

Pastoralist Transhumance and Conflict along the Nigeria-niger Borderlands: Towards New Perspective for Effective Border Management in Africa

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Abstract : Pastoralism has been an old practice in the Sahel region of west Africa. In recent years, pastoralists in Nigeria have increasingly been migrating on seasonal transhumance southward from the neighboring countries, especially Niger Republic, in search of better grazing conditions due to mainly, climate change. This has increased pressure on farm lands which instigate farmer-herder conflicts. These conflicts occur mainly between farmers and pastoralists but also between pastoralist groups themselves. However, there has been a shift in these conflicts recently to involve traditional institutions and, in some cases, the local authorities along the borderlands. The involvement of local institutions in the conflict has created an incentive to local actors, particularly pastoralcommunity-based groups, in responding to these violent threats. As pastoralists are mobile, these conflicts became difficult to contain and, thus, spill across borders. Consequently, the conflict has now transformed into an urbanized regional conflicts that involve some major cities along the Nigeria-Niger borderlands; Sokoto, Zamfara, and Katsina on the Nigerian side and Dosso, Taho and Maradi in Niger republic. These areas are now experiencing unprecedented growing wave of violence that have become complex and escalates into a hydra-social conflict. The aim of this research is to investigate how the fluidities of Nigeria-Niger borderland intensified armed conflicts between the local pastoral organizations and sedentary populations spreading to some urban cities along the borderlands. The paper further suggests alternative approaches towards addressing the perennial crisis in African borderlands.

Keywords : pastoralism, climate change, conflict, nigeria, niger, borderlands

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