# “Farmer/Herder” Conflicts and the Prospects of Local Peacebuilding: The Case of Agogo in the Asante-Akyem North Municipal Assembly of Ghana

by

Maame Aboagyewaa Peterson

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme

Faculty of Graduate Studies University of Manitoba, Winnipeg

**Ackowledgements**

I would like to say thank you to God for the strength and wisdom needed to complete this study. A special thank you to my family and friends, especially my husband and son. I am also grateful for the support of my advisor, Dr. Adam Muller, and my advisory committee members, Dr. Sean Byrne and Dr. Jessica Senehi.

A special thank you to my friends, who became brothers, Joshua Okyere, Mathias Ateng, Benjamin Maiangwa and Francis Dzikpe, for always being there for me. I would like to say thank you to the West African Network for Peacebuilding, Accra, Ghana, for their support. Thank you to the Agogo farming community and the Fulani Youth Association of Ghana. Thank you to Jason Brennan and Susan Ducharme for all their administrative support.

To all who contributed to my PhD journey through financial and non-financial means, I say God richly bless you.

Thank you to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Manitoba for the Research Completion Award and the Carla Thorlakson Travel Grant.

This work was also carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of IDRC, Universities Canada, or its Board of Governors.

## Dedication

I dedicate this work to my husband, Kwame, my son Adriel, my parents Emma and Francis, and my siblings Nana Konadu, Mamaa, and Nana Ansua Peterson. I also dedicate this to the Dodoo family especially my late Uncle Professor Dodoo. This work is also dedicated to my in-laws the Asante-Mensah family, Mr Totimeh (Blue) and his wife Stefanie. Finally, to the late Emeritus Professor Russell Smandych, for his support and encouragement. I appreciate you all for believing in me and encouraging me to keep moving forward, no matter what comes my way.

## Abstract

This study investigates the complex dynamics of farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana, particularly focusing on the role of identity in these disputes. Unlike other West African countries where conflicts are primarily driven by resource scarcity, Ghanaian conflicts between indigenous farmers and Fulani herdsmen are significantly influenced by issues of identity and the perceived non-indigeneity of the Fulani. This study examines how being labeled as an "Other" impacts the socioeconomic opportunities for Fulani herdsmen and explores the link between citizenship rights and these conflicts.

Employing a qualitative research approach, the study utilizes individual interviews and group observations in Agogo—an area with a pronounced history of frequent conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers. By applying identity theories and critical and emancipatory peacebuilding frameworks, the research analyzes participants' lived experiences and the broader implications for peace and security.

The study also highlights the crucial roles of women and youth in peacebuilding efforts within Agogo. It incorporates recommendations and practical strategies proposed by the participants themselves, including both farmers and Fulani herdsmen. These recommendations stress the need for designated areas for farming and pastoral activities, enhanced cross-cultural dialogue, and peace education initiatives. For the people of Agogo, peace encompasses not just the absence of violence but also social and economic development, access to amenities, and overall well-being. This research provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana and offers participant-driven strategies for strengthening peacebuilding efforts.

The key findings include deep-rooted tensions over land use, water access, and crop destruction by cattle, which fuel hostility between farmers and herders. Further, prejudicial "othering" of the Fulani herdsmen and media stereotypes exacerbate mistrust, while the exclusion of farmers, youth, and women from land distribution decisions intensifies grievances. The study also found that gender-based violence contributes to fear and insecurity in Agogo. The findings also reveal generational differences in peacebuilding approaches and highlight how varying views on conflict resolution, patriotism, and community values contribute to ongoing tensions. Additionally, challenges like corruption, ineffective leadership, and inconsistent policies are identified as obstacles to effective peacebuilding.

Table of Contents

## Glossary of Key Terms

- The term second generation would be used in this study to refer to subsequent generations of immigrants as well.
- Fulani herdsmen refer to those who practice pastoralism and nomadism. There are other categories of Fulani who have managed to integrate into Ghanaian society and have acquired citizenship rights. The dispute is with those who practice agro-pastoralism.
- The farming group refers to the indigenous people of Agogo.
- For this study, stakeholders refer to indigenous or Ghanaian governmental and non-governmental actors, which are local government officials, state security officials, chiefs (traditional leaders/ opinion leaders) of host communities, and non-governmental organizations working on peacebuilding and conflicts in the town of Agogo in the Asante-Akyem North Municipality.
- WANEP- West African Network for Peacebuilding
- ECOWAS-Economic Community of West African States
- CSO-Civil Society Organization
- NGO-Non-governmental Organization
- PACS- Peace and Conflict Studies

# List of Tables and Figures

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Chapter One introduces the study's key themes, context, and objectives. It examines the rise of intercommunal conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on farmer/herder tensions in Ghana and their socioeconomic, political, and environmental drivers. It highlights research gaps, particularly the role of identity in resource access and the limited focus on indigenous peacebuilding and gender perspectives. The chapter discusses the study's significance for peace building and conflict resolution and outlines its objectives. Finally, it presents the research questions and provides an overview of the thesis's structure.

## Background of the Study

Intercommunal conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa linked to transhumance (seasonal movement of cattle in search of pasture for grazing) have increased over time (Umutoni, 2018). This has been linked to climate change and limited land resources, as well as ethnic politics and indigeneity (Moritz, 2006; Paalo, 2021). The scarcity of land resources has pushed already vulnerable groups into extreme poverty. The patriarchal nature of many African societies denies women their human rights, the effects of which are worsened during violent conflicts (Luedke & Logan, 2018).

Ballentine and Nitzschke (2013) contend that civil wars in contemporary Africa are not only caused by historical feuds but also by the inequitable distribution of economic resources and power among different social groups. Africa has recorded many violent clashes between immigrants, or settlers, and host populations. Perhaps the most well-known case in recent years have been the xenophobic attacks on other African nationals by some South Africans (Kerr et al., 2019). Clashes between immigrants and host populations may be due to power imbalances

between these groups. Discourses and policies on xenophobia, migrant-host population conflicts, and exclusion have generally ignored second and subsequent generations of migrants. These second-generation migrants are citizens by virtue of their place of birth, following the principle of *jus soli,* and should therefore normally enjoy the same rights as indigenes. In Ghana, there have been conflicts between indigenous Ghanaian farmers and immigrant herdsmen of Fulani descent (Paalo, 2021), and such conflicts have implications for national and regional security. Farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana are based on issues of identity, particularly citizenship rights and how that impacts one's access to land resources.

Further, political entrepreneurs play on the emotions and perceived insecurities of members of their respective groups to incite violence in pursuit of their own selfish ends (Wolff, 2006). Wolff explains that political entrepreneurs are individuals who leverage their political power and position for their own benefits sometimes by influencing policy or mobilizing support for own interests. Bukari and Schareika (2015) noted that prejudicial "othering" is being used by some political leaders in Ghana to limit the Fulani herdsmen's access to land and other socioeconomic resources. They noted that some of these leaders have manipulated the issue of identity, that is the perceived non-Ghanaian status of the Fulani herdsmen to escalate existing tensions in Agogo, claiming that these Fulani are immigrants with no proper claims to land resources. For example, in 2017 the Ghanaian government deployed military and police in Agogo to forcibly remove Fulani herdsmen in an operation they termed 'operation cow-leg' (Paalo, 2022).

The construction of Fulani identity as fundamentally violent has been used by many political leaders, the media, and the public to incite fear and panic. This in turn has exacerbated the conflicts in Ghana, Nigeria, and elsewhere. For example, Maiangwa (2017) shows how the

politics of indigeneity and the framing of Fulani identity compound the violence in farmer/herder relations in Nigeria. The media likewise shapes public perceptions of identity through their reporting (Pate & Dauda, 2015). Media reports of farmer/herder conflicts have exacerbated the problem of herdsmen's recognition and misrecognition. For instance, some local Ghanaian newspapers have framed the identity of the Fulani as violent jihadist who are a threat to the survival of the local farming community and must therefore be forcibly removed from the lands. The media's negative reportage of the conflict as well as the biased views of the Fulani have deepened animosities between farmers and herdsmen (Mohammed et al., 2018). It has additionally increased sentiments of xenophobia against the Fulani group in Ghana.

This study aims to examine the socioeconomic ramifications of labeling individuals as "others" in Ghana, particularly prejudicial "othering". In the process, it also delves into the correlation between citizenship rights and farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana, focusing on the theoretical and practical implications of this relationship. The study underscores the potential for isolated conflicts between migrants and indigenes in certain communities to escalate into a nationwide crisis if ignored. This study also expands on the literature on emerging issues of prejudicial "othering", xenophobia, the impact of farmer/herder conflicts on different gender groups, and the role of women and youth in grass-roots peacebuilding.

