

Between hope and despair

Pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso

Loïc Bisson
Ine Cottyn
Kars de Bruijne
Fransje Molenaar

CRU Report



Clingendael

Netherlands Institute of International Relations



Clingendael

Netherlands Institute of International Relations

Between hope and despair

Pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso

Loïc Bisson
Ine Cottyn
Kars de Bruijne
Fransje Molenaar

CRU Report
February 2021

February 2021

© Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'.

Cover photo: © Riccardo Gangale / USAID

Unauthorized use of any materials violates copyright, trademark and / or other laws. Should a user download material from the website or any other source related to the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', or the Clingendael Institute, for personal or non-commercial use, the user must retain all copyright, trademark or other similar notices contained in the original material or on any copies of this material.

Material on the website of the Clingendael Institute may be reproduced or publicly displayed, distributed or used for any public and non-commercial purposes, but only by mentioning the Clingendael Institute as its source. Permission is required to use the logo of the Clingendael Institute. This can be obtained by contacting the Communication desk of the Clingendael Institute (press@clingendael.org).

The following web link activities are prohibited by the Clingendael Institute and may present trademark and copyright infringement issues: links that involve unauthorized use of our logo, framing, inline links, or metatags, as well as hyperlinks or a form of link disguising the URL.

About the authors

Loïc Bisson, Junior Researcher, Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute.


Ine Cottyn, Former Research Fellow, Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute.


Kars de Bruijne, Senior Research Fellow, Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute.


Fransje Molenaar, Senior Research Fellow, Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute.

The Clingendael Institute
P.O. Box 93080
2509 AB The Hague
The Netherlands

Follow us on social media

 [@clingendaelorg](https://twitter.com/clingendaelorg)

 [The Clingendael Institute](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-clingendael-institute)

 [The Clingendael Institute](https://www.facebook.com/theclingendaelinstitute)

Email: cru@clingendael.org

Website: www.clingendael.org/cru

Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Executive summary	2
Introduction: pastoralism and conflict in Burkina Faso	5
Research objective and approach	7
Data collection	7
Structure of the report	9
1 Insecurity in Burkina Faso: a pastoral perspective	11
2 The root causes of the problem: natural resources governance	14
2.1 Formal land rights and pastoralist marginalization	16
2.2 Customary governance systems at the local level: pastoralists underrepresented	19
2.3 Grievances regarding access to resources: pastoralist concerns	22
2.4 Conflict resolution mechanisms and the escalation of violence	24
2.5 Conclusion	26
3 Pastoralism under strain: the end of a resilient livelihood system?	27
3.1 The inner workings of the pastoralist market	27
3.2 Actors in the pastoralist market	29
3.3 Pastoralists' adaptation and resilience: voices from the field	39
3.4 Conclusion	42
4 Main findings	43
5 Policy Recommendations	46
Annex 1 – Methodology	53

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the financial support received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. It came about with the help of people willing to share their knowledge, network, and stories on pastoralism in Burkina Faso. The authors wish to thank all the people whose assistance was a milestone in the completion of this project.

The majority of work was done by Ine Cottyn and Loïc Bisson. Ine was responsible for the first phase of the study and the data collection and did fieldwork in various regions. Loïc Bisson managed the second part data collection, analyzed all the data and drafted substantial parts of the report. Ine Cottyn then finalized the drafting and the overall report. Dr. Fransje Molenaar designed the study and the methodology and was together with Dr. Kars de Bruijne responsible for quality control. Kars de Bruijne finally, wrote the executive summary and parts of the introduction and conclusions.

We thank our research partners Mahamoudou Savadogo, Mohamadoun Amadou Diallo (Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel: CILSS) and their respective colleagues for their unceasing efforts to support the execution of our key informant interviews, focus group discussions and value chain analysis. Special thanks also go out to the Dutch representation in Burkina Faso, Maarten Rusch and Bayili Octave, who received us graciously and agreed to be interviewed as well as providing their logistical support during our fieldwork and their valuable comments on earlier drafts of the report.

We could not have written this study without the help of our colleagues at the Conflict Research Unit (CRU). This report was developed as part of both our politics and crime and business and peace lines of work. A special word of thanks goes to Jos Meester who invested time in providing comments and suggestions throughout the production of this report. We are grateful for the help of Anna van der Meulen, who was so generous with her time coding, analyzing and organizing over 120 interviews and focusing group discussions, and Anna Schmauder who provided valuable input and suggestions for this study by acting as a sounding board.

Florent Geel and Jos Meester reviewed the report, their help in improving and ensuring the quality of this study is greatly appreciated. It remains without saying that any errors or omissions are our own. Finally, we are especially grateful to the Burkinabe respondents who made themselves available for an interview, participated in focus group discussions, and generally demonstrated a willingness to share insights on such a complex topics at a time during which their country remains embroiled in serious conflict.

Executive summary

In July 2020, Jeune Afrique published a widely read article on the links between pastoralists and violent extremist organizations (VEOs) in the Sahel.¹ The article paints a bleak picture of the position of pastoralists, caught between the rock of VEO rhetoric, propaganda and recruitment attempts and the hard place of farmer community-defence forces who target (Fulani) pastoralists as they suspect links with VEOs. Why did Sahelian pastoralists end up in this precarious situation?

VEO rhetoric seeks to capitalize on longstanding tensions between pastoralists and farmers. The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) in Mali for example, exploited grievances over cattle thefts in order to intensify conflicts between Tuareg and Fulani nomads. Katiba Macina draws on narratives of the historical Macina Empire and alludes to the reinstalment of the Macina Empire, dominated by Fulani Pastoralists. While it is clear that VEOs are not exclusively driven by pastoralists' concerns and recruits, VEO rhetoric does seem to tap into a reality that is widely felt within pastoralist communities and therefore resonates with some. Why does it resonate?

This report takes an empathetic approach to pastoralists as it explores what drives pastoralists and probes into structural problems. It argues that deep-seated socio-political and economic relations have changed at the micro and macro levels and uncovers the underlying structural causes and driving forces that stand at the heart of various conflicts in the Sahel. This empathetic approach is not meant to justify violent activity nor is it meant to increase sympathy for pastoralists over the real concern of farmers in the Sahel. But it is driven by the conviction that understanding the real drivers of a resonating discourse of Sahelian VEOs among pastoralists is the pre-requisite for an effective and durable solution to the conflict.

Specifically, this report explores the underlying drivers in the Sahel, Boucle du Mouhoun and East regions in Burkina Faso (where pastoralism constitutes 40 percent of the workforce). Research was conducted in 21 villages where farmers and pastoralists share resources. The research found a rapidly (changing) political economy of pastoralist production modes as it explored pastoralist value-chains and the place of pastoralists in land regulation. While both pastoralists and other resource users were integral to the research, most research activity was aimed at pastoralist communities in an attempt to have the voice of this marginalized community represented in the debate.

1 Jeune Afrique. '[Peuls et jihadisme au Sahel : le grand malentendu](#)', 7 July 2020.

This report thus provides an understanding of the causes and drivers fuelling grievances that have sidelined pastoralists. To this end, it unpacks the relationship between pastoralism, conflict, and stability in Burkina Faso. The study finds that pastoralists face structural trends working against them.

First, a legal landscape combined with the discrepancy between national law and the local implementation of pastoral rights and a lack of enforcement of pastoralists' access rights are a major driver for pastoral concerns. This distribution of land use has had major implications for social relations governing the use of natural resources, but has also changed the local political economy of pastoral production. The net effect is that pastoralists have been losing out on the current arrangements. What this means is that "resource scarcity" is not the root cause of pastoral concerns. Rather it is that social and economic processes, and a wider political marginalisation of mobile groups, are unequally impacting pastoralists in competition over natural resources. It means that power dynamics at the local and national level shape unequal access to resources and, in turn, creates more instability and exacerbates conflicts.²

Second and closely tied to the first observation is that existing systems for local dispute resolution are increasingly breaking down. This is a real cause for concern as these mechanisms have historically proven to be effective in managing conflict and were a key mode for national and international policymakers to intervene. The problems are that these mechanisms, both customary and statutory, suffer from corruption, impunity and politicization. The effect of this mounting pile of grievances over this dispute-settling mechanism is causing even higher levels of distrust among state and local actors and affects the legitimacy of (customary) governance structures. This is exacerbated as customary and statutory systems are competing which has created legal confusion, creating instances whereby both parties turn to other – often more violent – means to control or negotiate access to resources. Where violence has wiped out central state structures, resource conflict is presently mediated through vigilante violence. It is this very immediate reality that provides a fertile ground for VEO recruitment among pastoralists as long-standing intercommunal conflicts are more and more stripped of any means to regulate them.

Third, the commercialisation of the herding sector is another major reason for a deep feeling of marginalization. Generally, it seems that commercialization, which is in part a product of development policy, is not benefitting pastoralists. Pastoral market integration is hampered by many constraints and other (often urban) actors such as middlemen are the ones that profit from changes in the production market. The immediate security situations in the Burkina aggravates livestock trade and again disproportionately affects

2 De Haan et al. 2016. *Pastoralism Development in the Sahel A Road to Stability?*, Washington: World Bank Group.

pastoralists' livelihoods. As they are affected by longstanding economic changes and increasing conflict and instability in the regional market, many pastoralists are currently forced to sell their animals at a loss or they lose their herds when they flee the violence or are attacked by armed groups.

Fourth, the economic, environmental, and socio-political reasons in combination with the spread of violence and insecurity throughout the country are finally undercutting the resilience mechanisms that pastoralists have traditionally used to deal with setbacks, particularly mobility. Agricultural expansion and the spread of insecurity have fragmented pastoral corridors and grazing areas. Pastoral mobility or transhumance is a key asset of sustainable livelihoods for pastoralists and an essential resilience and adaptation mechanism. This mobility, already challenged by issues related to demographic growth, farmland encroachment and policies governing natural resources that do not protect pastoralist access to necessary resources such as pasture and water points, is further threatened by the rise of violence and conflict spreading through the region. Security has become the main decision-making factor for pastoralists engaging in the practice of transhumance, and for many this has meant the current abandonment of the practice. While transhumance trajectories in the past have sometimes been adjusted because of farmland encroachments and closed corridors to deviate from potential conflicts, the current security situation has now paralysed important trade flows.

From this the following recommendations transpire: A) Pastoralist communities need to be better included in the political decision-making processes as they are presently underrepresented both at national and local level. Addressing the root causes of violence is meant to adjust this unequal playing field of land and resources; B) Pastoralists' livelihoods have to be supported by diversification, intensification and training. The policy challenge is to develop new thinking as to how pastoral livelihoods can be sustained and combined with the new economic realities. This can take the form of new roles in the value chain, improving the place of pastoralists in the market, protecting mobility and pastoral intensification and these are the key policies that need to be put in place; C) An integrated approach to agricultural development needs to be taken. Rather than supporting either farmers or pastoralists, projects focusing on development and resilience should seek to focus on the idea of multiple resource users within targeted landscapes; D) Explicit support should be given to pastoral conflict mediation agents to prevent the escalation of localized grievances and conflicts. Clear links exist in the Rural Land Tenure Charters of the 2009 law. Revamping and supporting them is needed to mobilize support for community leaders, pastoralist mediation agents, traditional and religious authorities to help identify local solutions.

Introduction: pastoralism and conflict in Burkina Faso

In July 2020, Jeune Afrique published a widely read article on the links between pastoralists and Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) in the Sahel.³ The article paints a bleak picture of the position of pastoralists, caught between the rock of VEO rhetoric, propaganda and recruitment attempts and the hard place of farmer community-defence forces who target pastoralists – amongst which are many Fulani – as they suspect links with VEOs. Why did Sahelian pastoralists end up in this precarious situation?

Conflicts around pastoral resources have escalated in the Sahel in the last few years. Many conflicts are between sedentary farmers and nomadic pastoralists. Since October 2015, VEOs have appeared in Burkina Faso which has led to a toxic tit-for-tat dynamic between self-defence forces, VEOs and various pastoralist groups.⁴ By 2019-2020, community-based violence, VEO attacks and violence against civilians from both formal state security forces and informal self-defence groups have reached unprecedented levels.⁵

VEO rhetoric capitalizes on inter-communal tensions, mainly between pastoralists and farmers. While it is clear that VEOs are not exclusively driven by pastoralists' concerns, that they target not only Fulani but all pastoralists and that many pastoralists are unwilling to join VEOs, VEO rhetoric nevertheless seems to tap into a reality that is widely felt within pastoralist communities. Why does it resonate?

Pastoralism is an important economic activity contributing to the livelihoods of an estimated 50 million people living on the fringes of the Sahel and Sahara. In Burkina Faso pastoralists represent 40 percent of the workforce and livestock production is a significant economic force, representing 13.5 per cent of the national GDP and 19 per cent of export value.⁶

3 *Jeune Afrique*. 'Peuls et jihadisme au Sahel : le grand malentendu', 7 July 2020.

4 Cissé M. G. 2020. *Understanding Fulani Perspectives on the Sahel Crisis*, Africa Center, April; Pellerin, M. 2019. *Armed Violence in the Sahara. Are we Moving from Jihadism to Insurgency?*, IFRI, November.

5 The number of attacks on civilians and defence and security forces is escalating rapidly: one in 2015, 38 in 2016, 66 in 2017, 173 in 2018 and 349 in 2019. Data retrieved from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED).

6 Ouédraogo, Moussa. *Land tenure and rural development in Burkina Faso: Issues and Strategies*, FAO, Issue paper 112.

The Fulani are the dominant pastoralist group, but in Burkina Faso (agro-)pastoralism is the vocation of different ethnic groups that benefit from this sector.⁷ Pastoralists sell manure for the agricultural sector, and their animal production fulfils the meat and dairy demands of an ever-increasing population in growing urban centres. Apart from domestic markets, Burkinabe livestock are exported to Nigeria and other states.⁸ Bordering six ECOWAS countries, Burkina Faso has become a major hub for increasing flows of trade including livestock. Cattle markets support additional industries, such as butchers, abattoirs, vets, people supplying forage and water, and the skin and hides industry.

However, despite its economic value, pastoralism is under threat. According to pastoralists, the root causes of the problem are unequal access to pastoral resources, government policies and biased local governance systems. In addition, pastoralists argue that they face challenges to their livelihoods, driven by a structural change to the economic modes of production. As a consequence, long-standing socio-political and economic relations have changed at the micro and macro levels and they uncover the underlying structural causes and drivers that stand at the heart of various conflicts in the Sahel.

This report finds a breakdown of intercommunal trust and social cohesion between pastoralists and farmers at the local level. This allows various extremist groups to spread their operational field and recruit local militants. Instead of relying on religious ideology, groups such as Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) are employing identity-based arguments to tap into pastoralists' grievances and stigmatization to spur their recruitment. The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) mainly aims to weaken social fabric and establish the authority and legitimacy of militant extremism. Katiba Macina – another VEO – has played a particularly effective role in destabilizing the region by specifically using a rhetoric focused on Fulani grievances to fuel existing tensions (see section 1).⁹

Pointing at mobile pastoralism and ethnic Fulani as an objective and homogeneous security threat is a practice that is in dire need of correction. In fact, what is needed is a better understanding of why VEO propaganda is resonating with (Fulani) pastoralists. This study, therefore, takes an empathic standpoint and tries to explore the real underlying driver of grievances. It points to the multifaceted problems that underpin the observed dynamics: changing socio-political and economic relations at the micro and

7 UNOWAS. 2018. *Pastoralism and Security in West Africa and the Sahel. Towards Peaceful Coexistence.*

8 USAID. 2017. *Burkina Faso Staple Food and Livestock Market Fundamentals. September 2017.*

9 Katiba Macina – the Macina Liberation Front (FLM) – is one of the brigades that forms part of JNIM (Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin), a group that is mainly operational in Mali. International Crisis Group. 2020. *Burkina Faso: Stopping the Spiral of Violence.* Africa report 287, Brussels: ICG, p. 12.

macro levels. Understanding the real drivers of a resonating discourse of Sahelian VEOs among pastoralists is a pre-requisite for an effective and durable solution to the conflict.

