these industries;
- (iii) prevent violent conflicts and build peace

by establishing a state peace architecture; local peace committees in conflict-affected LGAs to foster dialogue and non-violent resolution of disputes, reconciliation, co-existence and social cohesion;

(iv) mobilize national and regional efforts in the promotion of human security at national and sub-regional levels.

Expected outputs

The expected outputs are:

Community Protection Interventions implemented in five target Local Governments.

Livelihood and Economic Empowerment provided for farmers and livestock breeders.

Functional Peacebuilding Architecture established at the state and community levels.

National and Regional Framework for addressing Herdsmen-Farmers Conflict established.



Beneficiaries

The project beneficiaries of this pilot phase are the people of Benue and Nasarawa states in general, and particularly the local population in the five local government areas namely: Agatu, Guma, Logo, Kwande and Buruku; mainly from the Tiv, Idoma ethnic groups in Benue State, and the predominantly Fulani herder community in Nasarawa state.

The beneficiaries consist of IDPs, returnees and host communities, including farmers and herdsmen in Benue and neighboring states, and the private sector in the agriculture value chain.

The project seeks to help create new farmlands with irrigation facilities, and diverse food crops for people and animals, new residential houses, sustainable agriculture-based activities and income sources, and peace among the conflicting parties.

This project has a strong potential to contribute to regional dialogues on conflict prevention and mitigation in complex environments.



First year Achievements

- (i) The Peace Seminar was attended by over 250 participants from Benue and Nasarawa States.
- (ii) The establishment of the Herdsmen-Farmer Peace Forum, with a signed commitment by Herdsmen, Farmers, CBOs, CSOs, Academia, etc. to build peace in Benue State and Nasarawa States.
- (iii) Engagement with Governors in the Benue and Nasarawa States, the five Local Government Chairmen in Guma, Agatu, Logo, Buruku and Kwande and the Traditional Leaders of the ten communities where we will be working in Mbawa (Daudu), Nzorov, Usha, Aila, Tombo, Ukemberaga/ Tswarev, Mbaya, Binev, Moon and Yaav. Establishment of 100 Protection Action Group Members to conduct community protection and contribute to early warning monitoring.
- (iv) Coordination frameworks in place to support joint planning, follow up and reporting.
- (v) Distribution of the relief materials, shelter and livelihood support scheme to IDPs in Benue State completed.
- (vi) Identification of land and soil testing in all five LGAs of Project implementation in Benue State Project use.
- (vii) Establishment of 100 Protection Action Group Members to conduct community protection and contribute to early warning monitoring.
- (viii) Constitution of the governance body for the Farmer-Herdsmen Peace Forum, where members nominated a Chair, Co- Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Patron, and adopted a Terms of Reference for the Forum.
- (ix) Recruitment of agronomist, irrigation engineer and land clearing consultants to commence land preparation activities for training of IDPs on agricultural best practices

**UN Resident
Coordinator in
Nigeria, and Project
Team with the Benue
State Governor**



Resident Coordinator, Project Team with the Nasarawa State Governor



Meeting with Traditional Leaders and other Key Stakeholders in Nasarawa State



The Peace Seminar

The Peace Seminar was attended by over 250 participants from Benue and Nasarawa States where the Herdsmen-Farmer Peace Forum was established with a signed commitment by Herdsmen, Farmers, CBOs, CSOs, Academia, etc. to build peace in Benue State and Nasarawa States.

The Peace Forum constituted a governance body where members nominated a Chair where members nominated a Chair, Co- Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Patron, and adopted a Terms of Reference for the Forum.

The project team motivated the state and local government authorities to provide 402.21ha of land needed for new farms and residential buildings with allocation of land in Guma, Logo, Kwande, Buruku and Agatu, for project use.



Representatives of the Benue State Government, Miyetti Allah, Farmers Association, Traditional Rulers and Religious Bodies committing to establish the Farmer- Herdsmen Peace Forum.

Activities in the first year of implementation

(i) Town hall and peace advocacy meetings with the members of the communities. (ii) Profiling of the IDPs completed for the distribution of the relief materials, shelter and livelihood support scheme. (iii) Setting up of State-Level Technical Committees in Benue and Nasarawa States for the project. (iv) Coordination frameworks in place to support joint planning, follow up and reporting. (v) Three-day Human Security Training for stakeholders held in Makurdi. (vi) Procurements for land-based activities in respect of the project e.g. water irrigation equipment and systems, diverse seeds for planting, training to enhance farming output, etc. (vii) Establishment of Early Warning systems in Benue State.





Three-day Human Security Training for stakeholders held in Makurdi



Participants at the Policy Dialogue in Abuja

Conclusion

The project is off to a great start. We have invested a lot of time on advocacies, coordination mechanisms, and tools to work with, to make the project a success. We look forward to achieving amazing results in the year 2020.