This study draws on two theoretical perspectives: identity theory and critical and emancipatory peacebuilding. It also adopts a qualitative research methodology that consists of interviews and participant observations designed to understand the lived experiences of participants from their own perspectives. Though similar conflicts occur in other parts of Ghana, they have become more deadly and rampant in and around the town of Agogo over the last decade, thus making Agogo a logical choice of site for this study.

## Statement of the Problem

In Ghana, there have been violent incidents between indigenous Ghanaians and Fulani immigrants (Otu & Impraim, 2021). There have been clashes between Fulani herdsmen and indigenous Ghanaian farmers in Agogo and several other towns throughout southern Ghana (Nartey & Ladegaard, 2021). Scholars such as Catley et al. (2013) and Tonah (2005) have examined the causes of farmer/herder conflicts in relation to climate change and struggles over environmental resources. Although Bukari and Schareika (2015) acknowledge that citizenship rights may underlie the natural resource conflict, the impact of the herdsmen's perceived identity on their socioeconomic rights and the broader issue of identitarianism remains understudied.

Second, the role of indigenous and traditional peacebuilding approaches, specifically the potential contributions of grassroots groups in Agogo to forging sustainable peace in this community, has not been adequately explored. Exploring grassroots perspectives on peacebuilding in Agogo is essential, as PACS research shows that involving local groups leads to more sustainable and lasting solutions. Local ownership and indigenous peacebuilding practices have been applauded for contributing to sustainable peace through the promotion of intergroup dialogue and cooperation (Thiessen, 2013).

Third, the gender dimensions of this conflict have been understudied, particularly the impact of the conflict on the different gender groups, as well as gender considerations for peace building. The impact of conflict across genders is non-uniform (O'Reilly et al., 2015), therefore, including gender perspectives in peacebuilding efforts is essential because it allows resolution strategies to address the specific needs of different gender groups, particularly women (Adeogun & Muthuki, 2018). In addition, a focus on gender will ensure that peacebuilding efforts are

sustainable and socio-culturally appropriate because different genders experience and participate in conflict and peacebuilding differently. Conflict resolution strategies and peacebuilding strategies must evolve as the world evolves. This is because social conflicts are evolving in terms of their incidence rates and dynamics (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2016).

There have been accounts of women playing leading peacebuilding roles in many post-conflict societies and war settings, such as Liberia (UNWomen, 2019). The role of women in conflicts and peacebuilding has often been overlooked, particularly in the context of critical considerations of Ghana's farmer/herder conflict. McEvoy (2009) argues that to understand women's experiences of conflict, there needs to be an analysis of their political power and position. Women have sometimes been marginalized in matters of peacebuilding and conflict intervention by patriarchy. Nonetheless, their marginalization has not stopped them from involving themselves in acts of political resistance. Women have contributed in many instances to peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict societies (Goyol, 2019), yet their contributions are less highlighted in peacebuilding research including the farmer/herder conflict discourse.

Further, the challenges that women face in conflict societies often remain underreported. During intercommunal wars, females may become victims of sexual violence (Flaherty et al., 2015). Women's bodies are occasionally used as a battleground in which sexual assault is employed as a weapon against an opposing group (Seifert, 2018). For instance, in Ghana, Fulani cattle herders have been accused of raping the wives and daughters of farmers as revenge (GhanaWebNews, 2019). In this farmer/herder conflict in Ghana, sexual violence is a major challenge because it is the main weapon of war used by both conflicting parties. It is therefore essential to examine gender with regards to the experiences of females in Agogo to understand

their contributions to peacebuilding and the challenges they face with regards to the conflict in their community.

**The Purpose of the Study**

First, this study adds to knowledge on issues arising from the socioeconomic exclusion of minority groups (particularly groups experiencing economic precarity and immigrants) as well as its impacts on security in contemporary West Africa, a region that has become plagued with incidents of extreme violence and terrorism. The knowledge I gained through my analysis can influence policies on conflict resolution and stakeholder engagement on national and regional security issues.

Second, this project explores both the Fulani and the farming group's indigenous peacebuilding approaches to determine if and/or how these approaches may be applied to their conflict. It also contributes to the understanding of how the process of "othering" Fulani herdsmen in Ghana has developed and examines Fulani responses to this process. This study examines the effects of conflict on women's socioeconomic wellbeing as a specific minority category within each of these warring factions. It adds to knowledge of the roles played by women and youth in peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Third, the study suggests conflict resolution strategies that originate from the viewpoints of the warring factions themselves, given that previous solutions implemented by the government and other non-governmental stakeholders have proven unsustainable. These recommendations are based on their own perspectives on what peace means, as well as their ideas of what a peaceful society should look like.

Finally, these recommendations for peacebuilding heavily rely on emancipatory approaches or practices. This is because much of the evidence from PACS research and practice suggests that peacebuilding is more sustainable when there is local ownership and participation in the process (Byrne, 2023).

## The Study's Rationale and Objectives

This study seeks to explore the following objectives: determine the causes of the farmer/herder conflict in Ghana from the perspective of all parties (the Fulani group; the farming group and the stakeholders); examine the indigenous community's perceptions of the identity status of the Fulani herdsmen; examine the Fulani community's perceptions of the nature of conflict resolution policies and strategies, as well as how they respond to them; explore the different meanings and understandings of peace for each group (that is the Fulani group and the Farming group in Agogo); explore each group's indigenous peacebuilding approaches and their potential for building sustainable peace in Agogo; examine how the stakeholders' conception of the Fulani is influencing the conflict (how their conception is influencing the national perception of this category of Fulani as well as issues of national security); and finally, explore the gendered dimensions (including intersectionality) of this conflict, particularly the specific impacts of the conflict on Agogo women and youth and their roles in the conflict and in peacebuilding.

## Research Questions

Peace has different meanings for different individuals and groups because of social, economic, political, and cultural and other factors. Therefore, it is important for peace researchers to first understand what peace means to their study population and to understand the

motivations underlying the actions and inactions of this population. My study seeks firstly to ask what peace means to the Fulani community and inquire into what peace means to the farming community.

Second, I am interested in what indigenous or local processes the Fulani community and the farming community use or what exists in their community to resolve conflicts and build peace. I also want to understand the role of some key population sub-groups such as women and the youth in peacebuilding, as anecdotal evidence (including scanty literature on their roles) suggests these groups have been historically ignored in peacebuilding processes in Agogo. Literature on farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa and particularly Ghana, have hitherto not highlighted the roles of the youth and women in peacebuilding efforts. Thus, I am interested in asking, what roles women play in Agogo's peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives? And what role the youth of both the Fulani and Farming groups play in peacebuilding in Agogo? I also wanted to understand the roles of other stakeholders, that is, indigenous or Ghanaian governmental and non-governmental actors, which are local government officials, state security officials, chiefs (traditional leaders/ opinion leaders) of host communities and civil society groups working on peacebuilding and conflicts in the town of Agogo play in this conflict. I wanted to explore what roles these stakeholders play in fostering peace or intensifying the conflict.

**Overview of the Chapters**

Chapter One includes an introduction and defines some of the key terms used in the study, specifies the study's objectives and research questions, and articulates its rationale. Chapter Two explains the study's context, most especially the historical background of

farmer/herder conflicts generally in West Africa and specifically in Ghana (Agogo), the pertinent laws and policies pertaining to these conflicts and transhumance in West Africa, Ghana's efforts towards resolving farmer/herder conflicts, and the associated opportunities and challenges. Chapters Three and Four review relevant literature on peacebuilding and the causes of intergroup ethnic conflict. Chapter Three provides theoretical insights on farmer/herder conflict, particularly theories concerning identity and the role of some stakeholders such as political leaders in intergroup ethnic conflicts. While Chapter Four discusses theories and concepts of peace building related to the critical and emancipatory peacebuilding school of thought. Chapter Five details the research methods and methodologies used in the study, while Chapters Six and Seven expound on the study's findings. Finally, Chapter Eight concludes the study with the overall key findings and general conclusions, the implications of the findings for PACS theories and praxis, as well as policy recommendations and my future research goals.