Research objective and approach

This report finds that issues of resource competition or socio-political grievances form the core of the problems for pastoralists in Burkina Faso. Pastoralist communities face economic and political marginalisation having either been neglected by the government and international development agencies or suffering from poorly designed interventions.¹⁰ The narrative of pastoralists as a security threat de-links pastoralism-related conflicts from structural trends disrupting pastoral livelihoods and disenfranchising an ever-growing number of pastoralists in Burkina Faso.

While pastoralism is found to be at the heart of the current conflicts, a perspective on the current security crisis that starts from pastoral communities at the margins is underrepresented. This report thus aims to provide an understanding of the causes and drivers fuelling grievances that have pushed Fulani and other pastoralists to join extremist groups or engage in violent acts. It asks: what are these underlying causes and drivers of conflict and what solutions are there for the challenges that Burkinabe pastoralists face? To unpack this relationship, this study addresses three sub-questions:

1. How does the relationship between pastoralism, resource and land conflicts, and instability manifest itself in Burkina Faso?
2. How is the pastoral economy affected by the current insecurity situation in the region?
3. What governance interventions could be adopted to achieve the peaceful co-existence of competing resource users in areas under pressure and what governance interventions could be adopted to support the pastoralist economy while enhancing regional stability?

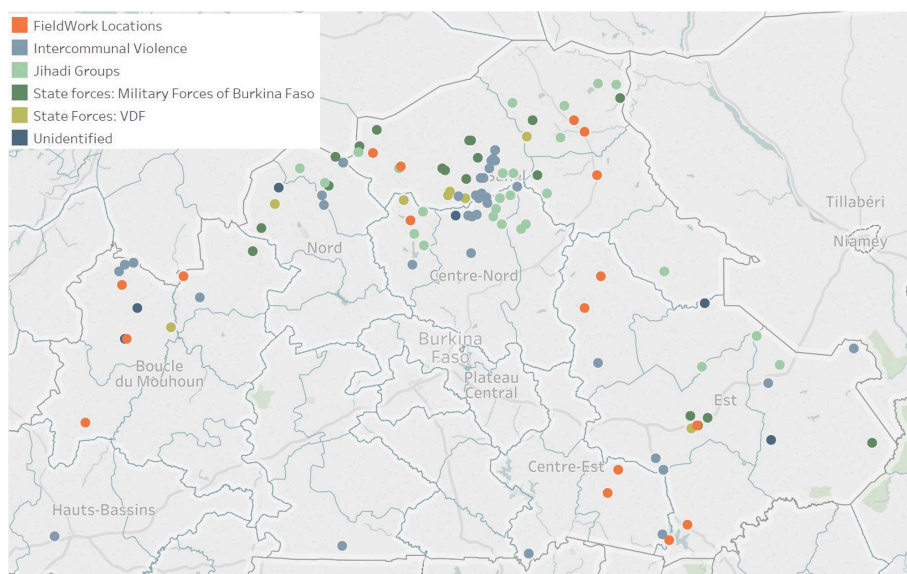
Data collection

In order to answer these questions this report draws on data collected between November 2019 and January 2020 as well as in August 2020. Data was collected in a total of 15 municipalities in Burkina Faso's East, Sahel and Boucle du Mouhoun regions. These regions are particularly hit by the spreading violence in the region (see figure 1).

10 De Haan et al. 2016. *Pastoralism Development in the Sahel A Road to Stability?*, Washington: World Bank Group.

In 15 municipalities access was gained to 19 locations where farmers and pastoralists share resources. A total of 47 focus group discussions and 81 key informant interviews were took place. These focus group discussion and key informant interview were conducted with herders, farmers, traditional authorities and state authorities, persons who operate water points and markets as well as security forces. In Boucle du Mouhou we find mainly Fulani pastoralists, while in the Sahel and East region the actors in the livestock sector are not only Fulani, but also include other ethnic groups. Given this reality, in this research we did not limit our analysis to Fulani communities, but included different groups of pastoralists in our data collection.

Figure 1 Fieldwork locations and pastoralist-related violence (2018-2020)



Interviews with policy makers, experts, (I)NGOs, the Liptako Gourma Authority and herders' and farmers' associations were conducted in Ouagadougou to identify the main policies that are currently being adopted to address resource conflicts and transhumance, their degree of implementation and effects on the livelihoods of and relationships between different pastoral actors.

Finally, detailed market information was gathered at various cattle markets. The goal was to identify the different steps in the value chain and the position of relevant stakeholders in every step. In short, the research adopted a political-economy lens to identify socio-economic and political dynamics that contribute to conflict and to identify opportunities for policy initiatives in at-risk regions of Burkina Faso. Many lessons are more widely applicable to the Sahel (and West Africa).

Structure of the report

The report is structured in five sections. The first section describes pastoral-related violence. The second section discusses governance at the local level to understand the pastoral resource governance regime at the national and local level. This section illustrates how inequality between farmers and pastoralists has less to do with formal rights than with the power relations that shape these. Pastoralists' grievances stem from their unequal capacity to secure access to resources, and the role of customary justice mechanisms in preventing the escalation of resource conflicts.

The third section of the report delves more deeply into pastoralist grievances by looking at the economic structure of pastoral livelihoods and value chains (and how these are affected by the current violence). First, the position of pastoralists in the cattle value chain is discussed showing how market dynamics drive major changes to pastoral livelihoods. Second, the unsustainability of mobility as a coping mechanism is discussed showing that violence further undercuts this key strategy employed by pastoralists to manage vulnerability and uncertainty.

The report concludes with a summary of the findings (section four) and recommendations for donors and international partners (section five) pointing at governance solutions and development initiatives.

Box 1 A note on terminology

The scholarly literature and policy debate on pastoralism and conflict in sub-Saharan Africa are complex with numerous actors and a rich terminology. For the sake of brevity and clarity, this study uses some umbrella terms that we believe best encapsulate the spirit of this study. We recognize, however, that these terms can be used to describe a broad range of practices and peoples.

Pastoralism – a livelihood system whereby more than half of the income is derived from livestock production, characterised by an extensive livestock production system that relies on spatial and temporal mobility to access land and resources.¹¹ This may include the consistent nomadic movement of livestock over long distances or the practice of moving livestock over short distances or only on a seasonal basis. Pastoralism is an adaptive practice, and the timing and the extent of pastoral mobility can vary across different ecological zones.

11 Roy H Behnke et al., "Pastoral migration. Mobile systems of livestock husbandry," in *Animal Migration– A Synthesis*, ed. EJ Milner-Gulland, J. Fryxell, and A. Sinclair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Robin S Reid, María E Fernández-Giménez, and Kathleen A Galvin, "Dynamics and resilience of rangelands and pastoral peoples around the globe," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 39 (2014), 217-242.

Transhumance – Transhumance refers specifically to regular seasonal livestock movements that typically correspond to the region’s rainy and dry seasons.¹²

Pastoralists – This term broadly refers to the people who practise some form of livestock production and to whom this livelihood is constitutive of their identity. To some extent, the profile and ethnic groups of livestock keepers also vary from country to country, and there are also subtle differences related to the type of pastoralism practised. In Burkina Faso, the Fulani have historically been the biggest cattle owners. Today, they still herd about 70 per cent of the total cattle population, but only own about half thereof.¹³ Transhumant pastoralism is practiced mainly by the Fulani. Although some of them have settled and practice crop-livestock mixed production systems – or agro-pastoralism – in society they are seen as pastoralists and as such are compared with other groups considered to be farmers. Indeed, agriculture and pastoralism are increasingly being integrated in Burkina Faso, and some farmers now own more livestock than sedentary pastoralists. The distinction between who is and who is not a pastoralist relies more on social representation, property regimes, and practices that are typical of pastoralism and mobility patterns than who owns the cows.

Farmers – Similarly, this term broadly refers to the people who mainly practise agriculture.

Customary/traditional authority – refers to “an institution that derives full or partial legitimacy from the tribal / ethnic / cultural values of a group of people (wherever they are) who share them.” Throughout this report, we will use the terms traditional leaders and customary leaders interchangeably. They are an informal source of governance, as the Constitution of Burkina Faso recognizes traditional leaders as “moral authorities” and “custodians of traditions and customs in [Burkinabè] society.”¹⁴

12 D Turner, M and Schlecht, E. 2019. “Livestock mobility in sub-Saharan Africa: A critical review,” *Pastoralism* s9, no. 1 (2019); De Haan et al. 2016. *Pastoralism Development in the Sahel: A Road to Stability?* Washington, D.C: World Bank.

13 Gonin, A. and D. Gautier. 2015. ‘Shift in herders’ territorialities from regional to local scale: the political ecology of pastoral herding in western Burkina Faso.’ *Pastoralism* 5(7).

14 For our definition of traditional or customary authorities we refer to the interpretation as described in Molenaar, F., Tossel, J., Schmauder, A., Idrissa, A. and Lyammouri, R., August 2019, *The Status Quo Defied: The legitimacy of traditional authorities in areas of limited statehood in Mali, Niger and Libya*, The Hague: Clingendael Institute, p. 26.

« [La Constitution de la IVème République du Burkina Faso](#),” June 2, 1991.

1 Insecurity in Burkina Faso: a pastoral perspective

In Burkina Faso, violence is rapidly escalating across the country with a recorded civil death toll reaching over 1000 in 2020 alone.¹⁵ Violence first mainly plagued the Sahel, East and Centre-North regions, but since 2018 VEOs are expanding their actions into the North and the Boucle du Mouhoun regions. While attacks used to be mainly against security forces, now, however, the militants are increasingly targeting civilians.

While many acts of violence remain unclaimed, they are allocated to a mix of actions by self-defence groups, abuses by national security forces and attacks by VEOs. There are a number of interrelated factors underlying these conflicts; however, a major influence is the spread of VEOs from Mali and Niger, who import violence by instrumentalising existing tensions and in particular exploit pastoralist grievances. They tap into the discontent that many rural communities have towards the state, which was weakened by the fall of former President Blaise Compaoré in 2014.¹⁶

Militants are largely motivated by local concerns, including farmers and herders who are victims of land-related injustices or racketeering, bandits, gold miners, or stigmatised populations seeking protection.¹⁷ A common factor is contesting governmental authority in the areas where it operates which has translated into the targeting of security forces, civil servants, traditional authorities or community members who are seen as collaborating with government representatives in order to create a power and governance vacuum.

The main extremist groups that are active in Burkina Faso are the homegrown Ansarul Islam and groups from Mali, like the Macina Liberation Front (FLM), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), which started gaining a foothold in Burkina Faso in late 2015.

The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), originally based in Mali and Niger, is mainly operating in the Liptako-Gourma border zone (Mali, Burkina and Niger) and made its first inroads in the North of Burkina Faso by the end of 2016. In their aim to

15 Interview with country director DRC Burkina Faso, October 2019.

16 The New Humanitarian. [In eastern Burkina Faso, local grievances help militancy take root](#). 15 January 2019. (Accessed November 2020).

17 International Crisis Group. 2020. [Burkina Faso: Stopping the Spiral of Violence](#). Africa report 287, Brussels: ICG.

stretch their zone of influence, their strategy is to take advantage of existing tensions at community level to weaken the social fabric and to establish the authority and legitimacy of militant extremism. In Mali, for example, ISGS has exploited grievances over cattle thefts in order to intensify conflicts between Tuareg and Fulani nomads.

Particularly the FLM and Ansaroul Islam incorporate local grievances in particular as Fulani preachers concentrate on stoking Fulani herding feelings of injustice and resentment toward the government. The FLM, also known as Katiba Macina, has played a particularly effective role in destabilizing the region using a rhetoric focused on Fulani grievances to fuel existing tensions. Emphasizing their domestic roots, they draw on narratives of the historical Macina Empire to gain popular support and allude to the reinstatement of the Macina Empire, dominated by the Fulani ethnic group and under Islamic rule. Their effectiveness stems from using radio to communicate in Fulfulde (the native Fulani language), endorsing feelings of injustice and discrimination while calling for more equality of opportunity and political reform.¹⁸ This resonates, in particular, among young Fulani herders.

Ansaroul Islam appeared on the scene in late 2016 and are mainly active in the Soum and Centre-North regions of Burkina Faso. Founded by Ibrahim Malam Dicko, a Fulani preacher, this group also aims at recruiting young Fulani men by drawing on their feelings of neglect by the central government. These tactics explain why many of these groups' recruits are likely to be Fulani and why the media and the authorities alike often refer to these groups as Fulani movements.

Fulani participation in or support for these (and other) groups has led to many observers simplifying the situation as a 'Fulani Jihad', which served as part of the justification for state and self-defence groups' violence against Fulani civilians. Despite the fact that it is a minority of Fulani who take up arms or join these groups, it has led to the subsequent stigmatization and abuse of the entire Fulani community.¹⁹ VEOs are however not exclusively driven by Fulani concerns and recruits and neither do they target only Fulani, but rather tap into a broader tendency of the increasing breakdown of social trust and cohesion at the local level.

Exploiting injustices is frequently linked to land disputes and coupled with political and community-based issues. Before the 2014 political crisis, most reported conflicts concerned disputes between herders, generally from the Fulani tribe, and farmers. Moreover, unequal competition over land and water resources due to agricultural developments and land speculation, declining supplies, the obstruction of transhumance routes and the non-application of legislation was another reason. While these farmer-

18 Le Roux, P. 2019. [Confronting Central Mali's Extremist Threat](#). Africa Center, February.

19 Cissé M.G. 2020. [Understanding Fulani Perspectives on the Sahel Crisis](#). Africa Center, April.

herder tensions have a long history all over Africa, these tensions were often locally managed in a more or less peaceful manner, and violence was limited in scale.²⁰

The activities of extremist groups and the emergence of civilian self-defence groups have increased violence. Civilian self-defence groups began to form in 2014 and three self-defence groups have emerged.²¹ The Koglweogo mainly operate in the eastern, central and northern provinces and are often tied to traditional authorities as they fight crime and provide – often brutal – justice. They mainly recruit their members from the Mossi ethnic group that represents almost 50 per cent of the population.²² In the Eastern regions they are known as Gourmantché and different variations of the Koglweogo exist. There are an estimated 4500 Koglweogo groups that are active in Burkina Faso, and they are made up of around 45,000 members.

Second, the Dozos are traditional hunters of the Dogon community mainly active in western Burkina Faso and provide security and protection services. The stigmatization of Fulani has triggered the targeting of this community by Koglweogo and Dozo militias. Brought into the fight against VEOs, the Koglweogo are responsible for several massacres of members of the Fulani ethnic group, who they accuse of collaborating with these militants.²³ This has escalated into a deadly cycle of revenge and reprisals.²⁴ In 2012, a union of herder representatives went on to protect pastoralists in the East and North of the country through the Rouga.²⁵ The Rouga are dominated by the Fulani and emerged specifically to counter Koglweogo and Dozo activities, and they mainly deal with issues of cattle theft and extortion that pastoralist communities often experience.

20 Cissé M.G. 2020. *Understanding Fulani Perspectives on the Sahel Crisis*. Africa Center, April.

21 *The New Humanitarian*. 'Jihadis, vigilantes, and demoralised troops: A who's who in Burkina Faso's spiralling crisis.' 9 March 2020.

22 Lankoandé, W.E. 2020. *Burkina Faso's rocky road to democratic consolidation*. The Hague: Clingendael.

23 *Africa Center*. 'How Violent Extremist Groups Exploit Intercommunal Conflicts in the Sahel.' 26 February 2020.

24 *Africa Center*. 'Understanding Fulani Perspectives on the Sahel Crisis.' 22 April 2020.

