

ETP 2- Niamey 2017

Notes to ETP Decision-makers "Pastoral Crisis Prevention and Management: preparedness, alert and response"

Note No. 1: Security challenges and their impact on the pastoral economy and peace at the regional level

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1. Key messages

- ✓ Pastoralism is increasingly recognized as a powerful engine of the region's economic development. Long seen as a legacy of the past and not well adapted to modern life, this regional trading and production system is vital for the local, national and regional economies. Pastoralism is currently being rehabilitated thanks to the knowledge acquired in the ecological, economic and social fields, in the past ten years.
- ✓ This iconic system is the first agricultural product of regional integration. It is based on a high degree of mobility, essential for the valorization of the various types of natural resources, and the connection of vast areas of Sahelian and Sudanian pastures with the highly urbanised consumption basins of coastal countries. Such a connection is based on a true social organisation constantly adapted for managing the cross-border movement of herds, be they production or marketing herds.
- ✓ Mobile stock-breeding has attracted renewed attention over the past decade not only because of its economic interest but also, and more and more, in the light of the conflagration of conflicts generated by the extension of the agricultural pressure on lands and the degradation of pastoral hydraulic infrastructure. To address these real risks, several significant measures have been developed both by the States and the integration institutions and by the professional organizations and the communities themselves: improvement and dissemination of transhumance regulations and pastoral land regulations, development and security of pastoral areas, rehabilitation of water points, support for the establishment of a sustainable supply chain for livestock feed, etc. The N'Djamena (May 2013) and Nouakchott (October 2013) Declarations played a major role in mobilizing policy makers with the support of many technical and financial partners in Sahelian countries.
- ✓ Beyond the risks generated by the competitive and conflicting use of natural resources, another threat, more disturbing and affecting sustainable pastoralism, has been developing over the last decade. This is the extension of turbulence zones and cross-border armed conflicts in West and Central Africa transforming pastoral and agro-pastoral zones into spaces of violence and lawlessness. This security crisis has major and critical repercussions on pastoral societies and the functioning of national and regional economies. For several years,

we have been witnessing the shift of these spaces in the criminal economy and lawlessness. At the same time, the weakening of the authority and presence of States in these areas is removing the prospect of a real return to peace and development.

- ✓ Trapped in the massive collapse of peace and the local economy, pastoralists and farmers in the areas concerned are now experiencing a real tragedy that can be summed up by attacks on the lives of humans and animals. This insecurity is causing mass movements of populations who have no choice but to return to increasingly numerous refugee camps in the border areas of Chad, Cameroon, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso. In some places, the painstaking return to peace allows a timid and delicate recovery of agricultural activities. The return to pastoralism, meanwhile, remains even more difficult, especially for pastors forced to abandon the activity for several years. This loss of socio-economic and professional benchmarks is one of the main causes of the tipping of many young people from pastoral societies into criminal economic sectors that provide them with short-term means of subsistence.
- ✓ This crucial concern about the new forms of insecurity threatening pastoralism was the subject of a roundtable discussion amongst breeders during the second PRAPS technical talks held in July 2017. This complex and transnational issue is cause for concern and nowadays raises a great awareness in professional circles, associations and public authorities. This Note is not intended to provide operational recommendations. The question goes beyond the scope of actions developed by pastoral support projects such as PRAPS. On the other hand, it calls for greater political consideration of this tragedy by national, regional and international institutions whose mandates include ensuring the security of persons and property. There is no doubt that in view of this recurrent, even endemic insecurity, and particularly its consequences in terms of harm to the lives of rural people and particularly pastoralists, it seems more than urgent for the public authorities to implement structural responses addressing the root causes of evil.

2. Growing insecurity: a new major threat to pastoral activities

Observations made by the N'Djamena Declaration

For a decade, a new plague has come down on the pastoral farming methods: a chronic, moving and cross-border insecurity related to the illicit traffics, the mafia and terrorist groups. Pastoralism is a remarkable instrument for controlling vast and unoccupied territories. Mobility makes it possible to install a regular presence in empty areas of resident population and thus prevents uncontrolled real "no man's land" from developing (full text and proceedings of the Symposium: www.pasto-secu-ndjamena.org).

From Mauritania to Somalia, the large Saharo-Sahelian areas are characterized by difficult conditions and only practising mobile animal husbandry helps to exploit them. This ability to adapt has always been a valuable asset for pastoralists who support their families and provide their countries with meat, as well as neighbouring countries in both the South and the North.

Pastoralists provide great wealth to the countries of which they are citizens, contributing largely to GDP, tax revenues and exports. Pastoralists have ways of life and know-how best able to adapt to the Saharo-Sahelian environment and to vitalize this space. In addition to

being a major asset for the Saharo-Sahelian countries, livestock is also a powerful vector of regional economic integration through the thriving business it generates.

However, the resilience capacities of pastoral societies are challenged by recurrent climatic shocks and their environmental, economic, social and political consequences. In addition, for a decade, a new plague has come down on them. The spaces they occupy and support are plagued by chronic, moving and cross-border insecurity. Nourishing and feeding on illicit trafficking, many mafia and terrorist groups destabilize the entire region, worry the world and threaten to turn the Sahel and Sahara into a vast gray area.