**Conclusions**

Farmer/herder conflicts have occurred in many parts of Africa, particularly West Africa. Various peacebuilding strategies have been adopted by stakeholders; however, these strategies have failed to provide lasting peace. In the case of the Agogo in Ghana, the conflicts are still ongoing, although clashes have not been as rampant in the last two years. People in the Agogo community appear dissatisfied with the resolution of their issues, which has resulted in a persistent conflict situation. My study delves into the ways in which parties can contribute to peacebuilding and the conditions that have fueled this ongoing conflict. To achieve this goal, it is important to understand the history of the conflict and the context of Agogo.

In my second chapter I delve into the context of farmer/herder conflicts in Agogo and explore how their situation aligns with the broader context of farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa. This includes the policies and protocols that stakeholders have developed to resolve and prevent such conflicts in the region.

# CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY, GEOGRAPHY OF THE STUDY SITE, RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS ON TRANSHUMANCE

In Chapter Two, I review literature on the history and context of farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa in general and then I highlight the unique case of Ghana (particularly Agogo). In this chapter, I also describe the geographical location of the study site as well as its demographic structure and geopolitical context in Ghana. Additionally, this chapter serves to highlight the ethnocultural diversity of Agogo. Further, I discuss the previous peacebuilding efforts and the potential for sustainable peacebuilding practices and methods in Agogo. I also discuss the various policies on transhumance instituted to address the conflict and the challenges therein.

## Historical Background of Farmer/Herder Conflict in West Africa

Across West Africa, there have been many violent clashes between farmers and Fulani nomadic herders. The Fulbe, Fulani or Peul people, originally nomadic herders, have historically ranged across Western and Central Africa—from Senegal to Ethiopia and from the Sahel to forest zones (De Bruijn & van Dijk, 2001).Though many Fulani are now sedentary, they maintain deep cultural and economic ties to pastoralism. The Fulani population across Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon, and Mauritania is estimated to exceed 10 million (De Bruijn & van Dijk, 2001).

The term "Fulani" is often used (of Hausa origin), although "Peul" (Wolof) and "Fulbe" are also used. Fulani are found all across West Africa (van Santen et al., 2014). While Fulani herders have historically coexisted with sedentary farmers through trade and mutual land use, their migration patterns, especially into forested and southern regions, have led to struggle over limited land resources with local farmers (Cabot & Cabot, 2017).

The Fulani in the Southern parts of West Africa have often been considered strangers and non-citizens (Maiangwa, 2017), however in "Eastern Africa, they are indigenes who belong to groups like the Pokot, Turkana, Abakuria, Maasai and Samburu in Kenya, the Toposa tribe in South Sudan and the Dassenatch and Mursi of Ethiopia" (Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015, p. 4). Their access to environmental resources is often restricted, and in some cases entirely denied, due to their nomadic way of life which takes them beyond the boundaries of their resident communities. This movement frequently leads to tensions and conflicts with other land users, particularly farmers.

Importantly, farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa have deep historical roots, shaped by environmental, socio-political, and economic transformations across the Sahel and savannah regions (Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015). Traditionally, pastoralism—particularly among Fulani herders—coexisted with sedentary agriculture through symbiotic relationships (Cabot & Cabot, 2017). Herders moved along transhumance routes, trading livestock products for grains and accessing post-harvest fields for grazing. However, these relationships have been increasingly strained since the late 20th century (Penu & Paalo, 2021).

Across Africa, colonial policies played a key role in disrupting these relations. European administrations often prioritized sedentary agriculture over nomadic pastoralism, undermining traditional land-use agreements and codifying land tenure systems that favored farmers (Mwikali & Wafula, 2019). Post-independence development strategies further marginalized pastoralists, leading to competition over access to land, water, and political representation. Colonial administrations across West Africa implemented land tenure systems that significantly altered traditional land-use patterns (Moritz, 2010; Cabot 2017). These systems tended to privilege sedentary agriculture over pastoralism, often registering land under fixed ownership schemes that

excluded mobile groups like the Fulani. By formalizing land access through title deeds and boundaries, colonial governments marginalized pastoral communities whose land rights were typically communal and seasonal (Turner, 2022). The imposition of administrative boundaries further disrupted transhumance routes, often leading to conflict when herders crossed colonial borders in search of pasture. These changes not only undermined indigenous conflict resolution systems (Penu & Paalo, 2021) but also contributed to a legacy of structural inequality that persists today. Many post-colonial governments retained these land systems, further entrenching the marginalization of nomadic pastoralists (Moritz, 2006).

From the 1970's onward, climate variability, particularly recurrent droughts and desertification in the Sahel, pushed herders southwards into more densely populated agricultural zones like Cameroun, Nigeria and Ghana, intensifying land pressure and triggering disputes (De Haan et al., 2016). The migration of Fulani herdsmen down south due to climate-induced drought in the Sahel regions coupled with population growth, land fragmentation, and the expansion of commercial farming have exacerbated conflicts between nomadic herdsmen and local farmers in countries like Ghana (Bukari & Osei-Kufuor, 2021).

Further, the collapse of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, weak state institutions, and increasing access to small arms have transformed local land disputes into broader security threats. In countries like Nigeria and Mali, Fulani-linked conflicts have become entangled with armed insurgencies and ethnic militias (Krätli & Toulmin, 2020; Okoli & Atelhe, 2014). The link between climate-induced insecurity and youth disenfranchisement has become a concern for security experts. Displaced pastoralist youth, with limited opportunities, are increasingly vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups (Werz & Conley, 2012). Addressing this nexus requires coordinated governance approaches that recognize pastoralist rights while

promoting sustainable land management and peacebuilding. Farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa are rooted in deep historical, ecological, and political dynamics. While the Fulani have long played a vital role in regional economies, their marginalization, coupled with environmental pressures and weak governance, has intensified conflicts. Sustainable solutions require inclusive citizenship policies, land tenure reforms, improved natural resource governance, and long-term peacebuilding initiatives. These conflicts are symptomatic of broader governance and development challenges in the region. Policymakers must address not only the immediate causes—such as land use and migration—but also the historical injustices and systemic marginalization of pastoralist communities. There is also a pressing need to enhance dialogue between communities, support inclusive education, invest in mobile infrastructure, and develop adaptive land policies that account for mobility and shared use.

## Historical Context of Farmer/Herder Conflicts in Ghana

The emergence of conflicts between farmers and herders in Ghana can be attributed to historical events, namely the emergence of land tenure systems, population increase, and migration (Olaniyan et al., 2015). Fulani herder migration patterns from neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso and Niger have further complicated the situation (Bukari & Osei-Kufuor, 2021).

Farmer/herder conflicts in some African states constitute a type of indigene-migrant conflict. Transhumance across the Sahelian regions of West Africa has existed for centuries (Ayantunde et al., 2014). The Fulani, or Fulbe, have been the major ethnic group engaged in nomadism and transhumance in the region (Sangare, 2019). Over time, the Fulani have gradually migrated from their ancestral homes in Northern Africa to the southern areas in search of pasture

because of climate change on their pastoral lands in the Northern Sahelian zones (WANEP, 2018).

These movements of people and their property, including livestock, have led to struggles over limited land resources between the Fulani nomads and farmers, who depend on land and forest resources for their survival (Bukari & Schareika, 2015). These violent conflicts have existed for decades; however, research indicates that there has been an upsurge of incidents in the region (Moritz, 2006). This is because of climate-related challenges coupled with other socioeconomic problems like unemployment, corruption, and other social inequalities (WANEP, 2018).

In addition, land use and tenure systems have complicated the issue. For example, in Ghana, some landowners take advantage of loopholes in land administration systems by favoring pastoralists over indigenous farmers, which results in unstable land tenure and a feeling of deprivation for the latter (Kugbega & Aboagye, 2021). Some of the farmers claim that the Fulani can exchange cattle for land with some landowners. Farmer/herder conflicts have resulted in fatalities, internal displacements, and revenue losses due to human and food insecurity. Reports also indicate that the frustrations caused by these land disputes and socioeconomic inequality have increased the rates at which marginalized Fulani youth have enlisted in terrorist groups like Al Qaeda in West Africa (Werz & Conley, 2012). Given that such circumstances are worrying, the issue demands the attention of peace and policy makers, security experts, political and traditional leaders, as well as the general population.

Further, the proliferation and easy availability of light and small weapons has made farmer/herder clashes more deadly, resulting in the destruction of lives and property (George et al., 2021). In addition, population growth and urbanization have led to the commercialization of

agricultural and pastoral lands for commercial purposes (Bayala et al., 2023). Politicians exploiting farmer/herder conflicts and ineffective governance likewise hinder conflict resolution efforts and exacerbate polarization between farmers and Fulani herdsmen (Paalo, 2021).