25 International Crisis Group. 2020. *Burkina Faso: Stopping the Spiral of Violence*. Africa report 287, Brussels: ICG.

2 The root causes of the problem: natural resources governance

Competition over water and pasture – typically between herders or between nomadic herders and sedentary farmers – and resulting conflicts go back centuries (see section 1). But whereas competition often had a symbiotic component to it, today competition leads to violent conflict.²⁶ Generally, these conflicts can be classified into conflicts over damaged crops, conflicts over the use of watering points, conflicts over cattle rustling, land disputes and conflicts over blocked transhumance corridors.²⁷

There are a number of reasons why violent resource competition is growing in Burkina Faso. In recent years, the effects of climate change, demographic growth, processes of farmland expansion at the expense of pasturelands and the privatisation of land have all deteriorated pastureland and increased the general pressure on natural resources. This section however argues that it is not these factors but rather the increasingly failing and exclusive (local) governance structures that lie at the heart of the problem.

Competition between resource users is present in every community, but it was usually ‘amicably’ resolved as resource governance systems matched the local political economy. As a result, for years there was an effective mechanism for conflict management that was moreover resilient in the face of new pressures. Currently, violent conflict is erupting especially due to shortcomings in these governance systems and failing conflict resolution mechanisms, meant to regulate access to natural resources.

The implication is that our research suggests no direct correlation between the presence (or scarcity) of natural resources and violent conflict. Scarcity, access to and control over natural resources are often put forward as key drivers of the farmer-herder conflict, which is too often reduced to issues relating to the rights of access to and the

26 FAO. 2000. *Conflict and Natural Resource Management*, Rome: FAO, p. 2.

27 Diop. 2012. *La transhumance transfrontalière en Afrique de l’Ouest Proposition de plan d’action*, Accra: FAO.

privatisation of pastureland.²⁸ In fact, inequality between farmers and pastoralists has less to do with unequal access rights and competition over resources, than with the power relations that shape it. We find that pastoralists in Burkina Faso compete with farmers on an unequal playing field and are structurally marginalized, which leads to grievances regarding their access to land and resources.

The approach we take in this section is to start from a rural political economy analysis. Hence, we employ an economic understanding of how pastoral and agropastoral communities use rangelands and watering points. From that, we subsequently explore the specific role of land governance and (feelings of) the structural exclusion of the pastoralist community. For this reason, this section analyses the main policies and laws governing pastoral land and resource use in Burkina Faso, followed by an analysis of how this is translated into governance at the community level and how the mechanisms of conflict mediation that are in place cope with the new dynamics.

We find that there is a latent set of underlying intercommunal conflicts encapsulated in land-use rights. Latent conflicts are present in structural inequalities in the legal definitions of land ownership and resource use. This has resulted in some user groups being consistently excluded from participating in natural resource management. As new pressures have resulted in further changes in the social and political space, greater conflict over these underlying grievances has started to materialize.

In this section we first paint the legal landscape governing land and natural resources in Burkina Faso, indicating how pastoralists have been largely excluded from political decision-making processes and are underrepresented both at the national and local level. The net effect is that pastoralists have been losing out on the current arrangements. We then discuss what lies at the heart of pastoral grievances, namely the fact that the wider political marginalisation of mobile groups is unequally impacting pastoralists in competition over natural resources. Finally, we explore how conflicts between farmers and pastoralists as a consequence of these dynamics are mediated at the local level and when these conflicts risk escalating into violence.

28 Fratkin, E. 2001. 'East African pastoralism in transition: Maasai, Boran, and Rendille cases'. *African Studies Review* 44(3): p. 1-25; Homewood, K.M., Rodgers, W.A. 2004. *Maasailand ecology: pastoralist development and wildlife conservation in Ngorongoro, Tanzania*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Lesorogol, C.K. 2008. 'Land privatization and pastoralist well-being in Kenya'. *Development and Change* 39(2): p. 309-331; McCabe, J.T., Leslie, P.W., DeLuca, L. 2010. 'Adopting cultivation to remain pastoralists: the diversification of Maasai livelihoods in northern Tanzania'. *Human ecology* 38(3): p. 321-334.

2.1 Formal land rights and pastoralist marginalization

Local customary rights and overarching institutional regimes govern how actors appropriate resources and restrict the access rights of others. In Burkina Faso, colonial-era laws and policies have been inimical to pastoral livelihoods and set up land tenure regimes that excluded pastoralists. These laws already confined pastoralists to the margins of the law.²⁹ This trend has continued throughout the post-colonial era, despite major land tenure and rural land planning reforms throughout the 1980s and 1990s. For example, in Burkina Faso no legislation explicitly mentioned pastureland.³⁰ Uncultivated spaces – that is to say often pastureland – were de facto regarded as belonging to the state.³¹

Whereas, for decades, no significant steps were taken to secure these spaces for pastoralists' activities and mobility, the pastoral law of 2002, 'Loi d'orientation relative au pastoralisme 2009-034' (LORP), was the first framework law on pastoralism ever to be adopted in the country. The law formalized several types of pastoral areas, including village grazing land, forests, fallow fields, fields after harvest and stock routes. Local sedentary communities were responsible for the protection of these resources. The law established herd mobility as a fundamental right, which was a crucial step forward.

However, unlike Niger's 1993 Rural Code which elevated customary systems to the same legal status as statutory land property and substantially strengthened pastoralists' control of resources in their home territory, Burkina Faso opted for a more technocratic approach. It focused on integrated land-use planning that included provisions for the establishment of pastoral grazing reserves.³² Yet the state largely failed to apply this law. Its implementing decrees were only adopted in 2007 thereby creating delay and confusion in clearly delimiting protected pastoral areas, which were progressively

29 Davies, J., Ogali, C., Slobodian, L., Roba, G., Ouedraogo, R. 2018. *Crossing boundaries: legal and policy arrangements for cross-border pastoralism*, Rome: FAO.; Maïga, B. 2005. 'L'accès aux pâturages dans le delta intérieur du Niger', In *Le droit en Afrique: expériences locales et droit étatique au Mali*, ed. G. Hesselting, M. Djiré, Paris: Karthala.; Saïbou, I. 2010. *Les coupeurs de route: histoire du banditisme rural et transfrontalier dans le bassin du lac Tchad*. Paris: Karthal.; Schmid, U. 2001. 'Legal Pluralism as a Source of Conflict in Multi-Ethnic Societies.' *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 33(46): p. 1-47.

30 Burkina Faso. 1986. *Réformes Agraires et Foncières.*; Burkina Faso. 1992. n° 001/MFP/MAT/SG/DDET. 13 January.; Burkina Faso. 1992. *Circulaires Interministérielle n° 018/FP/MAT*. 16 April.; Burkina Faso. 1996. *Loi n°014/96/ADP Loi portant réorganisation agraire et foncière*. 23 May.

31 Gonin, A. and Gautier, D. 2016. 'Herders' territorialities and social differentiation in Western Burkina Faso'. *Nomadic Peoples*, 20(1): pp. 62-87.

32 Dyer, N., Omondi, S., Wantsusi, M. 2008. *Securing pastoralism in East and West Africa: protecting and promoting livestock mobility*. London: IIED.; Robert, E. 2010. 'Les zones pastorales comme solution aux conflits agriculteurs/pasteurs au Burkina Faso: l'exemple de la zone pastorale de la Doubégué', *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer. Revue de géographie de Bordeaux* 63(249).

encroached by agriculture over that 5-year period. By the time the law was adopted, many open access pasturelands had already been encroached by farmers, an ongoing process since the 1990s.³³

Apart from the absence of decrees, the law was also not implemented at the level of conflict mediation, creating impunity when it came to acting against encroachments into pastoral grazing reserves by farmers. Grievances against this violation of pastoral zones in their community without any reaction from any authority are high among pastoralists.³⁴ In practice, they claim, when a case of damaged crops is brought to court, the question of whether the damaged field is located in a restricted pastureland or in a livestock corridor according to the 2002 law is never raised. The lack of statutory legislation until 2002 and the subsequent lack of enforcement and a failure to protect pastoral areas have created a permissive legal landscape in which farmers can claim property rights while mobile pastoralists can only obtain fleeting access rights to their ancestral territories.

Eventually, the 2002 law proved to be a double burden on pastoral communities. On the one hand, it limited their mobility and access to land and resources by law by imposing on them a farmer-centric and exclusive type of property regime. Granting pastoralists protected pastoral areas confines them to finite spaces and restrains their mobility by introducing compulsorily transhumance certificates to allow them to move around. On the other hand, these laws failed to protect areas and rights granted to pastoralists in the first place. As a result, the state assumes control over pastoralist mobility, but fails to protect them. This is in line with a wider push towards the sedentarization of pastoralism. While the value of pastoral mobility and the need to secure transhumance is affirmed in the LORP, this accomplishment is undermined by Article 2 of Decree No. 2007-416 – concerning the methods for identifying and securing special grazing areas and areas of land reserved for cattle grazing – where the focus is specifically placed on the promotion of the sedentarization and the eventual modernisation of traditional livestock farming. The measures put forward in this decree are intended to create the conditions for the gradual disappearance of transhumance.³⁵

33 Burkina Faso. 2003. *Loi n° 034-2002/an loi d'orientation relative au pastoralisme au Burkina Faso*. January.; Gonin, A., Gautier, D. 2015. 'Shift in herders' territorialities from regional to local scale: the political ecology of pastoral herding in western Burkina Faso'. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 5(7): p. 1-12.

34 Focus group discussion with pastoralists, Komienga, East Region, 9 December 2019.

35 IPAR. 2015. *Etat des lieux et analyse de la prise en compte du foncier pastoral dans les politiques et les cadres réglementaires en Afrique de l'Ouest*. Dakar: IPAR, p. 5.

In 2009 the Rural Land Tenure Law was passed formalizing different land tenure types in rural areas, which is to be applied on a municipal scale. However, also this law makes no provision for protecting regional stock routes and transhumance routes that supersede the municipal level. Under this law the development of local charters to regulate ownership tenure and access to land is promoted, with explicit mention being given to pastureland. These local charters are to be drawn up at community level, where community members come together to discuss norms and rules of natural resource management. In theory these rules are checked as to whether or not they contradict national law with the support of the Directorate General of Pastoral Spaces and Facilities (DGEACP). However, local elites with connections in Ouagadougou dominated the process and pastoralists rarely took part in drawing up charters.³⁶

The imposition of national priorities over pastoral interests has a longer history, as pastoralist communities have long been marginalized and excluded by institutions and policies that do not serve their interests or support their livelihoods.³⁷ International policymakers have a long history of promoting sedenterization in sub-Saharan Africa. In the post-colonial context of the late 20th century, policies were supportive of sedentary agriculture, to the detriment of regional pastoral mobility practices. Policies were often aimed at pluri-activity for sedentary farmers, or involved attempts at forced semi-sedentarization through pastoral centres and herding areas.³⁸ This continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with a third of all the funds spent on livestock between 1968 and 2010 being dedicated to creating sedentary ranches based on the American intensive model between 1968 and 1980.³⁹

These former projects failed to develop a sedentary livestock economy that could replace traditional and mobile systems to provide enough livestock, meat, and milk for the growing urban and international markets. In spite of this failure, present-day

36 Gonin, A., Gautier, D. 2015. 'Shift in herders' territorialities from regional to local scale: the political ecology of pastoral herding in western Burkina Faso'. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 5(7): p. 1-12.

37 Nori, M.; Taylor, M. and A. Sensi. 2008. *Droits pastoraux, modes de vie et adaptation au changement climatique*. London: IIED; Homewood, K. 2008. 'Ecology of African Pastoralist Societies.' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 43(1): p. 162-165; Osman, A.M.K., Olesambu, E. and C. Balfroid. 2018. *Pastoralism in Africa's drylands: reducing risks, addressing vulnerability and enhancing resilience*. Rome: FAO.

38 Moutari, I. M. and F.Giraut. 2013. 'Le corridor de transhumance au Sahel: un archétype de territoire multitué ?' *L'Espace géographique* 4(42): p. 306-323.

39 Gonin, A., Gautier, D. 2015. 'Shift in herders' territorialities from regional to local scale: the political ecology of pastoral herding in western Burkina Faso'. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 5(7): p. 1-12.

livestock policies in the Sahel maintain a sedentary bias.⁴⁰ This can be traced back to the meagre representation of pastoralists and specifically the Fulani at the level of the policy-making institutions. In Burkina Faso, pastoralists' political representation is weak or non-existent, making it a central aim for pastoral organisations in the country to give pastoralists a voice in civil society and politics, so that they can influence decision-making. When pastoralists are represented, these are usually elite and rich urban pastoralists who are not representative of the majority of impoverished, rural pastoralists.

As a result, and within the framework of decentralization, in Burkina Faso policymakers plan to delimit new pastoral territories under the control of local authorities. The main goal is to increase the number of pastoral territories from 24 in 2013 to 120 in 2025. These territories are envisioned as development centres for intensive production on fattening farms using fodder and the genetic improvement of cattle breeds. Sedentary livestock production in confined village territories with limited available resources is proving difficult, requiring either high quantities of purchased fodder or entrusting the herds to pastoralist herders to guide them to greener pastures. As such, livestock policies have not only jeopardized traditional pastoralism, but sedentary livestock production as well, forcing farmers to incorporate their animals in pastoralists' transhumant herds.⁴¹

2.2 Customary governance systems at the local level: pastoralists underrepresented

National law, however, is not the only land regime that governs pastoralists. At the local level, customary systems are similarly to the detriment of pastoralists. Competition between formal and traditional governance systems is a legacy of changing land governance systems in Burkina Faso. Before the 1970s land management was largely left to customary institutions and was governed according to customary law. This approach was reversed under Thomas Sankara's regime (1983-1987) and in 1984 all land and management rights were vested in the state and the legitimacy and even the recognition of customary land rights were denied. After 1987 there has been a gradual change in the opposite direction and in 2012 a revision legally divided the national domain in land held

40 In Burkina Faso a guiding motif is found among reports on general livestock policy orientations: "transforming traditional herd-breeding into intensive or semi-intensive livestock husbandry" (Plan d'actions et programme d' investissements du sous-secteur de l'élevage 2010-2015 2010; Politique nationale de développement durable de l'élevage au Burkina Faso 2010; Stratégie d'aménagement, de sécurisation et de valorisation des espaces et aménagements pastoraux 2009).

41 In interviews farmers and pastoralists indicate how farmers are increasingly giving their animals to herders in all three regions.

by the state, by municipalities (local collectives) and by private actors. The land tenure regime complements the country's ongoing initiative to decentralize a broad array of political and administrative responsibilities. Even though the 2009 Rural Land Tenure Law and the 2012 RAF give the mandate to formalize different tenure types, most of the land remains under the governance of customary and informal rules.⁴² This history has created confusion amongst local land users.

In all research locations, answers as to who governed and managed local natural resources differed and some would even wonder whether there was any mechanism in place. Generally speaking, the Village development councils (CVD), the Chief and the Chef de terre were identified. Customary chiefs are traditionally the ones entitled to distribute and allocate community land and are responsible for the enforcement customary rules that accord with state policy. Land is allocated through donations, loans and successions administered by the chief, and when outsiders want to settle in the community land is allocated subject to the condition that they abide by local customs. A major concern is that customary authorities tend to be exclusionary in their methods of allocating land parcels, discriminating against pastoralists – who are perceived as outsiders – women and young people.

In Burkina Faso chiefs are not formal agents of the state and do not receive salaries or public funds, and their re-won powers risk turning into opportunities for rent-seeking behaviour and corruption.⁴³ The Tengsoaba (Mossi for maître de terre) is another important traditional figure with nominal power over land succession rights who cooperates alongside the institutionalised figure of the village chief.⁴⁴ He encapsulates the physical link with the ancestry in his succession whilst also representing a decisive judicial personality for the transfer of property in localised communities. Local customs are shaped by the interests of farming communities, often promoting the exclusive occupation of land by farming.

Village development councils (CVD), which are responsible for conceiving formal policies regarding land-use planning, are the action space for sedentary farmers. Pastoralists who depended on flexible and seasonal resources rather than territorial control have long avoided village politics. Farmers, on the contrary, take advantage of the social prestige represented by their wealth and landholdings to occupy most seats on the municipal councils and CVDs. In virtually all of the municipalities where we conducted interviews, except Gayeri, farmers are better represented than pastoralists in the CVDs. Therefore, land planning is governed by a body dominated by farmers, tasked

42 Ouédraogo, M. 2002. [Land tenure and rural development in Burkina Faso: Issues and Strategies](#). Issue paper 112, London: IIED.