These are the main findings formulated in the text of the N'Djamena Declaration in May 2013.

More than four years later, what about the magnitude of such a threat?

Since 2012, the Malian Government has abandoned the pastoral areas in northern Mali, Gourma and insecurity has even gained ground in the delta. The three Liptako-Gourma borders have never been so risky for the people. The vast Lake Chad Basin, which is a vital zone of pastoral retreat in the event of drought in eastern Niger, Kanem and Chari-Baguirmi Chad and North Cameroon has become a cemetery of local people (farmers, fishermen, pastoralists) who failed to flee to the refugee camps. North-eastern Nigeria has become a hotbed of crime, resulting in a complex change in cross-border transhumance routes and livestock trade routes from the pastoral areas of Diffa and Chad. The Central African Republic, which was cited as an example in 1990 because it had become, in less than twenty years, one of the largest producers of meat in the region, is struggling to recover from the civil war that started in 2012. Côte d'Ivoire, which had developed in the 70s a real strategy of reception and installation of herders thanks to the establishment, by SODEPRA, of several hundreds of pastoral installations, is plagued by deadly conflicts like that which occurred in the region of Bouna, in 2016. How not to be preoccupied with such turbulence and the lasting chaos they can cause?

3. Pastoralism and the security issues: the major risk of amalgamation

"Pastoral groups are often accused, even if they do not have exclusivity, of being behind the unrests, acts of banditry and rebellions. It is undeniable that some of the areas they cover have become hotbed of destabilization with the recent installation of drug traffickers, terrorists and gangs. But, should we incriminate those who regularly engage in the painful tasks of moving around with the herds (long walks, tedious water pumping, daily monitoring of animals, search for lost or stolen animals, etc ...)? Nothing is more dangerous than amalgamating between producers and bandits "(Marty A. 2013).

There is no particular problem in terms of security and stability with pastoralism when it can operate normally. On the contrary, many of us have known a time, not so long ago, when it was totally safe to circulate in the pastoral areas, including for foreigners. As it was recalled in N'Djamena in 2013, pastoral stock-breeding is even a factor of security, contributing to the

occupation of the "no man's land". Attached as they are to their herds, pastoralists are very appreciative of peace and tranquillity. They are even the very first ones to be willing to forge links, social agreements, even alliances, with the other groups during the transhumance and when they attend the markets. Unfortunately, nowadays, they are the very first people to fear the kidnapping or racketeering of their property and the attacks on their physical integrity.

One can say that **the States have an interest in these huge areas being inhabited and valued by professionals who are accustomed to live there and take advantage of existing, even uncertain, resources.**

However, some pastoral groups may have accumulated problems for other reasons unrelated to the pastoral economy. The loss of trust in the State can promote political and economic marginalization, the development of divisions and inequalities, the recurrence of crises (droughts and conflicts), the weakening of solidarity bonds, the absence of social services, etc. These are then fertile grounds to snap discontent and push the idle youth in the search for future prospects, into the criminal economy. This type of circumstances is undeniably conducive to crystallizations of identity, even irredentism. But, it is not pastoralism as such that is involved. It is rather the fact of deep structural causes, not sufficiently elucidated and resolved in time. Breeders, and especially pastoralism, could have served as a bulwark against such abuses if the public authorities and their partners had been able to implement the appropriate policies and actions required for their well-being. Unfortunately, for too long, pastoralism has remained the poor relative of the world of development.

We should remember at least the following lesson from this observation: **it is development by and with the people that constitutes the first pillar of security and peace.**

4. What strategies for responding to these new forms of insecurity?

i. The indispensable security approach, even if necessary, also carries risks. The first response to deal with a situation of insecurity is to gather the means to prosecute and put out of harm's way the actors responsible for this situation. For the Sahel countries, this response is potentially a source of tension, whether it is locally sourced or provided by foreign partners (Veron, 2013). The example of Mali is fully suggestive of the limits of the exclusively security approach. Despite the strong international military presence, the pressure of jihadist groups seems to be increasing. Malian soil has been the scene of almost two hundred attacks in less than two years, causing several hundred deaths and injuries (Thiam, 2017). Insecurity is now spreading to the centre of the country.

This leads quite naturally to reflect on the accompaniment of this security response by actions for the benefit of the populations, in particular in terms of economic and social development and in terms of local governance. The measures therefore concern both the participation of the populations in the political life of their regions, particularly in the context of decentralization, and in the governance of the powers in place, whether they come from decentralization or de-concentrated administrations.

But the modalities of this accompaniment remain largely to be defined, a difficult task given the failures of the past in dealing with the causes of crises and violence affecting the region. The PRAPS, like other projects, is fully confronted with these difficulties of intervention in several countries in the regions where, in the face of insecurity, the state services are only too little present. **More than ever, pastoral organizations have a major role to play alongside local authorities**, when they are still in place to implement the development and reconstruction actions required in these territories and areas in crisis.

ii. Go beyond an exclusively security approach, intensify the work of crisis prevention in its social and economic dimensions.