West Africa is beset with clashes between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers (Otu et al., 2020). These clashes have taken place in Ghana, Nigeria, and other West African sub-region countries. In Nigeria, the Fulani, despite being a minority group in terms of population size, are at least recognized as a major group in terms of political power, for instance Nigeria has had several political leaders including a President of Fulani descent. The Fulani are primarily located in the northern parts of Nigeria. However, in Ghana, certain official public records of the country from the time of its independence (such as the national population and housing census records) currently does not consider the Fulani as an indigenous ethnic group. This is because Ghana's Fulani people are the descendants of nomads from Chad, Niger, and Nigeria (Bukari et al., 2018).

The formation of Fulani communities in Ghana can be traced back to the beginning of the 20th century (Oppong, 2002). Tonah (2005) states that the Fulani group's first settlements were mostly located in the savannah areas in the north of the country. Nevertheless, they have gradually extended their influence into the southern forest regions (Tonah, 2005). Fulani in Ghana can be grouped into 3 categories: sedentary herdsmen, nomads/mobiles, and those who have settled in urban areas and engage in trade (Issifu et al., 2022). The sedentary Fulani assert that they are not troublemakers and disagrees with those who hold them responsible for farm invasions and damage (Issifu et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the Fulani nomads reject claims that they are hostile and dangerous (Setrana et al., 2022). The conflict in Ghana primarily stems from destruction caused by cattle of some nomadic Fulani, but the tension between these Fulani and

host communities often leads to generalizations that all Fulani are responsible for environmental damage (Issifu et al., 2022).

Historically, Fulani herders were employed to tend cattle as caretakers for Ghanaian indigenes (Tonah, 2008), marking a period of intergroup cooperation and trade. In recent times, there has been anecdotal evidence that some Fulani have begun to run their own cattle ranches. This shift may have contributed to tensions between the Fulani and indigenous farmers because the move to independent ranching likely intensifies competition for limited environmental resources. As the Fulani establish their own operations, conflicts over land use may emerge, leading to misunderstandings and mistrust. This erosion of cooperative relationships, once grounded in shared goals, could exacerbate existing grievances and fuel further discord between the groups.

Despite the Fulani herders' centuries-long presence in Ghana, they continue to face exclusion from many socioeconomic opportunities and lack political rights, including suffrage rights (Bukari & Schareika, 2015). The Fulani herdsmen are not recognized as Ghanaian based on the notion that they are non-indigenous. The Fulani herdsmen agree that they are non-indigenous to Ghana but argue that they are Ghanaian based on the principle of citizenship by birth on Ghanaian soil. However, nomadic Fulani herdsmen's claims to birth right citizenship are usually contested unlike other categories of Fulani who have managed to integrate into the Ghanaian society (even these other categories of Fulani sometimes have challenges in proving their citizenship statuses). This is because the nomadic Fulani herdsmen move across borders with their cattle within the West African region (Tonah, 2008). These herdsmen usually live in the forests and do not usually make use of public birth centers or hospitals to have their births duly registered (Setrana, 2021). Therefore, their claims of being born in Ghana are sometimes

contested. Unlike other sedentary Fulani who have settled within Ghana, who have access to citizenship rights and opportunities, the Fulani herdsmen and their families are not recognized in many instances as Ghanaians. This lack of citizenship rights has an impact on their livelihoods and social mobility (Setrana, 2021).These exclusions have contributed to their grievances against the Ghanaian government and the indigenous population.

This conflict is therefore a reflection of a deeper identity crisis afflicting these two social groups in Ghana. Farmer/herder conflicts occur in most parts of sub-Saharan Africa. In East Africa and the northern parts of West Africa (areas like Kenya, Chad, and Mali) indigenous pastoral groups have long fought over land (Schilling et al., 2015). In southern parts of West Africa (Ghana, Ivory Coast and Nigeria), there have been many clashes between the Fulani and members of local groups such as farmers, usually over land rights (Bukari et al., 2020). What is peculiar about the Ghanaian case is the problem of political identity, that is, the construction of Fulani identity as foreign and non-Ghanaian (Bukari &Scharieka, 2015; Paalo, 2021) due to the historical absence of an indigenous ethnic group called Fulani in Ghana. In other parts of Africa where these farmer/herder conflicts have occurred between the Fulani group and farmers, the problem of identity does not necessarily involve nationality and citizenship rights. It is usually due to clashes of culture, religion, and struggles over land resources. Although these causes of farmer/herder conflicts also exist in Ghana, the issue of identity, particularly citizenship status is being manipulated by some local leaders, the media and other actors to escalate tensions over land resources, these actions have also fueled xenophobia.

According to Maiangwa (2017), post-colonial structuring and identification of who belongs and who does not belong, and the creation of prejudicial “othering” of those considered as out-groups is one of the triggers of farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa. The concept of

indigeneity is used to control land rights and access to resources in some of these resource related conflicts in West Africa. Post-colonial West Africans often define indigenous people as those with ancestral links to the land, that is, those who are "sons of the soil". This idea of indigeneity forms the basis for labelling the Fulani as non-Ghanaian or immigrants. Immigrants are usually blamed when there are economic downturns and struggle over limited resources (Kaushal, 2019). Immigrants are primary targets for xenophobic violence during economic crises; this is the case in South Africa (Ukwandu, 2017). Likewise, the Fulani are the descendants of nomads who immigrated into Ghana (then known as the Gold Coast) centuries ago, and they have become "easy" targets to blame for climate-related economic and land resource problems.

Farmer/herder clashes have plagued West Africa for decades, with identity serving as a fundamental factor in these disputes. To effectively address the intercommunal conflict in Agogo, it is essential to examine how identity influences and drives these issues. Understanding the role of identity is also crucial for developing comprehensive strategies for resolution and peacebuilding. Although Bukari and Schareika (2015) noted that prejudice and ethnocentrism are essential factors driving Ghana's farmer/herder conflicts, Ghana has not adequately researched other factors related to identity such as issues of gender and citizenship rights, and how these impact the conflicts. In West Africa, there have been clashes between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers in Nigeria and Ghana (Paalo, 2021). Despite comprising a minority group in Nigeria in terms of population size, the Fulani are an indigenous group (at least recognized as indigenous by the Nigerian state though some other ethnic groups reject this) primarily located in northern Nigeria. As previously mentioned, in Ghana, the Fulani are not considered to be an indigenous ethnic group. The Fulani are descendants of nomadic migrants from other countries like Chad,

Niger, and Nigeria. There have been clashes between 2nd and subsequent generation Fulani herders and indigenous Ghanaian farmers in northern and southern Ghana (Olaniyan et al., 2015). The construction of a kind of "foreign" Fulani identity by local Ghanaian farmers and the state has led to confrontations and counteractions. Although the Fulani acknowledge that they are non-indigenous to Ghana and trace their ethnic identity to the African Sahelian regions (e.g., Mali, Chad, Niger, parts of Nigeria etc.) they believe that they have equal rights as the farming community since they are, by law, Ghanaians who were born in Ghana or have parents who were born in Ghana (Setrana, 2021). The principle of citizenship by birth known as "*jus soli*," and the principle of citizenship by ancestry known as "*jus sanguinis*," by law entitle the Fulani herdsmen to the same socioeconomic rights as all other Ghanaians.

Environmental degradation and socioeconomic factors are among the multiple underlying causes of farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana (Cabot & Cabot, 2017). Sociocultural differences as well as political factors such as the inadequacy of land use policies and policies on climate change have also aggravated the situation. For instance, Tinsley and Gwiriri (2022) argue that current pastoral livestock policies in Ghana generally ignore how climate change increases the vulnerability of pastoralists by failing to address the changing availability of pasture and water resources, which are critical to their livelihoods. This oversight not only exacerbates the challenges faced by pastoralists but also fuels competition with farmers over dwindling resources, intensifying conflicts between these groups. Ultimately, without a more comprehensive approach that incorporates the effects of climate change and recognizes the needs of both pastoralists and farmers, the cycle of conflict is likely to continue, undermining community stability and food insecurity in the area (Issifu et al., 2022).