43 Idrissa, R. 2019. *Tinder to the Fire. Burkina Faso in the Conflict Zone*. Dakar: RLS.

44 FAO. 2018. [Autorités traditionnelles et institutions coutumières](#).

with governing the conditions of resource competition with those who they see as outsiders. CVDs often fail to set up pastoral areas in their locality despite the presence of pastoralist populations and the fact that this is their prerogative. Pastoralists have a clear dissatisfaction with the functioning of local CVDs stating that they are often not functional and biased in terms of access to resources.⁴⁵ The one exception we came across in our research is Gayeri, where both farmers and pastoralists claim to be equally represented in the CVD, accounting for the highest level of satisfaction with resource management.⁴⁶ Interestingly enough, this is also the only CVD with women being represented and having fair access to resources, suggesting that inclusive governance for farmers includes inertia in including all historically marginalized groups.

This unlevel playing field for natural resource management is often turning out to be disadvantageous for pastoralists. They cannot fall back on national laws governing the rural space including Burkina Faso's 2002 Pastoral Policy Act to protect their access, as these are hardly enforced and suffer from a lack of implementation due to the absence of decrees. In addition, while these fair policy frameworks for natural resource management may be in place, they might be ignored or perverted in their implementation at the local level. For example, pastoral zones and corridors that are delineated at the national level are not protected. A difference in the nature and scope of farmers' and herders' rights explains part of the power imbalance.⁴⁷ Access to water and pasturelands is based on open access and not ownership rights.⁴⁸ This property regime is still a widespread conception among pastoralists since it fits the pastoralists' mobile lifestyle.⁴⁹ Open access is weakened as it is subject to farmers' power to change land use from pastoral to agricultural.⁵⁰ The expansion of agriculture is leading to the extension of exclusive rights and a symmetrical decline in open property for pastoralists.

45 Focus group discussion with pastoralists, Bogande, East Region, 10 December 2019.

46 Focus group discussions in Gayeri with pastoralists and farmers, December 2019.

47 Gonin, A.; Filoche, G and P. L. Delville. 2019. 'Dynamics of Access to Pastoral Resources in a Farming Area (Western Burkina Faso): Unveiling Rights in Open Access Regimes'. *International Journal of the Commons* 13(2) : p. 1049-1061.

48 Gonin, A. 2018. 'Des pâturages en partage: Territoires du pastoralisme en Afrique de l'Ouest'. *Revue internationale des études du développement* 233(1): p. 33-52.; Gonin, A.; Filoche, G and P. L. Delville. 2019. 'Dynamics of Access to Pastoral Resources in a Farming Area (Western Burkina Faso): Unveiling Rights in Open Access Regimes'. *International Journal of the Commons* 13(2): p. 1049-1061.

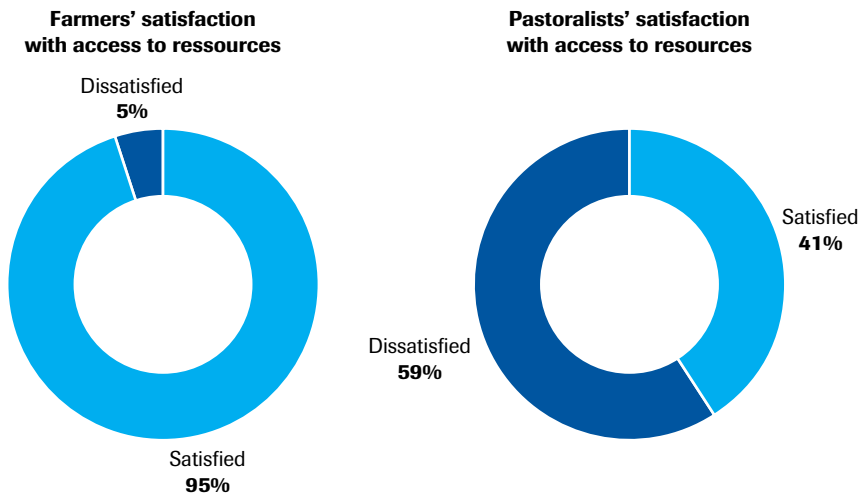
49 Schlager, E. and E. Ostrom. 1992. 'Property-rights regimes and natural resources: a conceptual analysis'. *Land economics* 68(3): p.249-262.

50 Gonin, A.; Filoche, G and P. L. Delville. 2019. 'Dynamics of Access to Pastoral Resources in a Farming Area (Western Burkina Faso): Unveiling Rights in Open Access Regimes'. *International Journal of the Commons* 13(2): p. 1049-1061.

2.3 Grievances regarding access to resources: pastoralist concerns

What are the effects of these formal and customary land regimes on the perceptions of pastoralists? To this end, we conducted a number of interviews to explore these perceptions. While both farmers and pastoralists hold grievances regarding access to natural resources and land, farmers are mostly satisfied with the current distribution of resources while pastoralists feel overwhelmingly dissatisfied. Some 95 per cent of interviewed farmers across the 3 regions stated that they were satisfied with their current access to resources, while only 41 per cent of all interviewed pastoralists said they were satisfied (see figure 2 below).

Figure 2 Farmers' and pastoralists' satisfaction with access to resources



Pastoralists' main grievances revolve around depleted resources, poor access rights to water points and land, and the occupation of pastureland and cattle tracks by cash crops and farmland. These grievances are interconnected, as the obstruction of corridors have ripple effects and constrain their access to water points or pastureland. The intensity of these problems fluctuates in time and space depending on how advanced the agricultural season is and where they are in the territory. During the planting and harvesting period, protected pastoral areas and cattle tracks are occupied by farmers, and it becomes difficult for pastoralists to access resources without sparking conflicts with these actors.⁵¹ In addition, because an increasing number of farmers are

51 Focus group discussion with pastoralists, Bogande. East Region, 10 December 2019; Focus group discussion with young pastoralists, Gayeri, East Region, 11 December 2019.

expanding their activities to livestock production, they often keep the crop residues they used to share with pastoralists for their own herds.⁵² This is a major new point of discontent among pastoralists, for whom crop residues are crucial to fatten their own animals. In dealing with these challenges, pastoralists indicate that they regret the lack of support from the state in protecting pastoral zones from agricultural encroachment.⁵³ They see themselves “at a clear disadvantage compared to farmers” in terms of access to resources, especially when it comes to farmers illegally occupying restricted pastoral areas without repercussion from the authorities.⁵⁴

Farmers also recognize that due to demographic growth and prolonged droughts, competition over land and water is increasing, but scarcity does not seem to translate into reduced access to resources for them.⁵⁵ Most of them explain that “as farmers, [they] do not face any major difficulties in accessing natural resources.”⁵⁶ They understand resource management as “equal” and “fair” and are satisfied with it.⁵⁷ Some farmers seem to be generally oblivious to the dynamics of exclusion and refute grievances from pastoralists and blame pastoralists for being anarchic, incapable of using resources sustainably and destroying their fields with their herds. Overall, farmers’ grievances have less to do with poor access than with competing resource use by other actors who are challenging the status quo. For example, they also see the arrival of internally displaced people or gold miners in their communities as threats.⁵⁸

Conflicts arising from mutual transgressions by both farmers and herders are an inherent part of negotiations on access to resources.⁵⁹ For example, just as much as farmers claim land tenure by physically clearing the land and planting crops, damaging

52 Focus group discussion with pastoralists, Fada, East Region, 8 December 2019.

53 Focus group discussion with young pastoralists, Pama, East Region, 11 December 2019.

54 Focus group discussion with pastoralist women, Fada, East Region, 10 December 2019.

55 Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Nouna, Boucle du Mouhoun, 12 December 2019; Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Gorom, Sahel region, 19 December 2019.

56 Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Barani, Boucle du Mouhoun, 13 January 2020; Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Komienga, East Region, 10 December 2019; Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Fada, East Region, 10 December 2019; Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Gayeri, East Region, 11 December 2019; Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Dori, Sahel Region, 30 January 2020.

57 Interview with local authority, Barani, Boucle du Mouhoun, 12 December 2019.

58 Focus group discussion with farmers and other resource users, Djibo, Sahel Region, 29 January 2020.

59 Le Meur, P.Y. and P. Hochet. 2010. ‘Property relations by other means: conflict over dryland resources in Benin and Mali’. *The European Journal of Development Research* 22(5): p. 643–659.; Turner, M. D. 2004. ‘Changing uses of wealth stores by rural smallholders: Description of an approach used for longitudinal analysis of livestock transactions in the Sahel’. In *Adapting social science to the changing focus of international agricultural research*, (ed.) Ehui, S.K.; Lynam, J. and I. Okike. p. 193–208. Nairobi: ILRI.

crops with their herds is one of the few tools left to pastoralists who want to make use of their access rights over the land. Pastoralists intentionally enter fields and destroy crops to protest against land encroachment and reclaim the area. A case in point occurred in August 2009 where, despite the pastureland being made a protected zone by the 2002 law, pastoralists were convicted and were forced to pay a fine to the farmer in question. As in other fields with political dimensions, those actors with the greatest access to power are also best able to control and influence natural resource decisions in their favour. While pastoralists complain about unequal access rights to open resources, farmers point to competing resource use – practices they see as challenging their rights over these resources.

2.4 Conflict resolution mechanisms and the escalation of violence

Open conflicts between farmers and pastoralists are the visible manifestation of power relations concerning access rights and illustrate and uncover the fragile relational dynamics governing the sharing of natural resources between competing groups. Historically, customary justice systems have been decisive in settling domestic issues and intra-group clashes, particularly in rural areas where the state has limited reach.⁶⁰ For conflicts between pastoralists and other resource users, it is often local traditional leaders who are the first responders to everyday resource disputes and can play a key role in both mediating conflicts and preventing their escalation.⁶¹

In the different resource locations smaller disputes are usually settled amicably between the actors involved. These involve chiefs, religious leaders, or other intermediaries such as the Rouga.⁶² Traditional authorities may serve as a credible first line of defence to mediate disputes or help to regulate the community use of resources, before turning to state authorities when enforcement is beyond their capacity.⁶³ Depending on the gravity of the issue or in case a settlement cannot be reached the case is brought before the Chef, the CVD, the prefecture or is taken up the ladder of the formal justice system. Pastoralists generally prefer more informal mechanisms, which they claim they trust more than formal mechanisms which they often consider to be dysfunctional or to their

60 Molenaar, F.; Tossel, J.; Schmauder, A.; Idrissa., R.; and R. Lyammouri. 2019. [*The Status Quo Defied: The legitimacy of traditional authorities in areas of limited statehood in Mali, Niger and Libya*](#). The Hague: Clingendael Institute.

61 Olaniyi, R.O. 2015. 'Bororo Fulani Pastoralists and Yoruba Farmers' Conflicts in the Upper Ogun River, Oyo State Nigeria, 1986–2004'. *Journal of Asian and African studies* 50(2): pp. 239-252.

62 For more information on the Rouga see Molenaar, F., Tossel, J., Schmauder, A., Idrissa, A. and Lyammouri, R., August 2019, [*The Status Quo Defied: The legitimacy of traditional authorities in areas of limited statehood in Mali, Niger and Libya*](#), The Hague: Clingendael Institute, p. 60.

63 International Crisis Group. 2017. *Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict*, International Crisis Group. Brussels: International Crisis Group.

disadvantage.⁶⁴ Likewise, farmers express more trust in traditional mechanisms that can promote good inter-community relations.

While customary solutions have often resulted in amicable resolutions of localised conflicts, our research highlights a key bottleneck: legal pluralism/overlapping jurisdiction between state and customary law. Many pastoral and farming communities operate within legally plural administrative systems, in which multiple sources of authority (including state and traditional authorities) exercise political power.⁶⁵ Legal pluralism can be a particular risk of conflict when local authorities choose to manipulate or exploit conflict resolution mechanisms for their own gain.⁶⁶ It may give rise to political splintering and “forum shopping,” in which each aggrieved party seeks favour through competing centres of authority (e.g., a traditional chief, mayor, the police and the gendarmery).

The effect is that pastoralists and farmers will often resort to different authorities to have their problem heard. Since the CVDs, tasked with governing land disputes at the local level, massively favour farmers as presented in the previous section, pastoralists will often prefer to seek the help of other customary authorities. In similar ways, as happens for example in Boucle du Mouhoun, the chief can allow pastoralists to enter the community – drawn in to herd his cattle – without the agreement of the farmers. The farmers will bypass the authorities or mechanisms for conflict resolution and will go straight to the police, because they do not trust the authorities to be neutral. By having recourse to modern legal proceedings, they anticipate that the judge’s ruling will be based on national law, which tends to be biased towards farmers. This accentuates another important limitation of the traditional system, since at the national level there is no law that recognises local rules of conflict mediation. If someone disagrees with the way a dispute has been settled locally, that person can take it up the formal justice system because there is no legal ground for the local ruling.

Forum shopping can reinforce the cycle of everyday corruption and conflict escalation that erodes local legitimacy.⁶⁷ The efficacy of local leaders in mediating conflict can be diminished when they engage in blatant partisanship or self-serving behaviour. Local and district authorities often profit financially from their role in conflict mediation (e.g., through bribery), which can transform everyday disputes into examples of state-

64 Interview with pastoralists, Kompienga, East region, 11 December 2019.

65 Meinzen-Dick, R.S. and R. Pradhan. 2002. *Legal pluralism and dynamic property rights*. Washington D.C.: IFPRI.

66 Moritz, M. 2010. ‘Understanding herder-farmer conflicts in West Africa: Outline of a processual approach’. *Human Organization* 69(2): p. 138-148.

67 Drent, A.K. 2017. ‘Forum shopping as retaliation in disguise: how nomadic Fulbe condemn retaliation and forum shopping but practise them anyway’. In *On retaliation: towards an interdisciplinary understanding of a basic human condition*, (ed.) Turner, B. and Schlee, G. p. 185-207. New York: Berghahn Books.

sanctioned injustice. Since chiefs are the main actors in the distribution of land in the community under the traditional system, they might become involved in private land sales to community outsiders, which has been reported throughout the region. As rural economies evolve and the demand for land or animal products increases, there are new opportunities for enrichment that may break down traditional institutions. A 2020 analysis by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization of the Liptako-Gourma region highlighted land sales and property speculation as a principal reason why traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have broken down in the area.⁶⁸

Despite these trends, both pastoralists and farmers explain that most people dislike having to turn to state authorities outside of their community in fear of having to pay some type of bribe or not being listened to. If they call the police or the gendarmery, they will have to pay for their fuel to turn up which is very costly. Their case will be taken on by non-native prefects who are often unaware of local dynamics. These formal processes take a long time and both actors are rarely satisfied therewith. However, in locations where more new actors such as local authorities and farmers have become cattle owners, farmers have indicated that recently more people have resorted to filing complaints with the police in order for the procedure to end up before the judge who will rule on the basis of national law.⁶⁹

2.5 Conclusion

This section has demonstrated how pastoralists in Burkina Faso compete with farmers on an unequal playing field regarding access to land and resources, since policies and attitudes affecting pastoral resources have been largely exclusionary. As a result, while conflicts between resource users are present in every community in varying degrees, the discrepancy between national law and local implementation and enforcement to protect pastoralists' access rights has contributed to violent escalations of grievances and conflicts between competing groups.

Traditional justice mechanisms were the preferred way of solving existing tensions and conflicts but, faced with new pressures, these mechanisms seem to breakdown. As these mechanisms are no longer able to prevent the increased escalation of these natural resource conflicts, they negatively affect the nature of farmer-pastoralist relations. When other actors such as self-defence or vigilante groups step into an emerging justice vacuum, further escalating intercommunal conflicts, this creates a fertile breeding ground for the intrusion of radical armed groups.