A return of the State and its services. A security response assumes, as a first approximation, that the State, which today is largely absent from pastoral areas, reinvests them and implements the means and men that will enable it to exercise its sovereign functions and restore trust. This includes, amongst other things, the installation or resettlement of military or similar garrisons in the areas in question.

In areas at risk of insecurity, the "fight against insecurity" must now be at the centre of the professional activity of many stakeholders from various backgrounds. Whether it is to prosecute suspected terrorists, to prevent young people who are idle from committing acts of petty crime, many professionals must now be involved in the fight against insecurity on a daily basis. And so, well beyond the professional spheres of the police and justice: this is particularly the case of professionals operating in the field of social intervention. These interventions in the social field should aim at helping promote security through "prevention" activities with young people and / or other inhabitants of disadvantaged areas and considered as "criminogenic" (Schaut 2000, Boucher, 2003).

Re-inventing the social bond. In areas emerging from turbulence, the reinvention of the social bond is indeed a major imperative for societies that have just been torn apart and whose wounds will take time to heal sustainably. *"This is indeed a question of survival. Neither simple backtracking, nor pure creation ex-nihilo, it is about building new economic, social and political perspectives, valuing all the opportunities offered by the present and taking into account the lessons of the distant and near past, to build a sustainable future for all components.* (Marty, 1997).

To achieve this in such contexts, it appears essential to intervene in a progressive and gradual manner by combining short-term and medium-term actions. In the short term, it is to accompany the initiatives of dialogue and build social and economic links, while maintaining a humanitarian aid which remains indispensable. In the medium and long term, we must strive to formulate and implement more structuring actions for local community development.

The importance of policy dialogue between public actors and civil society at all local, national and regional levels. The desire to operationalize an integrated regional vision of livestock has led ECEDAS, coastal governments and regional livestock networks to mobilize to establish a regional framework for high-level policy dialogue on cross-border transhumance. The main advantage of these high-level meetings is to build a forum for exchanges between practitioners and actors working on cross-border transhumance issues. It annually reviews past campaigns, helps to better prepare for future campaigns and agrees on a roadmap that

is subject to periodic evaluations (RBM, 2016). The regional consultations provide a framework for high-level policy discussions for decision-makers in Sahelian and coastal countries. This type of initiative has the potential not only to improve policies at the regional level, but also to reinforce the shared visions and cooperation that is essential for peace and the economic development of pastoral and agro-pastoral farms in cross-border areas.

5. Conclusion: Broadening the scope of crisis prevention and the restoration of peace and development in major transboundary entities under threat

Crisis prevention in pastoral regions and the civic integration of pastoralists in their countries and areas are therefore more than ever closely linked to relevant, timely and efficient targeted actions and policies: securing mobility, recognizing pastoral development of land, better consideration of the ecology of Sahelian environments and the pastoral economy through policies, access to social services, including health and education. This is, mainly, the priority challenges for which several initiatives have begun in the region, including the PRAPS in the six Sahelian countries, the PASTOR in Chad, the RIMRAP in Mauritania and many others. It is also this, too, that the coastal countries would like to contribute fully through PRIDEC, to which PREDIP, PEPAO and PACBAO should soon contribute.

However, the development of areas of conflict and lawlessness calls for a stronger consideration of pastoralism by policy makers at the national, regional and international levels. In view of this recurrent, even endemic, insecurity, and particularly its consequences in terms of harm to the lives of rural people and particularly pastoralists, it seems more than urgent for the public authorities to implement structural responses to root causes of evil. This is what Niger is trying to do, particularly through the High Authority for Peace-building in Niger, which is mobilized in conflict or post-conflict zones.

The future of pastoral systems and the integration of pastoral populations into political and civic life in Africa is today a regional issue, for the sake of security in the Sahel and in most cross-border areas, the development of rural territories and urban supply of healthy animal products from the Sahelian zone to coastal countries.

Strengthen the governance and security of pastoral areas, actively support the resilience of pastoral societies, improve the economic viability of pastoral systems and finally facilitate access of populations of these areas to basic social services (health, water-hygiene-sanitation education, etc.) adapted to their context, constitute the priority areas of intervention for pastoral development. These are some elements of the commitments expressed by the various actors through the N'Djamena Declaration.

Security crises affecting areas under terrorist influence are difficult to integrate into interventions such as PRAPS and more generally by the EWS tools. Political issues make the prevention of pastoral crises very difficult and contingency plans rarely address this type of situation. Companies also limit their commitment and are reluctant to engage in infrastructure construction. Procurement is sometimes blocked for lack of competition. Countries and technical and financial partners should therefore adapt procedures to this type of context so as not to hamper public action in these areas. More globally, finally, the

challenge is also to synergize in the countries the security and defence EWS advocated by ECOWAS with the EWSs addressing ordinary pastoral risks.

5. Useful references

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