Also, isolated conflicts involving only some communities can increase xenophobic sentiments among a country's general population, which in turn could have implications for national security. These isolated clashes between farmers and herders are gradually becoming a threat to Ghanaian national security. Likewise, isolated conflicts among farmers of Burkinabe descent in La Cote d'Ivoire were an underlying factor in the 2011 Ivorian civil war (Olaniyan et al., 2015). The concept of Ivoiritė was used to preclude people of Burkinabe descent from enjoying some citizenship rights (Ayuba & Ismaila, 2018). It is therefore vitally important to understand the possible impacts of Ghana's farmer/herder conflicts on national and regional security. This is because such conflicts, if ignored and allowed to fester, could develop into the kind of civil war seen in La Cote d'Ivoire.

**The Study Site's Location and Geography**

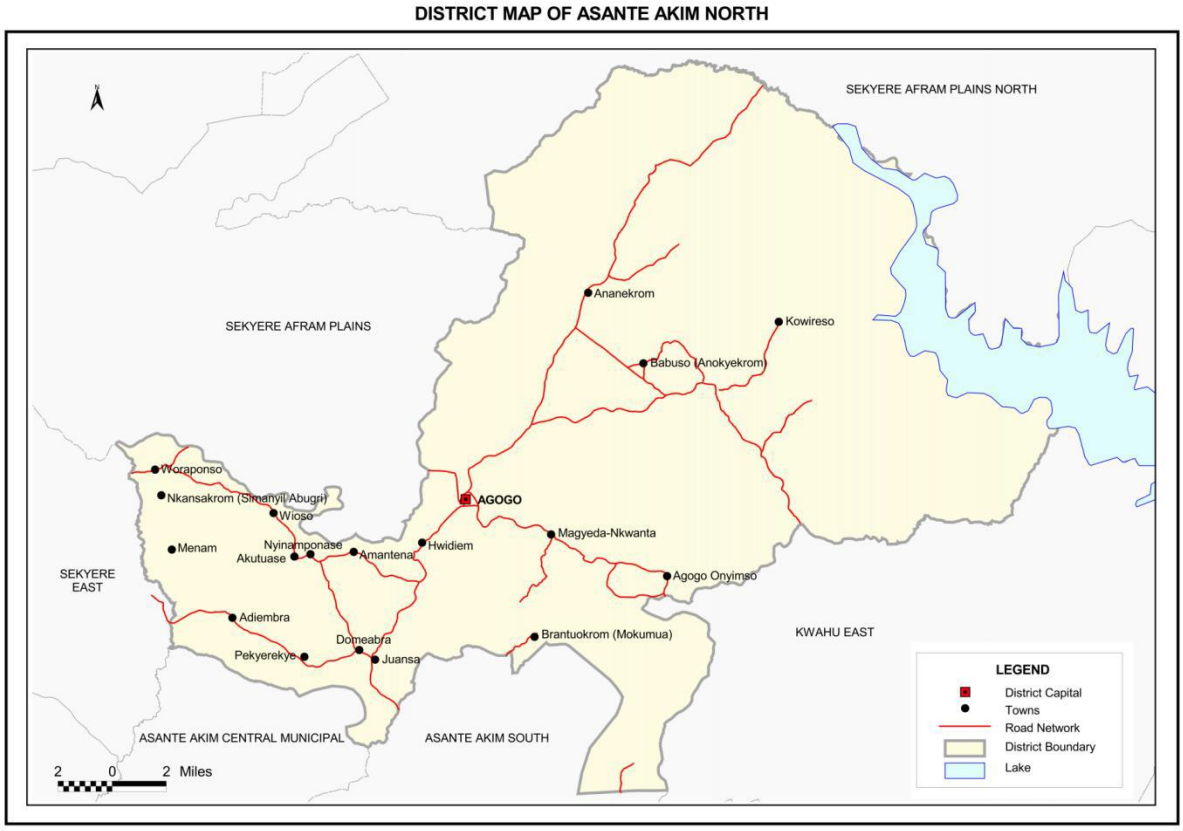
Agogo, a township in the south-eastern part of the Ashanti region, is the study site. Agogo serves as the administrative center for the Asante Akim North Municipal Assembly, functioning as its capital town. The Asante Akim North Municipal is classified as one of the 261 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) within Ghana (GhanaDistricts, 2023). Specifically, it is categorized as one of the 43 MMDAs located in the Ashanti Region. The Asante Akim North Municipal Assembly, previously known as the Asante Akim North District, was established in 2012 following the division of the former Asante Akim North Municipal, which is now referred to as the Asante Akim Central Municipal. This division resulted in the creation of the Asante Akim North District, which has recently been upgraded to the status of a Municipal Assembly as of 2020. A district is a group of individual towns or settlements with a population of a minimum of 75,000 and maximum of 85,000, whereas a

Municipal Assembly has a population of over 85,000 but less than 250,000 (GhanaDistricts, 2023).

According to the official website of the Municipal Assembly, the municipality comprises of about 1217.7 square kilometers (472.4 square miles) in land mass, constituting approximately five percent (5 percent) of the entire geographical area of the Ashanti Region and 0.5 percent (0.5 percent) of the overall land area of the country. The constructed environment encompasses an area of 369,482 square kilometers, while the forest zone accounts for 848,218 square kilometers of the overall land area. The municipality also has contiguous boundaries to the north and north-west with Asante Akim Central Municipality, as well as to the west with Kwahu South District (GhanaDistricts, 2023). According to Ghana Districts, 2023, the Bekwai Municipality is situated in the south-western direction, whereas the Birim North District is in the south-eastern region of the Eastern Region.

According to Ghana's 2021 Population and Housing Census, the total population of the Agogo Municipality was 85,788 people, including 42,000 males and 43,788 females (GhanaStatisticalService, 2014). The population exhibits significant ethnic heterogeneity, with the Asante being the indigenous group. The population of Agogo, the capital town of the Municipal Assembly, is very ethnically diverse, with ethnic groups such as Konkomba, Fulani, Grusi, Frafra, Mamprusi, Kwahu, Ewe, Dagomba, Akyem, and Gonja, in addition to the indigenous Asante-Akyem group (Kugbega & Aboagye, 2021). From an economic standpoint, it can be observed that agriculture serves as the primary source of employment for approximately 72.7 percent of the labor force in the municipality (GhanaStatisticalService, 2014).

**Figure 1 -Map of The Asante Akim (Akyem) North**




Source: Ghana Statistical Service Population and Housing Census Report, 2010

## Previous Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Efforts in Agogo: Challenges and Opportunities

The state, local leaders, and community groups in Agogo have over the years made numerous attempts to restore peace between farmers and herdsmen. Community associations have successfully organized some peace dialogues between farmers and herders. These bottom-up peace building strategies have resulted in more successful peace negotiations and truces than top-down ones due to the trust community members have for their own indigenous groups (Setrana, 2022). There has been support (financial and technical) from various community

groups both in Agogo and in the diaspora towards peacebuilding in the community (Setrana, 2022). Although indigenous community associations have contributed to peace building in Agogo, their efforts have not yielded lasting positive results as the conflicts persist unabatedly. The use of top-down approaches through the courts and the state police have also not been as helpful in resolving the conflicts. These challenges stem from a lack of trust in the judicial system and a growing trust in traditional authorities (Setrana & Kyei, 2021). In some conflict situations, top-down approaches may be required, for instance to provide an interim solution for further peace negotiations. However, given the sociocultural context of Agogo and the lack of confidence in the state security agencies and courts, grassroot peace building approaches have generally yielded more positive results (Setrana, 2022).

In addition, the perception that the Fulani are non-indigenous constrains the conflict resolution efforts of both state and non-state stakeholders (Paalo, 2021). The herdsmen believe that the judicial system is biased and that court rulings have mostly favored farmers (Setrana, 2022). Paalo (2021) notes that for sustainable peace building to occur in Agogo, peace building approaches should focus on the inclusion of local and civil society groups in peace processes, peace education, educating both groups on regional agreements (the ECOWAS Protocol on transhumance and land use), as well efforts to address the root causes such as identity politics and socioeconomic exclusion of the Fulani. (Penu & Paalo, 2021, p. 227) contend that "institutional change, institutional pluralism, and institutional meanings impact peace building and conflict resolution efforts in farmer/herder conflicts". They assert that standardizing the meaning of certain terms across various societal levels is crucial as it influences policy formulation and implementation. For instance, Penu and Paalo explain that one major area of contestation concerns the definition of citizenship, and specifically whether the definition of

citizenship should be state-centric or should rather be defined in line with customary laws of belonging (i.e., at the community/village level) since this definition has implications for determining who has access to land resources.