68 FAO. 2020. *Burkina Faso, Mali et Niger. Plan de réponse régional. Avril 2020-avril 2021*. Dakar: FAO.

69 Focus group discussion *with farmers and other resource users, Bourzanga, Sahel region, 27 November 2019*.

3 Pastoralism under strain: the end of a resilient livelihood system?

In section one we found the structural exclusion of pastoralists at the central state level and in villages, resulting in grievances and biased customary justice that favours settled communities over pastoralists. What is important, however, is that pastoralists have faced these various other challenges in the past but have been resilient enough to deal with these pressures. This section explores why these resilience mechanisms are no longer effective. It argues that economic, environmental, and socio-political factors in combination with the spread of violence and insecurity throughout the country are posing an unprecedented threat. Very resilient systems in the past are no longer sustainable modes of production and, coupled with mounting insecurity and violence, past pastoralist production systems no longer appear to be sustainable.

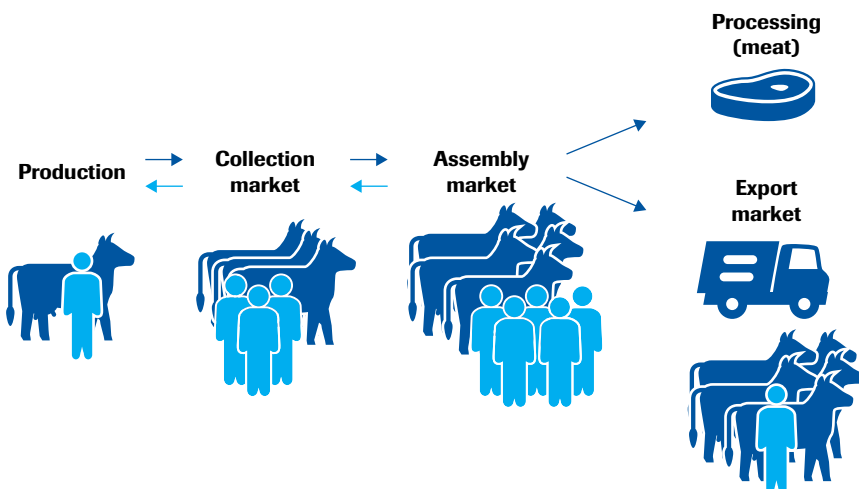
In this section we first explore the inner workings of the pastoral market, and the changing economic reality in which pastoralists are making a living. We pay specific attention to the position of pastoralists within the cattle value chain and their relations with other stakeholders who are active in this market. This brings us to the identification of two main problems when it comes to pastoralists' livelihoods, addressing the main hurdles they face when their market integration is being hindered and the pressures that are undercutting pastoral mobility. Finally, we analyse the impacts of the security context on the pastoral economy based on voices from the field.

3.1 The inner workings of the pastoralist market

Livestock markets are an essential component of pastoral viability that connect pastoralists to trade circuits, and link production areas to consumer centres in larger cities and importing countries. As places where the different actors in the livestock value chain come together and transactions are made, these markets disclose underlying power dynamics. Livestock markets are divided into collection markets, assembly markets and export markets. Collection markets are located at the village level and assembly markets and export markets at the level of provincial capitals and departmental capitals with a large number of animals being shipped out to foreign markets.

In the East region of Burkina Faso, there are about 70 livestock markets including collection markets, assembly markets and the export market of Fada N’Gourma which is the largest market in the region.⁷⁰ Buyers come from other cities in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana. The Sahel region has about forty livestock export markets.⁷¹ In these markets, some animals come from Niger and Mali. In Boucle du Mouhoun, the markets that are still functional are Béna, Djibasso, Yasso and Kouka. These markets are characterized by a period of peak attendance between July and January and a period of low attendance between February and June. The peak period corresponds with the return of transhumance by herders and the low period corresponds with the dry season during which herders follow the practice of transhumance in the coastal countries of Benin, Togo and Ghana. Figure 3 gives an indication of the different markets where cattle pass through from production to export or meat, with a visual indication of the increasing number of cattle and actors that are active in each of these markets. In the table below an overview is given of the different actors, locations and main supporting organisations active per market.

Figure 3 Cattle and stakeholders going through different markets



70 The most important markets that supply the export market of Fada N’Gourma are : Namoungou, Piéga, Tamalbougou, Matiacoali, Natiabonli, Nagré, Yamba, Tibga, Diabo, Kompienga, Koualou, Tambado, Gayéri, Haba, Foutouri, Diapaga, Namounou, Sakouani and Nanponli.

71 The most important markets are in Djibo, Seytenga, Gorom-Gorom, Déou, Mansila and Dori.

Table 1 Different markets in the cattle value chain

	Production	Collection market	Assembly market	Export	Processing (meat)
Actors	Pastoralists Agro-pastoralists Urban pastoralists Fatteners	Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists Collecting traders Butchers Civil servants in rural areas	Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists Farmers Brokers Civil servants in rural areas Collecting traders Exporting traders Butchers	Brokers and brokers' assistants Collecting traders Butchers Exporting traders Truck drivers Herders/shepherds	Butchers Abattoirs Consumers
Location	Rural Urban in the case of intensive systems	Rural Commune and village	Urban and peri-urban	Urban	Urban
Supporting organisations	Rouga	Comité de gestion du marché (COGES)	Comité de gestion du marché (COGES)	Brokers's Association « Barkè », Provincial Union of Live-stock Export Traders of Fada (UPCEB/F), Comité de gestion du marché (COGES), Association des bouchers	Association des bouchers de Fada Association « kawral » des boucher

3.2 Actors in the pastoralist market

When they decide to sell their animals, pastoralists are located at the start of a marketing chain. Depending on the type of market served, the chain contains few or many actors along the different steps.

In Burkina Faso, at the local (rural) level the chain remains relatively short containing few actors and involves a limited number of animals. Destined for export, the animals go through a longer chain containing more intermediate actors along the different links. The growing demand for livestock products is providing opportunities for pastoral production and commercialisation to expand. However, with increasing linkages to regional and global trade networks, processes of privatisation, sedentarisation and territorialisation are becoming new challenges and pose new uncertainties for traditional

pastoralists. In the exchange between informal pastoral economies and high-value export markets, traders enforce their dominant position in the market and new actors enter the value chain competing at all levels. While pastoralists are generally only involved at the level of the sale of their own animals either directly to a collection trader or at the market, it is other groups of producers and an increasing amount of middlemen who have been the ones taking advantage of changing market dynamics driven by policies favouring the intensification of cattle production in order to meet the increasing demand for meat and milk in growing urban areas. These middlemen are purely traders and are from different ethnic groups than the producers.

The first intermediaries are the collecting traders who buy livestock for immediate resale during the following days. They buy directly from pastoralists in their camps or from collector markets and resell the cattle in assembly and export markets. Collecting traders have become increasingly numerous in production areas. The push towards the increasing commercialisation of the sector, driven by policies favouring the intensification of cattle production in order to meet the increasing demand for meat and milk in growing urban areas, has introduced some new actors at this level. Farmers and even some rural officials have become involved in livestock breeding and marketing. For them cattle have become an increasing investment opportunity as they can buy directly from pastoralists and immediately sell at a margin. This is a phenomenon that has grown in the last five years in the Eastern region and can also be observed in the Boucle du Mouhoun.⁷² At the collection market, the animals are either destined for national consumption and go to the butchers in the slaughterhouses or they are exported to neighbouring countries. The processing from animal to meat happens at each of the different national markets; Burkina Faso also exports live animals.

At the next market level an additional intermediary makes its entrée. Brokers are intermediaries between sellers and buyers at a livestock market, ensuring the traceability of any animal sold. In the East region brokers are only found in certain markets such as assembly markets and export markets. In Fada market, for example, there are 32 brokers who divide the market amongst themselves. Each broker is supported by 4 broker assistants. They are organised in an association called “Barké” with 165 members. They are the only ones who are allowed to sell animals which gives them a strong position in the market in Fada.⁷³ In the market of Béna, a small town in Boucle du Mouhoun, there are about 20 brokers organized in an informal association. Here they receive 1,500 CFA francs per animal sold (1,000 CFA paid by the buyer and 500 CFA by the seller).⁷⁴ Being at the heart of all transactions, they negotiate prices

72 Group interview with butchers in Fada, East Region, July 2020; Group interview with livestock traders, brokers, butchers, and pastoralists in Béna, Boucle du Mouhoun, August 2020.

73 Focus group discussion at the Béna market, Boucle du Mouhoun, August 2020.

74 Focus group discussion at the Béna market, Boucle du Mouhoun, August 2020. 1 Euro equals 656 CFA.

and can often make gains of between 5,000 and 15,000 or even 20,000 CFA francs on large adult males when the price of livestock is good in the market⁷⁵. On top of that, they also receive a portion of the market tax of 75 CFA francs that every buyer pays per animal. The income from this tax is divided among the market management committee (COGES), the mayor and the brokers' association.

Depending on the region, export traders buy livestock from brokers at the export markets of Fada N'Gourma, Pouytenga, Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouagadougou and certain assembly markets and sell them abroad in Nigeria, Togo, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire. The exports contain almost 100 per cent of live animals because of consumer preferences and because bigger margins can be made on live animals as compared to meat. On the largest animals that are sold for up to 600,000 CFA, they can gain a gross margin up to 75,000 CFA. These margins depend on whether the animals are transported immediately, first fattened or taken on transhumance to external markets, as each practice is faced with different risks and costs. In general, costs associated with the export of live animals include transportation by truck (400,000 CFA), shepherds, often impoverished or young pastoralists, who transport livestock (50,000 CFA by truck and 75,000 CFA per month on foot), market fees (15,000 CFA), customs charges (130,000-200,000 CFA), veterinary costs (15,000 CFA) and police harassment (15,000 CFA).⁷⁶

By employing these different exporting practices, traders can assess market dynamics and wait for a better time when prices are higher before selling the animals.⁷⁷ Traders are the more resilient in the value chain since they do not bear any of the risks.⁷⁸ Operating from a commercial perspective, traders engage in a variety of additional activities, allowing them to reduce their livestock export activities when the external market is in deficit and to be able to quickly recover when livestock prices return to more profitable levels. Furthermore, they can paralyze the sector, as has already happened in the Fada market, when the brokers wanted to increase brokerage fees from 2,000 to 5,000 CFA francs. Exporters refused to buy, and the market remained closed, forcing brokers to postpone their increase.

Problem 1: Pastoralist market integration is failing

A recent price analysis shows that over the last 10 years, markets in the Sahel are becoming more integrated on both a national as well as a regional level. It is important

75 Exchange with a broker's assistant at the Fada market, East Region, July 2020; Interview with Maïga Kolodo, President of the Barkè Association, East Region, July 2020.

76 Interview with a cattle exporter, Treasurer of UPCEB/F, East Region, July 2020; Interviews with cattle exporters in Fada, East Region, July 2020.

77 Interview with Bandé Boukari, cattle exporters, Vice-President of UPCEB/F, East Region, July 2020.

78 Interview with Augustine Ayatunde, ILRI Burkina Faso, October 2019.

to note that this economic integration is a process that is strongly supported by transhumance movements which facilitates the circulation of people, animals and information.⁷⁹ While in theory such integration can benefit producers by gaining access to higher purchasing power and higher prices – improving their livelihoods – when we scrutinize the relations between different actors along the marketing chain pastoralists do not appear to be the ones who profit from these dynamics. It remains difficult for pastoralists to take advantage of these dynamics and strengthen their position in the chain from production, processing, transportation to commercialisation (see the cattle value chain above).

Market dynamics are thus an important driver of change for pastoral livelihoods. These conditions push pastoralists into vulnerable positions. Pastoralists are effectively not participating in the regional market, but other players do so with their goods, and earn a premium. While livestock market networks are often largely informal, we see an increasingly conflicting tendency between formal and informal markets being played out between externally-driven capitalist expansion and local, internal dynamics.⁸⁰ There are four barriers that explain why pastoralists are not integrating in regional markets.

First, their remoteness confines pastoralists to mainly selling at collection markets in livestock producing areas, far from external buyers such as exporters. To sell their animals, they must rely on buyers who come to them or on middlemen like brokers. Brokers act as intermediaries between sellers and buyers in a livestock market. Each broker has a traditional network of several pastoralists who entrust them with their animals for sale and also livestock exporters employ the services of an appointed broker from whom they obtain supplies.⁸¹ This also limits their access to knowledge about the market environment and the members of the value chain. This includes information on the prices of different categories of livestock as well as other relevant market information that will facilitate informed decision-making and minimises the risk of exploitation by buyers. This information is traditionally passed on by word of mouth, either at the camp of the pastoralist producer or at the market itself but it can be inaccurate or limited in its geographical reach. Initiatives like the 'Mobile Data

79 Simonet, C., Traoré, S., Brunelin, S. and L. Royer. 2020. [*Livestock markets in the Sahel: market integration and the role of climate and conflict in price formation.*](#)

80 Nori, M., Scoones, I. 2019. 'Pastoralism, Uncertainty and Resilience: Global Lessons from the Margins'. *Pastoralism* 9(1): p. 10.

81 At Fada market for example, there are 32 brokers assisted by 4 assistant brokers and they are organized in an association (Barké) with 165 members including 20 women.

for Moving Herd Management and better incomes' (MODHEM) in Burkina Faso⁸² have made great strides in providing access to reliable data. While this has increased pastoralists' resilience, enabling them to avoid droughts and conflicts for example, it is not enough to improve their market position and negotiation strength.

Second, pastoralists are poorly represented in livestock market management committees and are hardly organised at the local level.⁸³ At the national level, several pastoral organisations are working to improve the living conditions of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. Without being exhaustive, we can cite: Association Nodde Nooto (A2N), Association des Eleveurs pour la Gestion Durable de l'Environnement (AEGDE), Association pour la Promotion de l'Elevage au Sahel et en Savane (APESS), Comité Régional des Unités de Production au Sahel (CRUS), Association Dental & Pinal, Réseau de Communication sur le Pastoralisme (RECOPA), Réseau des Représentants traditionnels des Éleveurs (ROUGA) and Plateforme d'Actions à la Sécurisation des Ménages Pastoraux (PASMEP). More recently, in addition to their usual missions, pastoral organisations such as the Pastoralist Communication Network (RECOPA) and the Regional Council of Sahel Unions (CRUS) have stepped in to help pastoralists and agro-pastoralists through donations of food, livestock feed, etc.⁸⁴

However, for a long time their organizations have been more interested in production-related issues, forgetting about marketing, which has become a focus for them in recent years. Middlemen are much better structured. Apart from the borkers' associations as mentioned above, other organisations include the Fédération Nationale de la Filière Bétail Viande du Burkina. In the Eastern region, those in the cattle sector are organised in an association called the Union Provinciale des Commerçants Exportateurs de Bétail de Fada (UPCEB/F). These structures have benefited from several organizational support programmes from the Confederation of National Federations of the West African Livestock and Meat Sector (COFENABVI-AO) and financial partners such as the Swiss Cooperation and USAID. Well organised, UPCEB/F had succeeded in establishing local memoranda of understanding with some financial institutions. Between 2008 and 2016, UPCEB/F had benefited from a credit of 60 million euros from ECOBANK on a first occasion, then 100 million euros the following year and 200 million euros during the last year. The savings and credit cooperative GALOR also supported the export sector during the same period.

82 The [MODHEM project](#) works to improve the incomes of pastoralists and farmers' households in Burkina Faso by providing access to reliable geo-satellite-based data. It is a telephone information system providing pastoralists with detailed information on biomass and water availability and quality, herd concentrations, weather information and market prices.

83 Interview with ILRI Burkina Faso, Augustine Ayatunde, October 2019.

84 Interview with Diallo Salou, pastor, President of RECOPA in Fada, East Region, July 2020.

That being said, a third barrier relates to their market rationale which does not match an increasingly commercially-oriented value chain. In essence, cattle are the equivalent of a savings account for pastoralists. They manage their herd to reach an equilibrium in herd size and composition adjusted to available resources, in order to avoid having to buy expensive additional fodder and manage diseases amongst other things.⁸⁵ This means that they are reluctant to sell, even when the price is high since the timing of sales is driven by particular cash needs rather than market demand. While this rationale is an important part of pastoral production systems, it is also a vulnerability factor regarding market integration and the micro level. These needs include education for children, marriage, veterinary costs, payments for access to resources during transhumance or coping with famine.⁸⁶ For example, it is especially during the dry season that pastoralists are often in need of cash to buy additional fodder or to pay negotiation fees in order to access water points.

Instead of being able to sell at this time when their animals are fatter and are worth more, they are forced to sell off when resources dwindle, and the animals start to lose weight again. In addition, this means that cattle are brought to the market in small numbers, which makes it hard to negotiate a good price. A shift in livestock ownership, a phenomenon that started as an outcome of the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, introduced new actors at the production level with a more commercial mindset: public servants, traders, investors, and farmers from different ethnic groups such as the Gourmantché who see investment opportunities diversify their livelihoods by joining the livestock sector. Years of operating in increasingly extreme conditions facing droughts, epidemics and cattle rustling have impoverished many pastoralists, diminishing their livestock ownership. With these new dynamics, some of the traditional pastoralists joined the labour force supply of these new, richer, commercially-oriented livestock owners.⁸⁷

Fourth and finally, mounting conflicts and instability affect the livestock market and it is the pastoralists who have to bear the vast majority of the costs of the insecurity. Armed attacks on markets have slowed down market activities at all levels, from the export market in Fada to smaller local markets such as Piéga, Matiacoali, Nagré, and Natiabonli in Gourma.⁸⁸ Other markets have reached a complete standstill since the first quarter of

85 IIRR and CTA. 2013. *Moving herds, moving markets: Making markets work for African pastoralists*. Nairobi: International Institute of Rural Reconstruction and Wageningen: the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation.

86 Focus group discussion with pastoralists Fada, East region, 8 December 2019.

87 Ibid.

88 The latest armed attack on a livestock market was in Namoungou on 7 August this year, killing around 20 people.

2020.⁸⁹ In addition, the advent of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 and the restrictive measures taken by the state to deal with the pandemic have put more pressure on these markets. In the Eastern region, the Fada livestock market and the surrounding collection markets were closed for five consecutive weeks. This affected all actors in the market, from brokers who were unemployed, to exporting traders who were forced to wait longer for their money from butchers, to external markets and the exports to Togo and Benin that were halted.

While traders and middlemen have been diversifying their livelihoods over the years as we discussed above, in times of crisis in the pastoral sector they are therefore more able to rely on their other activities. Pastoralists, on the other hand, rely completely on their livestock and become increasingly desperate. Since the price of animals is not fixed, the phenomenon of insecurity has caused several actors to fall back on one single market, thereby reducing prices. On top of that, during the five weeks of market closure because of COVID-19, pastoralists were forced to sell their cattle on the outskirts of the market area at a loss. In addition to markets, also borders were closed in order to prevent the cross-country spread of the virus which resulted in many transhumant herders with their animals in neighbouring countries being stranded in neighbouring countries.

COVID-19 is further compounding the already difficult situation that pastoralists find themselves in and this is caused by the deteriorating security context, and pastoralists have indicated that the latter is still of much greater concern to them. Several respondents in the Sahel and East region indicate that the security situation has discouraged them from moving with their cattle to the market, as secondary markets in rural areas which are closer to pastoralists' home base are closed and movement to larger markets further away such as Djibo is considered to be too risky. Cattle thefts and losses have become a major security issue and pastoralists complain about extortion by self-defence groups such as Koglowego who are stepping in to provide protection against cattle thefts.⁹⁰ Furthermore, cattle rustling has intensified among VEOs, particularly in the East and centre-North provinces, and this has become an important source for financing their activities. This dynamic has a strong impact on the pastoralism-security nexus.

Pastoralists recall that where, previously, a couple of animals were stolen by bandits and organised gangs operating in border areas, today one's whole herd is taken and one risks being murdered. With the stolen cattle, extremist groups become implicated in these cattle being sold at both national and international markets. However, since most of the pastoral economy is informal and traders are implicated, it is difficult to investigate

89 Interview with Maïga Kolado, broker, President of the *Barkè* association in Fada, East Region, July 2020.

90 Focus group discussions with pastoralists 2019.

the impact this has on the market.⁹¹ In the East and Sahel regions, some pastoralists find their animals stolen or lost thanks to the actions of the brokers' associations and the Rougas association which help them.⁹² Today, it is also common to find abandoned or lost animals whose distressed owners can no longer care for them, and so they are seized and sold at auction by rural and even urban communities.⁹³

Pastoralists are the victims of stigmatisation and abuse in several regions where their camps have been the object of deadly attacks (e.g. Yirgou, Tawalbougou, etc.) which have led to many pastoralist families losing their homes, material goods and livestock. They have fled their camps to take refuge in precarious so-called safer urban and rural centres. The regions most affected by IDPs are Centre-North, Sahel, North, East, the Mouhoun loop and Centre-East.⁹⁴ Among the more than 1.13 million IDPs registered in Burkina Faso by humanitarian agencies, there are hundreds of thousands of pastoralists. Others, who anticipated the security crisis, left for other locations within the country or across the borders in neighbouring countries such as Togo, Benin, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. These permanent movements of pastoralists with their herds southwards are not only negatively impacting markets in the East, Sahel and to a lesser extent the Boucle du Mouhoun regions, but the Burkinabe livestock industry in general as they result in lost revenue for the state.⁹⁵

Overall, we can conclude that despite increased regional market integration and a growing demand for cattle and meat, mainly in the rapidly urbanising coastal states, pastoralists face several barriers hampering their market integration. They remain in a vulnerable position in the market. Within an unstable socio-political and security context, pastoralists are assuming most of the risks while taking but not reaping the rewards in the cattle trade.

Problem 2: The breakdown of mobility as a resilience mechanism

A key feature of traditional pastoral production strategies is living with and under uncertainty.⁹⁶ A central strategy to manage such uncertainty has been mobility. Mobile

91 Interview with Augusting Ayantunde, ILRI Burkina Faso, 2019. Informal talks at Ouagadougou livestock market, 2019.

92 Interview with Bandé Hamidou, pastor, President of the Rougas in Fada, July 2020. Rougas are traditional representatives of Fulani pastoralists. Today they function as a security initiative dealing with cattle thefts and extortion that pastoralist communities experience.

93 Interview with Fada livestock market officials, East Region, July 2020.

94 *Humanitarian Response*. 'Burkina Faso: Plan de Réponse Humanitaire révisé.'

95 UNOWAS. 2018. *Pastoralism and Security in West Africa and the Sahel: Towards Peaceful Coexistence*.

96 Scoones, I. 2020. 'Pastoralists and peasants: perspectives on agrarian change'. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*: p. 1-47.

pastoralism has long been an effective strategy for the majority of Sahelian pastoralists to adapt to the harsh and volatile climatic conditions of the Sahel and is the dominant livestock production system in Burkina Faso.⁹⁷ It is an extensive production system characterized by the practice of transhumance – seasonal and cyclical movements of varying degrees between complementary agroecological zones.⁹⁸ The basic pattern of transhumance in Burkina Faso has been a north-south migration in which pastoralists and their livestock transition from the more arid Sahelian region in the north to the more humid Sudanian/Sudano-Guinean regions in the south.⁹⁹ During the wet season, the opposite movement leads pastoralists and their livestock towards the arid and semi-arid zones in the north, which often have high quality pasture.

Transhumance, however, is still poorly understood. Around 75 per cent of the livestock is farmed using a 'traditional' nomadic and migratory approach, both on a national and cross-border basis.¹⁰⁰ It is a unique and highly adaptive production strategy based on herd mobility and their ability to find the most nutritious grazing patches among the natural dryland pastures, a system that is most adapted to the harsh environmental conditions of the Sahel. (Cross-border) Mobility is not only essential for the quality of animal production but is also part and parcel of the pastoralist production line more generally. Cattle need to be moved from dryland zones to border markets and urban centres for trade, butchering, processing, and consumption. The main pastoralist and transhumance corridors generally flow from North to South depending on the season, facilitating trade between Sahelian producing areas and Southern coastal markets.¹⁰¹

97 Due to its geographical location between coastal states and the confines of the Sahara, Burkina Faso has three distinct climatic zones with a short rainy season and a long dry season: the semi-arid Sahelian savannas in the north (less than 600mm average annual rainfall); the Sudano-Sahelian zone in the centre of the country (annual rainfall between 600 and 900mm); and the wetter Sudanian south (annual rainfall in excess of 900mm). Burkina Faso is thus prone to strong geographical, seasonal, and annual variations. It is consistently identified as one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change on the planet (see Corvalan, C., Hales, S., McMichael, A. 2005. *Ecosystems and human well-being*. Geneva: World Health Organization and Ericksen, P., de Leeuw, J., Said, M., Silvestri, S. and L. Zaibet. 2012. 'Mapping ecosystem services in the Ewaso Ng'iro catchment'. *International Journal of Biodiversity Science, Ecosystem Services & Management*, 8:1-2, p. 122-134.) It is also one of the poorest, often raising doubts about the capacity of local populations to manage and adapt to increased climate variability.

98 FAO. 2001. *Pastoralism in the new millennium*. Rome: FAO.; SWAC/OECD. 2007. *Promoting and supporting change in transhumant pastoralism in the Sahel and West Africa*. Paris: SWAC-OECD.

99 Ayantunde, A.A., Asse, R., Said, M.Y. and Fall, A. 2014. '[Transhumant pastoralism, sustainable management of natural resources and endemic ruminant livestock in the sub-humid zone of West Africa](#)'. *Environment, development and sustainability* 16(5): p. 1097-1117.

100 Somda, R. and D. Ilboudo. 2018. '[Pastoral livestock farming in Burkina Faso](#)'. *Panorama*.

101 Tondel, P. 2019. *Dynamiques régionales des filières d'élevage en Afrique de l'Ouest : Étude de cas centrée sur la Côte d'Ivoire dans le bassin commercial central*. Maastricht: ECDPM.

The problem is that pastoral mobility is affected by several factors: droughts; the reduced availability of pastoral resources by the encroachment of farmland into grazing areas; and policies favouring the intensification of cattle production through the sedentarization of livestock production which do not recognize the importance of mobility.

Challenges to mobility is not new. Various studies have indicated how a combination of demographic, ecological, political, and security factors have subjected transhumance to patterns of change in the past in terms of geography and timing.¹⁰² For example, in response to the major droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, pastoralists adapted and their routes in Burkina Faso gradually shifted southward to access wetter areas.¹⁰³ Since the 1990s, despite rainfall having increased, pastures no longer regenerate properly, leading to a degradation of rangelands.¹⁰⁴ As a result, the range of herd mobility has become more important and transhumant routes have been extended. Pastoralists created alternative livestock routes and the stays in the destination site areas became longer.¹⁰⁵ In the west of Burkina Faso for example, an increase in orchards has altered transhumance destinations and the transhumance routes within western corridors.¹⁰⁶ At the same time some transhumant pastoralists have moved to a more sedentary

-
- 102 Aubague, S. and P. Grimaud. 2013. 'Réflexion sur l'évolution de la mobilité des pasteurs nomades au Tchad: sédentarisation ou transhumance?'. *Nomadic Peoples* 17(1): p. 126-136.; Bukari, K.N., Bukari, S., Sow, P., Scheffran, J., 2020. 'Diversity and Multiple Drivers of Pastoral Fulani Migration to Ghana'. *Nomadic Peoples*, 24 (1): p. 4-31.; Dongmo, A.L., Vall, E., Diallo, M.A., Dugue, P., Njoya, A., Lossouarn, J. 2012. 'Herding territories in Northern Cameroon and Western Burkina Faso: Spatial arrangements and herd management'. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 2(1): p. 26.; De Bruijn, M., Amadou, A., Lewa, D.E., Sangaré, B. 2016. 'Mobile pastoralists in Central and West Africa: between conflict, mobile telephony and (im)mobility'. *Revue scientifique et technique* 35(2): p. 649.
- 103 Benoit, M. 1978. 'Pastoralism and migration, the Paul de Barani and Dokin (Upper Volta)'. *Etudes Rurales* 70: p. 9-49.; Gonin, A. and Gautier, D. 2016. 'Herders' territorialities and social differentiation in Western Burkina Faso'. *Nomadic Peoples* 20(1), p. 62-87.
- 104 Kiéma, S., Fournier, A. 2007. 'Utilisation de trois aires protégées par l'élevage extensif dans l'ouest du Burkina Faso'. In *Quelles aires protégées pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest*, IRD Éditions. p. 498-506.
- 105 Kiema, A., Tontibomma, G.B. and Zampaligré, N. 2014. 'Transhumance and natural resource management in the Sahel: challenges and opportunities facing the mutations of pastoral production systems.' *VertigO-La Revue Electronique en Sciences de l'Environnement* 14(3) ; Ayantunde, A.A., Asse, R., Said, M.Y. and Fall, A. 2014. 'Transhumant pastoralism, sustainable management of natural resources and endemic ruminant livestock in the sub-humid zone of West Africa'. *Environment, development and sustainability* 16(5): p. 1097-1117.
- 106 Audouin, S. and Gazull, L. 2014. 'Spatial dynamics of an innovation system in Southern Burkina Faso'. *LEspace géographique* 43(1) : p. 35-50.

lifestyle to take advantage of the benefits of crop-livestock integration, thereby becoming agro-pastoralists.¹⁰⁷

Pastoralists' shifting routes are often highlighted as a key explanation for the increase in pastoralism-related conflicts in the Sahel.¹⁰⁸ Travelling to where they have never been before might mean that pastoralists drive their livestock into new farming land causing local frictions which can escalate into conflict. They would need to negotiate new rights of access to pasture and water points with local actors and therefore become involved in local governance dynamics they know little about. However, the relationship between pastoral mobility and conflict is not that straightforward.

The main cause of conflict is the destruction of crops by pastoralists' cattle and the obstruction of transhumance routes and corridors by farmland encroachment. These are points of friction common to West Africa and the Sahel, but in the past these issues seldom escalated into violent conflict in Burkina Faso.¹⁰⁹ The simplistic narrative oversees that these are not haphazard movements, but the result of a decision-making process dictated by a vast array of spatio-temporal variables. Furthermore, transhumance trajectories are built around complex networks and long-standing social and economic relations – for example relying on the Rouga, the Garso and various traditional mediating actors to negotiate access to resources.

3.3 Pastoralists' adaptation and resilience: voices from the field

From our interviews, we distinguished different variables including access to natural resources (pasture and water points), the accessibility of corridors and grazing sites and the facility of passage (e.g. the distribution of cropped fields), rainfall, the hospitality of the host communities, administrative requirements, previous knowledge of corridors and grazing sites, market requirements (e.g. the owner wanting to sell cows and asking the herders to return to their home territory.), and security considerations. Defending themselves against this stigmatising narrative, some pastoralists also stressed that avoiding conflict is a key strategy in their decision-making, referring to the Fulani

107 McIntire, J., Bourzat, D. and Prabhu, P. 1992. *Crop-livestock interaction in sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington DC: World Bank; Powell, J.M., Fernandez-Rivera, S., Williams, T.O., Renard, C. 1995. *Livestock and sustainable nutrient cycling in mixed farming systems of sub-Saharan Africa. Volume II: Technical Papers*. Addis Ababa: ILCA.; Boserup, E. 1965. *The conditions of agricultural growth: The economics of agrarian change under population pressure*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.; Bourn, D., W. Wint. 1994. 'Livestock, land use and agricultural intensification in sub-Saharan Africa'. London: Overseas Development Institute.