The Fulani claim ownership and access to lands through state-level laws (birth right citizenship per Ghana's 1992 constitution). In the courts, where land use issues are addressed and access involving the Fulani and farmers have been contested, state laws and institutions have more authority than customary laws rooted in heredity and ancestry, thereby creating "tensions between the formal statutes for defining citizenship versus the traditional and customary interpretations of citizenship" (Penu & Paalo, 2021, p. 237). Meanwhile the farmers rely on customary law to determine who is an indigene and who has a right to own and access land resources based on their definition of an indigene. The customary interpretation of citizenship does not align with the constitutional definition of citizenship, which has made it difficult to resolve the conflicts surrounding access to and ownership of land resources in Agogo.

More importantly, there is the issue of trust among the various actors involved in farmer/herder peacebuilding processes. A notable peace scholar Lederach (2015), among others, mentions trust as a key component of sustainable peacebuilding. Building trust between the mediators and the parties involved in conflict is essential. Agogo's peacebuilding strategies have not been based on trust. Both factions have accused mediators (the courts, traditional leaders, state officials and security, etc.) of being biased. The Fulani have accused the courts and security officials of being biased against them, while the farmers have accused some of their traditional leaders of selling ancestral lands to Fulani, thereby depriving their young people of livelihoods. Lack of trust in mediation and resolution processes is part of the reason why this conflict has become intractable.

**Policies and Protocol on Transhumance in West Africa**

Transhumance pastoralism is acknowledged by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as a productive livestock system that can enhance both economic and political stability and food security. To bring about these advantages, the subregional group created the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance and related legislation (ECOWAS, 1998). By requiring that herd movements take place along designated migratory corridors between member states, these rules aim to control transhumance pastoralism (ECOWAS, 2003; Timpong-Jones et al., 2023). The ECOWAS cross-border transhumance protocols have improved certain member states' infrastructure, but their inconsistent application has resulted in disputes between herders and farmers (Timpong-Jones et al., 2023).

In 2002, ECOWAS proposed an action plan and a policy on transhumance following a meeting by ministers in charge of livestock in the various member states (ECOWAS, 1998). All member states were required to execute the actions and policies that ECOWAS proposed. The objective of this policy plan was to support socioeconomic growth and increase livestock output. Additionally, the policy aimed to prevent farmer/herder disputes as well as other political, economic, and social issues related to the haphazard movement of livestock across borders in the region (ECOWAS, 2003). Similarly, the African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa aims to safeguard and promote the rights and well-being of African herders (UNCCD, 2024).

Furthermore, this Africa Union (AU) policy initiative acts as a platform to rally political dedication towards the development of herders in Africa (UN, 2020). In 2013, African Sahel nations convened for a global seminar to discuss how to harness transnational activity for

socioeconomic development while reducing tensions between farmers and herders. The N'Djamena Declaration was the result of this meeting (IOM, 2023). The N'Djamena Declaration acknowledges that transhumance ecological systems in Africa exhibit distinct regional characteristics. According to the IOM, a major goal of this Declaration is to promote and align policies among member states of the economic bloc to support their ecosystems.

**Transhumance Policies and Protocols in West Africa: Challenges**

The ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance aims to harmonize and regulate transhumance practices across member states (ECOWAS, 2003). This policy provides defined migratory corridors for livestock and herders. Additionally, the protocol ensures that herd movements occur along specific migratory corridors. These corridors are predetermined routes that facilitate safe and orderly transhumance. The protocol also provides guidelines for cross-border cooperation among member states of the ECOWAS. The protocol encourages collaboration among ECOWAS countries to manage transhumance effectively. Further the protocol provides supporting regulations for the policy. These regulations are practical guidelines for implementing transhumance policies which cover aspects like animal health and prevention of the spread of zoonotic diseases, water availability, and security during the migration of livestock and herdsmen (ECOWAS, 2003).

The ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance is well-intentioned; however, according to the 2020 United Nations report on peacekeeping in West Africa (UN, 2020), its scope is constrained by the national and local legislation of the nations affected by transhumance activities. The limitations of the ECOWAS protocol on transhumance are worsened by a lack of enforcement resources and a mismatch between regional, national, and local laws that create a strict legal

environment for the movement of herders in West Africa (Timpong-Jones et al., 2023). This is especially true for the transnational movement of undocumented herders and the lack of agreement over the implications of protocols and agreements on international free movements in the sub-region (Adzande, 2019).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) claims that states in the West African region struggle to put effective laws in place to control transhumance because there is no shared knowledge of transhumant migratory patterns and migrant demographic data. West African states have found it challenging to control and prevent disputes relating to transhumant operations in the area because of their lack of specific localized conflict mitigation strategies (IOM, 2023) and a lack of coordination among stakeholders. For instance, the region's coastal nations, who needed to agree to cross-border transhumance arrangements were not included in the N'Djamena Declaration process (IOM, 2023).

**Ghana's Commitment to the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movements and the Protocol on Transhumance**

Reports and research have claimed that many countries in West Africa, including Ghana, have not committed to implementing the ECOWAS protocols on free movement and transhumance due to factors such as xenophobia (Adzande, 2019; Aniche, 2022). In response to the obstacles faced in implementing the ECOWAS protocols, the Ghanaian government has implemented strategies to uphold its commitment. For instance, on April 4, 2023, the Ghana Cattle Ranching and Transhumance Committee (GCRTC) was established in Accra, Ghana. The nation's commitment to utilizing transhumance for socioeconomic growth and optimizing herder operations to prevent conflicts with farmers is a significant goal of this transhumance committee.

The establishment of the Transhumance Committee in Ghana, as stated by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, aims to provide guidance for transhumance activities and foster peaceful conditions in the country (ModernGhana, 2023).

In September 2017, Ghana also established a national steering committee to align with ECOWAS protocols on free movements as part of its commitment to implementation. The committee's objective was to identify efficient and enduring resolutions to the obstacles associated with the unrestricted movement of individuals and commodities in the West African sub-region (GNA, 2017). These efforts by the Ghanaian government shows its commitment to reducing clashes between farmers and herdsmen in the country and to improve security in the West African sub-region.

**Conclusions**

In this chapter, I examined the geographical, historical, and contextual aspects of the farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa in general and the Ghanaian context using the case of Agogo. The chapter provided an overview of the study site's geographical location, emphasizing the presence of various ethnic groups and the significant contribution of agriculture to the local economy. In this chapter, I also examined the historical context of farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa and Ghana, attributing the causes to complex factors including land tenure systems, population expansion, and migration. I also discussed the influence of drought and climatic conditions on the migration patterns and land use access of Fulani herders, which were found to be a major factor in the conflicts. This chapter discussed the impacts of socioeconomic issues, xenophobia, and political influences on the conflict in Agogo. This chapter also explored the deficiencies in previous peacebuilding efforts and the potential for sustainable peacebuilding

approaches in Agogo. Despite the efforts of community associations to facilitate peace dialogues, conflicts persist because of distrust in the judicial system, identity politics, and the socioeconomic exclusion of minority groups. The chapter also examined West African transhumance policies and protocols, with a focus on the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance.

While these policies aim to control transhumance and prevent farmer/herder conflicts, challenges arise from inconsistent implementation, a lack of enforcement resources, and the mismatch between regional and local laws and customs. To address these challenges, Ghana has recently shown commitment to implementing regional agreements by establishing the Ghana Cattle Ranching and Transhumance Committee and a national steering committee for free movement within the West African sub-region. The chapter has also explored the significant roles of ECOWAS in this farmer/herder conflict.

Finally, this chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted issues surrounding farmer/herder conflicts in Agogo, Ghana. It emphasized the complexity of these conflicts, which are rooted in historical, cultural, environmental, and socioeconomic factors. The chapter also highlighted the importance of effective policy implementation and trust-building in achieving durable peace in the area. The subsequent chapters will delve deeper into the dynamics of these conflicts and explore potential solutions to mitigate the conflict.

# CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

Chapter Three reviews literature that frames the study within the theories of identity. It explores the relationship between identity and intergroup conflicts, particularly how identity theory and issues of identity relate to intercommunal conflicts.

## Identity Theory

Theories are composed of interconnected concepts and ideas that offer plausible explanations for social phenomena. Strauss (1994) argues that theory not only provides a framework for critical and in-depth understanding but also serves as a basis for organizing knowledge. This section presents an overview of theoretical perspectives relevant to understanding the causes of intercommunal conflicts. The study is guided by insights drawn from identity theory and the critical and emancipatory peacebuilding theory.