108 McGregor, A. 2017. 'The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel'. *CTS Sentinel* 10(2): p. 34-39.

109 UNOWAS. 2018. *Pastoralism and Security in West Africa and the Sahel: Towards Peaceful Coexistence*.

concept of hiding (suu'da) and other sorts of avoidance strategies, a behaviour that in the past has also been attributed specifically to the Fulani by anthropologists. The restricted and adjusted patterns of mobility that have been detected in the past – of which some examples are given above – can however be regarded as preventive response strategies to counter security risks, stressing the role of mobility as a key coping mechanism to face old and new constraints. But what happens when conflict makes it too dangerous to travel on these traditional journeys?

In the case of conflicts with other resource users such as farmers, these frictions are usually resolved at the local level and fees are paid, or slight detours are made around communities where these conflicts might occur, and these have been relatively efficient coping mechanisms. However, faced with unprecedented violence by both state security forces and extremist armed groups, pastoralists feel helpless and indicate that the different negotiating mechanisms are useless. New security threats are affecting the decision-making process of pastoralists on transhumance, as security has become a decisive factor that overshadows other spatio-temporal considerations. Pastoralists in Gayeri explained how insecurity is so important in their area that it now trumps every other decision-making variable, and eventually dictates the conditions of transhumance more than access to resources does.¹¹⁰

Exposure to herd loss, bandits, corrupt government officials, and crop damage payments are some of the many variables that used to influence the cost-benefit calculation.¹¹¹ What is new, however, is the nature and level of the security risks in the equation. Insecurity has become the main decision-making factor – further disrupting the mobility of pastoralists. Different coping mechanisms were mentioned which included slight deviations when corridors are occupied by other actors – generally farmers illegally occupying cattle tracks, using new information systems to gain security information or relying on the Rouga to protect them.¹¹² However, when faced with the many security risks, and the absence of alternative routes, only a minority of the pastoralists we interviewed were still able and willing to embark on transhumance and they have become completely immobilised.

110 Focus group discussion with pastoralists in Gayeri, East region, 11 December 2019.

111 Turner, D. and Schlecht, E. 2019. 'Livestock mobility in sub-Saharan Africa: A critical review'. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 9(13).

112 In mid-2019, corridors in the East region had slightly shifted towards the Centre-East, starting in Fada and passing via Ouargay. But by the beginning of 2020, as the presence of violent extremist groups grew in the Centre-East, this corridor was gradually abandoned by pastoralists who found it too dangerous to use. Focus group discussion with pastoralists in Fada, East Region, 8 December 2019; Focus group discussion with pastoralist women in Bogande, East region, 9 December 2019.

They face a reduced freedom of movement, and with it their resilience to shocks. As pastoralists in Gayeri put it, “there is no space left to avoid armed groups, if you try another route, you will end up in the fields, damaging crops and creating conflict because everything is occupied.”¹¹³ In Gangaoual in the Sahel pastoralists indicated that they have abandoned transhumance for almost 4 years because of insecurity, and while they used to travel to pasture-rich areas like the Beli River region of the Tin Akoff commune, they now prefer to stay in their home territory to forage and feed their animals with what is available. This is having a strong impact on traditional pastoral livelihoods. Many young pastoralists are pessimistic with regard to the future of transhumance when they analyse the current situation where many have fled to other countries or have become IDPs having to leave their herd behind, or when they have become sedentary shepherds of other people’s cattle in a more intensive system.¹¹⁴

Cross-border transhumance into Mali and Niger has in effect entirely disappeared because of the conflict and is described by all as something “from another era”.¹¹⁵ In the Sahel region, the main corridors from Séno, Oudalan and Yagha to Niger (commune du Gorouol et de Terra) and Mali (commune de Tessit / cercle d’Ansongo) have been deserted. In the Boucle du Mouhon, the route from Barani to Segou in Mali has been completely deserted for more than 4 years and the centre of Mali is inaccessible to transhumant pastoralists. At the same time, cross-border transhumance into Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo and Ghana faces a completely different situation.

Being “pulled” by lower levels of insecurity, and pushed by constraints they face in Burkina Faso, many pastoralists now move southwards into these coastal countries. For some this has resulted in a permanent relocation. The relocation of pastoralists and their animals create pressure on natural resources in these countries and as such the risk of conflict. Pastoralists are considered to be foreigners and invaders and face a difficult time in integrating.¹¹⁶ If they damage crops, pastoralists highlight that they find themselves in a very precarious situation, because unlike in Burkina Faso where they can rely on extended family networks as well as the Rouga, the Garso and various traditional actors, there they are alone. This is a fertile breeding ground for VEOs which are slowly but certainly infiltrating these countries, seeking new development areas. Similarly to Burkina Faso, where conflicts are more intense when it concerns ‘foreign’

113 Focus group discussion with pastoralists in Gayeri, East region, 10 December 2019.

114 Focus group discussions with young pastoralists, November – December 2019.

115 Focus group discussion with young pastoralists in Gangaoual, Sahel region, 31 January 2020; Focus group discussion with pastoralists in Saouga, Sahel region, 321 January 2020.

116 IFRI. 2019. [Armed Violence in the Sahara. Are We Moving From Jihadism to Insurgency?](#) In Ghana, for example, military operations have been employed to expel the Fulani, including settled communities that have been there for generations, from Ghana. An example is Operation Cowleg, which was launched in the 1990s and has witnessed some revival since then, forcing Fulani herders across the border into Nigeria.

pastoralists transiting while on transhumance, Burkinabe pastoralists moving south also face such stigmatization and injustice.¹¹⁷

The pastoralists in this research who are moving or used to move to the coastal states on transhumance quote harassment by armed forces, being accused of being terrorists and often facing arbitrarily arrests and imprisonment as a consequence. Particularly the young herders feel they are stigmatized as terrorists target them for recruitment and the Burkinabe Defence and Security Forces perceive them as terrorists. Furthermore, while possessing national and international ECOWAS certificates as transhumance pastoralists, they still face many instances of extortion, fines and harassment as not every country seems to respect ECOWAS agreements.

COVID-19 has proved to be an additional stress factor when borders have been closed as a measure to contain the spread of the virus. To conclude, in fighting for their survival, mobility poses a major challenge for pastoralists. Mobility is a necessary aspect both for resilience but also for the sustainability of a sector that has important economic value in the region, providing an income to many – often poor – households who move in the margins of society. While pastoral mobility is often directly associated with conflict, restrictions seem to have given way to even more and new conflict lines.

3.4 Conclusion

This section has demonstrated that while already being in a disadvantaged position, pastoralists seem to be the only ones whose place in the chain and the margins they make are negatively affected by the effects of mounting insecurity and violence. Transhumance – which constitutes the driving force of economic integration in the region – has become virtually impossible for many. While pastoral mobility has been challenged by different factors such as environmental deterioration, the encroachment of farmland into grazing areas and policies favouring the intensification of cattle production through the sedentarization of livestock production, insecurity is now overshadowing other spatio-temporal considerations that have long dictated the decision-making process of transhumance.

117 Focus group discussions with farmers and other resource users, November–December 2019; Focus group discussions with pastoralists, November – December 2019.

4 Main findings

The report concludes that the development of pastoral economies and livelihoods is indeed an important contributing element to stabilization in the Sahel; however, poorly designed development interventions will actually create more instability and exacerbate conflicts. In preventing the escalation of pastoralist-related conflicts, one has to be careful not to rely on narratives that overlook the complexity of the issue and do not acknowledge the opposition which is prevalent at more structural levels in the country. To address the root causes of the problem, a better understanding of the different challenges that pastoralists today face in Burkina Faso is needed. This report has identified the following main issues: the under-representation of pastoralists in national and local governance systems, concerns regarding access to pastoral resources, pressure on pastoral livelihoods when facing new economic realities, and increasing security challenges.

– **Government policies and biased local governance systems: pastoralists under-represented**

There is meagre representation by pastoralist and specifically the Fulani at the level of the policy-making institutions in Burkina Faso. Pastoralists' political representation is weak or non-existent. In the past, this under-representation and marginalisation of pastoralist communities led to ill-informed and poorly designed resource governance as well as pastoral development programmes – often with a strong sedentary focus – by the Burkinabe government and international development agencies.

– **Unequal access to pastoral resources**

Pastoralists in Burkina Faso compete with farmers on an unequal playing field regarding access to land and resources, since policies and attitudes affecting pastoral resources have been largely exclusionary. While national laws recognise pastoral zones and the importance of pastoral mobility, they are rarely enforced at the local level, leading to the steady expansion of the agricultural frontier into pasturelands. The discrepancy between national law and local implementation and enforcement to protect pastoralists' access rights translates into customary systems that similarly are to the detriment of pastoralists. While both farmers and pastoralists hold grievances regarding access to natural resources and land, farmers are mostly satisfied with the current distribution of resources while pastoralists feel overwhelmingly dissatisfied.

– **Pastoral livelihoods under stress**

Pastoralists face different challenges to their livelihoods, driven by a structural change to the economic modes of production. From an economic perspective, pastoralists face many barriers hampering their integration in a sector that is being pushed towards becoming increasingly commercially oriented. Even though the market is growing and is powered by an increasing demand for meat in the region, so far pastoralists have not been the ones to benefit from regional integration efforts. This new economic reality entails changes to the local political economy which is increasingly to the detriment of pastoralists. Amongst many – largely Mossi – leaders, there is a persistent perception that pastoralism is an archaic way of life that at best should become sedentary (e.g., through intensive ranching systems) in order to meet market demands. However, this overlooks the fact that the production method of pastoralism is considerably more suitable for the challenges of global warming and environmental conservation than sedentary production.

Mobility as a key resilience and adaptation mechanism is not only essential for the quality of animal production but is also part and parcel of pastoralist production more generally. Currently, cattle movements are being constrained due to internal processes of farmland encroachment, the closure of longstanding transhumant and grazing trails and corridors and increasing security concerns. While different coping mechanisms have proved this system's resilience, its viability in the face of current conflict dynamics is uncertain, which might have serious repercussions for the livestock sector. Additionally, when rendered immobile, the increased and more permanent cohabitation of pastoralists and farmers will affect the playing field of resource governance at the local level, potentially creating or increasing intercommunal tensions.

– **Exclusionary governance practices in villages and conflict: the pastoral trap**

Shattered intercommunal trust and social cohesion present opportunities for extremist groups to tap into these local grievances in order to exploit deepening social divisions between pastoralists and other groups. VEOs exploit the stigmatization of pastoralists to spur recruitment and are deliberately targeting local chiefs, taking out local sources of authority and governance in an attempt to further stoke intercommunal violence.¹¹⁸ They use the state's weakness in governing and providing justice to their advantage and exploit rural tensions, for example feelings of injustice linked to land disputes. They play into pastoralists' financial and socio-political grievances to recruit militants, specifically targeting their sermons at those deprived of access to water, land or pastures. Other than promising financial

118 On 3 November 2019, for example, the deputy-mayor of Djibou was murdered. Le Roux, P. 2019. Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel. Africa Center

incentives to join their ranks, VEOs also tap into feelings of revenge amongst those that have been harassed or attacked by state forces and self-defence groups.

The result is a power vacuum and the breakdown of local conflict resolution mechanisms, which are filled in by vigilante groups – often with an ethnic base – such as the Koglweogo. This group aims to fill the vacuum left by the state in protecting the people, animals, and the natural resources of their local community.¹¹⁹ They increasingly assume powers that used to be under state control, such as taxation, policing and justice, thereby undermining the state and traditional authorities. Koglweogo militias have taken law enforcement and justice into their own hands in several parts of Burkina Faso. By taking on police and security prerogatives, they have either wilfully or unwittingly become accomplices in settling scores, often concerning land disputes which have particularly been to the detriment of the Fulani community who they perceive as extremists and it is this community that has become their primary target.¹²⁰

Taking a militarized approach, national security forces have become more active in addressing conflicts involving pastoralists. So far, the response by the state has fallen short and indeed contributed to the deterioration of the security situation. Security forces have been accused of extorting herders and disputes often result in excessive fines or punishment.¹²¹ Seen by many as hostile troops that are not there to protect the population, this has led to pastoralists increasingly relying on extra-legal actors such as the Rouga to settle disputes, sometimes violently. Additionally, the state's recent call for volunteers to fight VEOs will potentially amplify this vicious cycle of violence, since it exercises limited control over such self-defence groups and might further push the groups that are targeted into the arms of extremist groups. This escalating security situation increasingly threatens the livelihoods of local communities, reinforces their need for protection, and further endangers social cohesion.

119 Leclercq, S. and Matagne, G. 2020. "With or Without You": The Governance of (Local) Security and the Koglweogo Movement in Burkina Faso. *International Journal of Security & Development* 9(1): p. 1–22.

120 International Crisis Group. 2020. [Burkina Faso: Stopping the Spiral of Violence](#). Africa report 287, Brussels: ICG.

121 UNOWAS. 2018. [Pastoralism and Security in West Africa and the Sahel. Towards Peaceful Coexistence](#). As elaborated in section one, many pastoralists are very much afraid of stumbling upon state security forces while they move with their animals. The vast majority of pastoralists we interviewed in all three regions explained that attacks by both the FDS and terrorists and land encroachment ranked as the biggest constraints to successful transhumance and mobility.

5 Policy Recommendations

This report provides four policy recommendations for international policy makers and implementing organisations working in Burkina Faso and the Greater Sahel more widely. These suggestions are driven by the belief that pastoralism itself can be the first line of defence against violent extremism, but that in order to be successful there has to be a much greater effort to ensure the social rights of pastoralists and Fulani populations. Pastoralist-related conflicts find their roots – according to pastoralists themselves – in unequal access to pastoral resources, government policies and biased local governance systems that have been supported by NGOs and private sector programming.

The key to future engagement is to ensure that a new, more inclusive and conflict-sensitive mindset underpins programming. The basis for such thinking is to recognise that all resource users should be part and parcel of programming and local governance to ensure the peaceful co-existence of competing resource users, and the need for the further development of the pastoralist economy as the basis for a more stable security situation.

Based on this core insight, this report proposes four policy recommendations:

1. Improve the representation of pastoralists in local governance – particularly in Burkina Faso's ongoing decentralization process;
2. Ensure continued pastoral livelihoods through diversification, intensification and training in the face of market transformation;
3. Develop a less technical and more integral approach towards agricultural development projects;
4. Support (pastoral) conflict mediation agents to prevent the escalation of localized grievances and conflicts.

1. Improve pastoralist representation in (local) governance.

There is a growing realization that pastoralism can be the first line of defence against violent extremism. However, for this to be effective, a substantial effort needs to be made to improve the representation of pastoralists in (local) governance.

Our research finds that pastoralists and Fulani communities are largely excluded from political decision-making processes and are under-represented at both the national and local level. A specific reason why better representation is needed is that pastoralism needs a degree of *flexible* resource management systems, *communal* land management and *non-exclusive* entitlement to water resources. It is only through direct contact between resource users that mutually acceptable accommodations can be constructed.

What this means is that there is a need to correct the structural inequality that forms an important driver of conflict escalation. Therefore, efforts to ensure an inclusive approach to development have to recognise that pastoralists are a particularly vulnerable group that requires specific attention. It is important to ensure that local representation involves actual resource users rather than urban (Fulani) elites – who do not necessarily represent the interest of the larger group of impoverished rural pastoralists. There are three specific ways in which this can be done:

1. Hold the Burkinabe government accountable for implementing the laws that govern herding territories. First, this includes a revision of the 2009 Rural Land Tenure Law to better reconcile different populations' interests. The law provides mechanisms for formalizing and securing rural land rights, which has resulted in uneven access to the means for obtaining formal land rights leading to instances of land speculation and acquisitions by local and national elites. Rural Land Tenure Charters were designed to counterbalance this effect. Intended to ensure the formal recognition and approval of local agreements as the basis for participatory local governance systems, reality shows that their implementation remains minimal and the process has been captured by interest groups and has not sufficiently led to the inclusion of pastoralists. Second, the farmer-centric and exclusive type of property regime set out in the 2009 law hampers the fair governance of pastoral areas. The 2002 Law Orienting Use and Access to Pastures which guarantees pastoralists the right to pastoral land and to maintain the mobility of livestock is more explicit in pointing out how pastoral resources are shared amongst different users, stressing access to all stakeholders in a certain territory. So far, any implementation of this law has failed, resulting in the increasing encroachment of uses like farming in such areas. Concretely, international policy-makers have to a) uphold the norms agreed upon in the 2009 law; b) provide support for capacity at the local level to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the pastoral law and to protect pastures and rangelands from agricultural expansion. This will empower mobile and transhumant pastoralists to manage natural resources sustainably in collaboration with farming communities;
2. Moreover, the ongoing decentralization process has to be made more inclusive. The goal should be to ensure better inclusion of pastoralists to systematically include their concerns. Presently, the central government continues to maintain a high degree of authority over the internal governance of municipalities, such as the right to remove elected mayors from office. Consequently, a complex decision-making environment has emerged with continuous bargaining. Yet, customary authorities are often the first (and sometimes only) responders to disputes and can play key roles in mediating disputes and preventing escalation. What this means is that decentralization needs to better account for the participation of traditional and customary authorities in local management, including pastoralists and Fulani leaders. One specific way this can be done is to ensure that the local level municipal

councils and CVDs are no longer dominated by farmers (in only one of the review municipalities were farmers and pastoralists equally represented at the CVD – satisfaction with resource management was highest in the area).