Identity theory offers a useful lens for analyzing how individuals and groups understand themselves and others. According to Stets and Serpe (2013), identity refers to the meanings individuals attach to their roles, group memberships, and self-conceptions. Reimer et al. (2015) further elaborate that identity is shaped by various social markers such as gender, ethnicity, religion, class, sexual orientation, and nationality (citizenship). In this study, citizenship and gender are the primary identity categories that will be discussed.

A concept related to identity is alterity, which refers to the idea of "otherness" and has gained prominence across social sciences and the humanities (Huett & Goodman, 2014). Spivak (2021) contends that alterity underpins constructs such as nationalism, secularism, race, gender, and class by delineating in-group and out-group boundaries. Individuals are more likely to

identify with those who share similar social characteristics, while those perceived as different may be categorized as outsiders. These perceptions form the basis of "othering," a process whereby dominant groups assert their identity by distinguishing themselves from others. Staszak (2009) explains that "othering" enables dominant groups to build internal solidarity while simultaneously stigmatizing those in the out-group, often based on imagined or actual differences. This process is closely linked to power dynamics, as dominant groups often have greater access to political, social, cultural, or economic resources (Horowitz, 1985). While in-group and out-group dynamics do not inherently lead to conflict, "othering" that is prejudicial and exclusionary can fuel injustices and violent confrontations.

Citizenship is another key category of identity for this study. Marshall's (1949) theory of citizenship is grounded in the notion of identity, highlighting the role of shared national belonging. Anthony Smith's work on nationalism complements Marshall's theory by emphasizing that nations are constructed around common ancestry, history, culture, and shared myths, which he conceptualizes as the ethnie (Smith, 1988, as cited in Vujačić, 2014). In the Ghanaian context, the absence of shared ancestry between Fulani herdsmen and other ethnic farming communities has contributed to the exclusion of Fulani as legitimate citizens.

Despite the modern state's attempts to establish inclusive citizenship, ethnic identity continues to influence definitions of national belonging. Both Marshall and Smith highlight the role of capitalism in unifying social classes into cohesive political and economic communities (Vujačić, 2014). Citizenship enables individuals to participate in democratic processes such as voting and policymaking (Michels et al., 2011). It also serves as a form of individual capital, granting legal recognition and access to a nation's resources and institutional power (Balta & Altan-Olcay, 2016). Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital further illuminates how social

inequality is reproduced through identity structures. Cultural capital encompasses symbolic traits such as knowledge, tastes, behaviors, and credentials that individuals acquire through their social environment. Central to this idea is the concept of habitus, which refers to the set of dispositions shaped by one's social context. Bourdieu and Biggart (2002), along with Pierre and Richardson (1986), argue that an individual's "habitus" significantly shapes their opportunities and life outcomes. Consequently, social identification and national belonging can either enable or constrain individuals within existing social hierarchies.

Citizenship, therefore, plays a crucial role in shaping identity, influencing access to power, and determining an individual's position within social hierarchies. Beyond its legal and political functions, citizenship can also serve as a powerful tool for exclusion. It can be weaponized to construct boundaries of belonging, whereby certain groups are denied recognition and rights based on perceived differences in ancestry or origin. This process of exclusion reflects a form of prejudicial othering, where citizenship becomes a marker of in-group membership and those deemed as lacking legitimate national identity are marginalized. Mamdani (2018) underscores the centrality of citizenship in many intergroup conflicts in Africa, where identity and belonging are often contested.

A salient example is the Ivorian civil war, during which ancestral definitions of citizenship were used to politically exclude Alassane Ouattara, a prominent northern leader. Despite his long-standing political involvement, Ouattara was barred from contesting the presidency on the grounds that he was not considered a "true" Ivorian (Bøås, 2013). This exclusion was rooted in nationalist discourses that equated citizenship with ethnic origin, reinforcing the divide between those viewed as indigenous and those seen as outsiders. In this

context, citizenship functioned not only as a legal status but also as a mechanism of prejudicial othering that exacerbated political tensions and contributed to the outbreak of violent conflict.

### *Identity and Intercommunal Conflicts*

Ethnic diversity is a significant factor in these conflicts, with differences in identity playing a central role in how groups define themselves and others. These differences underpin how groups construct in-group and out-group identities and provide a basis for understanding intergroup and ethnic conflicts (Tropp et al., 2017). Identity, in this sense, is foundational to both personal self-understanding and how groups are perceived and categorized. It is upon these distinctions that individuals and groups justify their actions, decisions, and responses within the larger social and political structure (Korostelina, 2009).

Identity is multifaceted and fluid, encompassing gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, and other factors (Reimer et al., 2015). It is not static but evolves based on historical, cultural, and political dynamics. Social identity theory provides valuable insight into how perceptions of identity shape intergroup relations, with individuals and groups often perceiving threats to their identity as key drivers of conflict (Hogg, 2016). Conflict analysis has long recognized that identity is not just a personal matter but a collective force that can mobilize groups and shape the roles, rights, and positions of actors within society (Mitchell, 2006). The complex, socially constructed nature of identity means it can serve as a source of division, but also as a potential point of transformation in the context of conflict (Cook-Huffman, 2010).

Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that identity differences do not inherently cause conflict; rather, it is prejudice, negative stereotypes and power-laden discriminatory narratives attached to identities that generate tension. Conflicts arise when identities are politicized, socially constructed as oppositional, and used to justify exclusion or inequality. It is important to

understand that it is not the existence of difference, but the social meaning ascribed to difference that often drives intergroup hostility.

According to Bar-Tal and Teichman (2009), stereotypes and prejudice shared by in-group members of the out-group impacts the actions of the group toward the out-group which may lead to cooperation or conflict. Prejudicial "othering" can lead to extreme forms of confrontation, including violence and even genocide, as evidenced in historical examples like the Rwandan genocide (Mamdani, 2020). The "us versus them" mentality, a critical aspect of intercommunal conflict, arises from identity-based divisions that result in a process of prejudicial "othering." This psychological phenomenon involves the creation of an "out-group" that is portrayed as inferior, threatening, or incompatible with the in-group's values and goals (Manojlovic, 2018). Leaders, often leveraging historical narratives and transgenerational trauma, can exacerbate this division, creating fear and hostility towards the out-group and further solidifying in-group solidarity. According to Hirsch (2008), narratives of collective trauma can be transmitted to future generations through stories, images, and institutionalized policies. These narratives may lead descendants to internalize the memories as if they had experienced the events themselves—a process Hirsch termed *post-memory*.

Furthermore, prejudicial "othering" is not limited to direct conflict but contributes to a cycle of stereotyping and discrimination. The portrayal of the out-group as dangerous or less human can lower empathy and foster an environment where conflict is justified, and violence is seen as a legitimate means of protecting or advancing group interests. This process intensifies when ethnic or national identity becomes salient, making it harder for groups to resolve conflicts or reconcile. In turn, these divisions can perpetuate a cycle of resentment and distrust, making peacebuilding efforts more challenging.

Identity-based conflicts are deeply intertwined with historical, social, and economic factors. While identity is often a source of division, it is closely linked to larger societal issues such as unequal access to power, resources, and opportunities (Korostelina, 2009). According to Korostelina's 4-C (comparison, competition, confrontation, and counteraction) model of identity-based conflict, identity conflicts are best understood based on how groups compare, compete, confront one another and how the other group responds (counteracts). Korostelina further explains that in a multi-ethnic society, groups compare their social, economic, and political situations, often perceiving their needs as unmet, which leads to competition for limited resources. This competition is frequently framed through an identity lens, with leaders amplifying differences between groups to galvanize support and justify actions against the out-group.

Historical traumas and collective memories of past injustice also play a critical role in shaping identity and intergroup conflict. Groups that have experienced systemic marginalization may develop a collective identity around shared suffering, which in turn exacerbates intergroup tensions. John Burton's human needs theory (1990) and Edward Azar's protracted social conflict theory (1986) further underscore that when fundamental human needs (whether psychological, political, or material) are unmet, groups may resort to conflict as a means of asserting their identity and demanding recognition. These unmet needs are not only about survival but also about the acknowledgment of group identity, culture, and history.

Political dynamics significantly shape the role of identity in intergroup conflict. Political leaders, actors, and state policies often manipulate or exploit identity to consolidate power and justify exclusionary practices. The state's role in exacerbating or mitigating identity-based tensions is critical. Exclusionary policies, such as ethnic favoritism or political marginalization,

often push groups into adversarial positions, making reconciliation difficult. In these cases, leaders may use identity to rally their base, framing the conflict in terms of existential threats to group identity, which can escalate violence and prolong conflict (Burke, 2020).