2 Protect pastoral livelihoods through diversification, intensification and training

This report finds that challenges to pastoralist livelihoods are driven by a structural change to economic methods of production. Moreover, it shows that pastoralists have been able to find sustainable ways to adapt to these new economic realities. While the market is growing in size, pastoralists do not profit from this. The policy challenge is to develop new thinking as to how pastoral livelihoods can be sustained and combined with the new economic realities.

To this end, the first thing is to realize that agricultural programmes are part of the ‘problem’. Many policy interventions are targeted at the intensification of cattle production in an attempt to satisfy the demand for meat in urban areas. But the problem is that such policies have a technocratic approach as their basis (e.g. technical solutions to increase production) while insufficiently considering the political and economic consequences for the livelihood of small pastoralist communities. Therefore, interventions that focus on increased production alone are not the solution. We suggest four concrete initiatives to help pastoralists to adapt to changing economic realities

1. Pastoralists need help to attain livelihood diversification. This can take the form of providing complementary and alternative livelihoods in their pastoral value chain, for example in processing, marketing, production, and the sale of fodder and other natural products;
2. Support for pastoralists in changing their vulnerable position in the market. Support is first and foremost needed to strengthen the negotiation power of pastoralists by organising sellers to bring their animals to a fair buyer at the market. Promising initiatives are measures that improve the bargaining power of pastoralist communities such as the MODHEM initiative – that has provided access to reliable data on market prices, to help pastoralists decide on which market to go to.¹²² Other measures include establishing cooperatives of pastoralists to coordinate collective sales – including at terminal markets abroad to profit from regional market integration;

122 The [MODHEM project](#) provides reliable geo-satellite-based data. It is a telephone information system providing pastoralists with detailed information on biomass and water availability and quality, herd concentrations, weather information and market prices.

3. Protecting mobility as a key resilience and adaptation mechanism. Policy-making has to take a longitudinal approach to conflict and structural economic changes. Mobility has proven to be an essential part of the pastoral production system; it has been effective in responding to an increasing demand for meat and livestock products as well as a means to adapt to climate variability. The problem is that a sedentary bias in livestock policies as well as decentralisation is undercutting mobility. For example, the Burkina Faso laws on pastoral mobility and transhumance have been undercut by sedentarization policies. The international agreement among West African countries that allows the free cross-border movement of livestock including seasonal cross-border transhumance (the 1998 SWAC-OECD/ ECOWAS agreement) is an exemplary model of a socio-politically appropriate policy on livestock mobility in sub-Saharan Africa. It provides a legal basis for all cross-border movements of pastoralists in the region and thus plays a critical role in securing pastoralist livelihoods and supplying the growing urban markets with animal products.¹²³ National legislations on pastoralism should be streamlined so as not to contradict but facilitate the implementation of this protocol.

4. Supporting pastoralists in partially or gradually intensifying pastoral livestock production. This means first and foremost that pastoralists have to accept a changing reality and be able to profit from commercialisation efforts. To this end, a number of technical, economic, political and legal issues, including but not limited to secure access to land, strong pastoralists' organizations, access to inputs and services, management of forage intensification, and market security, must be addressed. Large-scale market training for pastoralists could help to promote these policies. Opportunities might exist in the feed sector, young pastoralists who have abandoned the practice of transhumance and have settled in peri-urban areas can be trained to mix fodder (grass and crop residue mixtures) to accommodate the feeding of animals in urban markets or in times of scarcity during the dry season. Currently there is no correlation between the price and quality of animal fodder, because the number of animals is rapidly increasing but there is not enough feed, so people buy what they can get.¹²⁴

3. A less technical and more integral approach towards agricultural development projects

It is crucial to base interventions on a profound understanding of the way access to natural resources is negotiated between multiple users. However, one of the findings of this report is that investment in development and resilience initiatives for certain groups

123 ECOWAS. p. 62

124 Interview with Augusting Ayantunde, ILRI Burkina Faso, 2019. Informal talks at Ouagadougou livestock market, 2019.

has overlooked more structural reasons for underlying existing tensions and has thus undercut the resilience of other resources users.

Both pastoral and agricultural policy-making have been functioning in separate spheres, whereby the effects of policies focusing on increasing pastoral productivity on a status quo in many communities where farmers and pastoralists share resources are often not considered, and policies that have focused on strengthening farming livelihoods have paid little attention to pastoral dynamics within the targeted landscapes. For example, an increase in local livestock ownership has changed the prevalent political economic settlement in certain areas as communities become caught between two stools: increasing cultivated land and increasing livestock.¹²⁵

A third recommendation is therefore that more integrated approaches are needed – even in the face of high levels of insecurity and violence. Rather than supporting either farmers or pastoralists, projects focusing on development and resilience should seek to focus on the idea of multiple resource users within targeted landscapes.

1. A simple recommendation to improve the integration of programming between pastoral and agricultural policy-making is to mainstream pastoral livelihood effects into all agricultural programming. This involves exploring the potential first, second and third-order effects on the pastoral value chain;
2. Mainstreaming governance angles in technical projects implemented by donors aimed at increasing yields. Interventions by international donors have largely occurred in isolation as well – often in cooperation with livestock departments – with a focus on technical aspects, improving access to essential services such as markets, veterinary services, etc. But the political context in which these programmes occur is crucial as the distribution of power at the local level provides various opportunities for local leaders and communities to alter good project designs to the detriment of pastoral communities. An integrated governance approach is therefore also needed. What this means that funders should propose funds that seek require collaboration across ministries (the Ministry of Agricultural and the Ministry for Animal Resources and Fisheries) and organizations, challenging the working in silos. For implementers, this means that conflict sensitivity analysis should be at the hard of programming on all agricultural and pastoralist funds and properly evaluate programming in (resource) border regions. Participation of pastoral representatives should part of M&E frameworks can take the form of number of pastoralists in steering committees of agricultural projects.

125 Soeters, S. 2018. *How a 'Landscape' approach could be the key to securing the Sahel*.

4. Support to (pastoral) conflict mediation agents to prevent the escalation of localized conflicts

Traditional mediation arrangements were historically successful in resolving local conflicts in Burkina Faso. However, the weakening and politicization of local and regional leadership has hampered the ability to mediate in a conflict. Instead, the local leadership have become part of the problem as conflict resolution mechanisms have become biased. Real efforts should be made to enhance local trust and confidence in the institutions engaged in the process of conflict mediation.

Conflict mediation should include national and local authorities, as well as the parties to a conflict, and be supported by independent mediators. An impartial justice system should be in place that combats impunity for crimes, in particular against pastoralist communities, to stop the vicious cycle of revenge and reprisal killings when different groups turn to more violent means when they feel that justice has not been served. Four specific mechanism can be considered:

1. Supporting existing procedures for resource conflict mediation and conciliation such as the Rural Land Tenure Charters (the 2009 law). This can take the form of mobilising support for community leaders and both traditional and religious authorities to help identify local solutions that have been successful and to scale them up and codify them. These agreements and local rules – made in a participatory manner – should be legally recognised so that addressing the courts or litigation become a last resort. Codifying local that have been successful and can be upscaled, and controlling their legality by national (civil) justice, will avoid any ambiguity and make addressing the court or litigations a last resort. In carried out well, such system of mutual checks and balances could confine corruption and the use of resource disputes as a power play by both chiefs and national authorities.
2. Supporting and strengthening the capacity of local mediation and conflict resolution bodies such as village councils and customary authorities for the settlement of disputes. In this process, discussions between pastoral representatives and state and security officials that may include common mechanisms for conflict management and resolution should be supported. Some successful examples are training by the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), Promediation who engage in community mediation and insider mediation by the Clingendael Institute who at the request of herder and farmer leadership support community peace dialogues.¹²⁶ The evidence base shows that leaders from both farmer and herder communities in these initiatives have become more supportive and more constructive in dialogues and mediation.

126 Clingendael Institute, [Training community mediators in Nigeria](#), 2019.

3. Better regulate competition between traditional and formal norms and regulations. To this end, a mapping of legal texts and informal customary rules has to be conducted in order to identify where formal and informal systems clash and allow for forum shopping. From this a proposition has to be developed to limit overlapping and often conflicting governance systems. The ultimate goal has to be a more impartial justice system not only as a goal in the distant future but a conflict resolution mechanism itself: the vicious cycle of revenge and reprisal killings as communities feel that justice is not served, needs to stop. A systems – even temporary – must come into being that can squarely compete with the offer of VEOs and other armed groups.
4. Support local media outlets escalating by eschewing exclusionary practices or language that cast conflicts explicitly in terms of religion and ethnicity, stigmatizing Fulani. Moreover, these radio programmes can also be instrumental in countering the spread of harmful terrorist narratives. Whether using, post-war reconciliation initiatives like 'Talking Drums' in Liberia could be inspiring initiatives to counter exclusion and support reconciliatory agents.

Annex 1 – Methodology

Since the research aims at capturing the regional effects on pastoralism during instability, three conflict-prone regions located on transnational pastoralist routes (with a similar design) were selected so that we can explore whether the governance of pastoralism and resource conflicts makes a difference to the extent to which pastoralism intersects with conflict and instability in the region. The Sahel and East region were selected within the Liptako-Gourma region, and the Boucle du Mouhoun region in the West connecting Sahelian producing areas and West African markets. In both of these areas, pastoralism is economically profitable, but is subject to tensions due to water and fodder scarcity, the reduction of grazing lands and mounting insecurity – disrupting traditional transhumance corridors and resulting in an increase in resource conflicts. These have been further exacerbated by livestock thefts at the hands of organized criminal and/or armed groups – further fuelling tensions between border communities.

The Sahel region is a vast pastoral area and it is there that we find the most homogeneous social and ethnic composition as the Fulani make up most of the population. The East region has a different dynamic with less livestock than the Sahel but hosts important markets such as the export market of Fada N’Gourma. This means that many transhumant pastoralists transit through the area. Boucle du Mouhoun has long been an important part of transhumance routes moving into Mali, a trajectory that has been completely immobilised due to security threats. The region however accommodates large-scale agricultural investments and land occupation and wealthy farmers become more involved in the livestock trade – often more than pastoralists – reinvesting their farming incomes into cattle. This translates into an increasing number of locally owned cattle, drawing in Fulani herders to look after them.

The selection of these regions was done in consultation with experts in the field and based on desk research. In the selection of the locations additional security criteria were considered such as guaranteed security in the locations and accessibility during the expected period of fieldwork. Because of the increased insecurity spreading through Burkina Faso in 2019-2020, the selection of municipalities was, however, eventually contingent on the security and accessibility of the locations during the period of the fieldwork. Additional interviews with focus groups took place to attain the initially required number. As such, we eventually conducted research in 8 municipalities in the East region, 5 municipalities in the Sahel, and 2 in the Boucle du Mouhoun, 15 municipalities in total.

The study used a mix of desk research, interviews, and focus groups. The desk research consisted of gathering information on relevant interventions, policies, laws, and local developments to date with the dynamics on the ground. This included reviews of

literature from academia, and policy-oriented writings from UN agencies, NGOs, INGOs, governments, conferences, and workshops as well as insights from researchers on the ground.

Table 1 Research locations per region

	East Region	Sahel Region	Boucle du Mouhoun region
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Komin Yanga • Fada • Gayeri • Kompienga • Koulo • Bogandé • Tawalbouyou • Ouargaye • Manni • Pama 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Djibo • Dori • Gorom-Gorom • Namsigua • Bamboul • Baraboule • Bourzanga • Seytenga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nouna • Barani
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fada 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bèna

Table 2 Overview of data collection

		East Region	Sahel Region	Boucle du Mouhoun Region
Phase 1	Total of FGD	29	11	5
	Total of KII	29	20	10
Phase 2	Total of FGD	11		11
	Total of KII	1		1

Data collection took place in two phases, first between November 2019 and January 2020, and second in August 2020. The first phase of data collection served to collect the bulk of the data used in the study, conducting a total of 45 FGDs and 59 KIIs. The interviews and FGDs were conducted in French, Fulani and other local languages. A team consisting of researchers on the ground either from or familiar with the regions was trained during a workshop to conduct structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) in the selected municipalities.¹²⁷ In every municipality, the local research teams conducted KIIs with herders, farmers, people that work in the animal industry (selling meat, hides, other derivatives), people that operate water points and markets, traditional authorities and state authorities (as far as these are present),

¹²⁷ These interviews and focus groups focused on the historical role of pastoralism in the community (and the changes thereto), pastoralism's main benefits for the community as well as some of the main grievances it has caused, the management of pastoralism by the community/state and the way in which herders organize themselves, the major threats that herders face in these times (and the way in which these threats manifest themselves) and the major opportunities that are currently available to herders.

including security forces and self-defence groups. Focus group participants explicitly included women, young people and underrepresented groups.¹²⁸ Throughout this phase, the lead researchers also made two trips to Burkina Faso to conduct interviews in person with policy makers, experts, (I)NGOs, the Liptako Gourma Authority and herders' and farmers' associations in the capital Ouagadougou to identify the main policies that are currently being adopted to address resource conflicts and transhumance, their degree of implementation and their effects on the livelihoods of and relationships between different pastoral actors.

The second phase of data collection in August 2020 consisted of a value chain analysis of pastoralism in the region based on the data collected in the field. The value chain analysis identified each step in the cattle value chain process – from herding to selling, butchering, packaging, and retailing to consumers. It identified actors at each stage and the margins they earn. It consisted of one local researcher from the region conducting interviews and FGDs with key informants in Boucle du Mouhon.

This second phase of data collection was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in travel and movement restrictions to/in Burkina Faso between March and July 2020. Because of the increased insecurity between the inception phase in September 2019 and the second phase of data collection in August 2020, it was decided that the local researcher would not travel to the Sahel and East region for security purposes, but rather conduct phone interviews with actors from the region. To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the value chain analysis, the local researcher realized two separate value chain analysis pre- and post-COVID-19. The second phase of data collection obtained 11 KIIS and 1 FDG in each region.

The researchers on the ground provided French transcripts of the KIIs and FGDs to the Clingendael project team. Because of the sensitive nature of the questions and the fact that data collection took place in remote areas experiencing ongoing violence and insecurity, receiving a recording of the interviews was not possible and maximum care was taken to anonymize the respondents. We aimed to receive verbatim transcripts. To ensure the quality and consistency of the data, the authors engaged with the researchers on the ground on a daily to weekly basis to follow up on data collection issues and to answer questions from the field. Transcripts were coded in NVivo. A codebook was developed focusing on identifying actors and relationships within the pastoral value chain, mobility patterns, access and challenges to natural resources and pastoral land, conflict-resolution mechanisms and recommendations and solutions from the ground.

128 One focus group with people benefitting from pastoralism – including women, one focus group with people not benefitting from pastoralism – including women, and one focus group discussion with young persons.