Furthermore, economic factors are often linked to identity-based struggles. Competition for political power, land, or economic resources often intersects with ethnic or religious identity, deepening conflicts. In these settings, identity becomes a tool for political mobilization, and perceived threats to identity can escalate into violent confrontations. The intersection of political, economic, and identity-based factors reinforces the complexity of intercommunal conflicts.

### *Gender Dynamics in Intercommunal Conflicts and Peace building*

Another important identity category that I will make use of in this study is gender. Gender is a socially constructed attribute that defines the roles and capacities of men, women, and others. It is an important tool for classifying identities that contributes to determining an individual's level of vulnerability in conflicts, their life experiences, as well as their responses to conflicts, trauma, and the work of reconciliation (Reimer et al., 2015).

Peacebuilding is a complex and comprehensive endeavor that seeks to establish sustainable and stable peace in regions that have been impacted by conflict or violence. Historically, peacebuilding efforts have frequently neglected to consider the influence of gender in determining the complicated dynamics of war and the subsequent process of healing in post-conflict settings (Adjei, 2019). Gender perspectives and the contributions of women to peacebuilding have become increasingly recognized in recent decades (Adjei, 2019). In colonial and post-colonial Africa, women have consistently played an active role in politics,

peacebuilding, socioeconomic development, and the struggle for independence (Bauer et al., 2017).

The impact of gender on individuals' experiences with violent conflicts and peace building varies depending on the specifics of their identity as men, women, and others who identify in ways that lie beyond gender binaries (O'Reilly et al., 2015). Hagen (2016) argues that to promote gender equality in international peacebuilding and conflict resolution discourse and practice, it is important to include other gender categories that are outside the heteronormative construction. To promote inclusion and respect for diversity, peacebuilding approaches must be inclusive and must pay attention to minority groups, including minority gender groups (Byrne et al., 2018). All efforts in peacebuilding and development should prioritize marginalized groups, such as women and girls living in patriarchal societies, as their exclusion significantly affects their overall well-being. The integration of a gender lens in peacebuilding involves acknowledging the unique needs, vulnerabilities, and contributions of diverse gender groups within regions affected by violence (O'Reilly et al., 2015).

Additionally, highlighting gender and feminist perspectives in peacebuilding and conflict resolution discourse allows a richer understanding of power relations at all levels of society (McLeod, 2015). The involvement of women in peacebuilding and development endeavors has demonstrated favorable outcomes within countries affected by war, both in post-conflict and ongoing conflict scenarios (Adjei, 2019). The inclusion of women in decision-making processes and peace discussions contributes valuable insights and priorities that are distinct from those of other groups (Faxon et al., 2015).

Further, the participation of all individuals in efforts aimed at recovering from post-conflict situations promotes a comprehensive and inclusive strategy towards reconstructing

societies (Faxon et al., 2015). The explicit endorsement of increased participation of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes is a key objective of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which was established in 2000 (George & Shepherd, 2016; Pierson, 2019). The incorporation of a gender viewpoint is of utmost importance in bolstering social cohesiveness, mitigating gender disparities, and ultimately fostering more inclusive societies.

Although it may be difficult to achieve this in certain societies, particularly in patriarchal ones where gender disparities are the social norm, it may be beneficial to peace building in such a society in the long-term if the idea of an inclusive society is welcomed. According to Hudson (2009), there is evidence to suggest that there is a positive correlation between gender equality and reduced incidences of violence and conflict. Peacebuilding processes have the potential to foster enhanced relationships and overcome societal gaps through the promotion of fair participation and representation (Adjei, 2019). The significance of women's involvement in fostering the economic recovery of post-conflict communities cannot be overstated (Wylie, 2017). Recognizing and supporting their economic agency can lead to increased resilience and long-term stability in these societies (Goetz & Jenkins, 2016). Having economic agency may give women their economic independence, which allows them to contribute financially to their household and community (in some cases). Financial autonomy gives women more access and a voice in decision-making at the household level which could transcend to the community level.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a multifaceted issue that is intricately linked to conflict, acting both as a cause and a consequence of intergroup conflicts (Adelakun, 2023). The incorporation of strategies aimed at addressing gender-based violence (GBV) is crucial within the context of peacebuilding strategies. The involvement of local communities and grassroots organizations in efforts to eliminate harmful gender norms and advance the safety and human

rights of females is an essential aspect of peacebuilding (Hills & MacKenzie, 2017). The implementation of effective measures to address gender-based violence (GBV) not only serves to safeguard people from harm but also plays a significant role in fostering the overall stability of societies in the aftermath of war (Blay-Tofey & Lee, 2015).

Unfortunately, in many patriarchal societies, women are perceived as the 'weaker sex', and in times of conflict, their bodies are used as a battlefield by enemy groups through sexual assault (Wilmer, 2020). For instance, both the Fulani and farmers in Ghana have faced accusations of using rape as a weapon of conflict (Ghana News Agency, 2011). Despite women's numerous contributions to our understanding of peacebuilding in conflict and post-violent conflict societies, the literature on farmer/herder conflicts, for example, often undervalues women's involvement in peacebuilding processes in farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa.

This study seeks to address some of these gaps by exploring the role of Agogo women in building peace in their community. This study also considers the concept of intersectionality, specifically examining the experiences of Fulani women and indigenous Agogo women during the conflict. This is significant because different groups (even within the same gender group) may experience conflict differently due to factors such as their religion or citizenship status. The significance of including a gender perspective in peacebuilding is clear; nonetheless, there are still notable obstacles that continue to impede progress in this area due to gender stereotypes, limited access to resources, and patriarchy (Adeogun & Muthuki, 2018). To overcome these challenges, concerted efforts are required at all levels of society, including national and international organizations and grassroots movements. Ultimately, the integration of a gender perspective will prove a critical component in achieving the goal of sustainable peace.

More importantly, including gender perspectives in peacebuilding efforts is essential because it allows resolution strategies to address the specific needs of different gender groups. In addition, this will ensure that peace building efforts are sustainable and socio-culturally appropriate since it will consider the different social and cultural contexts (that is, the shared values, social relations and cultural biases across gender groups that may hamper or promote each gender group's attitude and contributions towards peacebuilding).

### *The Role of Women and Youth in Peacebuilding and Socioeconomic Development in Africa*

Africa, with its diverse population and rich cultural legacy, has faced several problems in the areas of peace and development. Despite these limitations, women and youth have emerged as potent agents of change, playing critical roles in the continent's peacebuilding and development. Throughout Africa, women have shown extraordinary tenacity, resourcefulness, and leadership in peacebuilding activities. Their participation has been beneficial in conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction. Women's efforts in peace talks, community healing, and transitional justice processes have contributed to inclusive and long-term peace (Adjei, 2019).

Women's empowerment in Africa is inextricably tied to long-term development and sustainable peace on the continent. Societies thrive when women have equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity. According to the World Bank's report on Gender Equality in Africa (2023), gender equality in education and employment might contribute to a 12 percent rise in sub-Saharan Africa's per capita GDP by 2030 (WorldBank, 2023).

Although several African countries have implemented legislation aimed at women's empowerment, their progress has been limited and less impactful compared to Rwanda. While

these countries have made efforts through legal reforms to promote gender equality, the results have often been slow and superficial (Idowu, 2024). In contrast, Rwanda's comprehensive approach to integrating women into all levels of governance and society has led to substantial and measurable improvements in development indicators, demonstrating a more effective model of women's empowerment and its benefits for socioeconomic development (Idowu, 2024).

Further, the role of youth in Africa's development and peace cannot be ignored. Africa has the world's youngest demographic, with majority of its population being under the age of 30 (UN, 2023). For peacebuilding and development, this demography poses both obstacles and opportunities. Engaging the youth in decision-making processes, particularly peace talks, can contribute to the accountability and sustainability of peace agreements. This is because local ownership ensures that the grassroots, including the youth, are committed to sustainable peace in their community (Thiessen, 2013). The marginalization of youth has been noted as one of the causes of violent extremism since aggrieved youth may be enticed to join terrorist groups as a way to survive and escape poverty (Badurdeen et al., 2023). Agbedahin (2019), notes that skills training and education, as well as youth participation in governance and development processes, contribute to sustainable development in Africa. The 2023 Youth, Gender, and Peacebuilding in Africa report by the United Nations highlights the need for targeted policies and programs to address the unique needs of young women in peace and development processes.

The intersection of gender and youth is important and should be considered, with efforts made to address the unique challenges young women and girls face during conflicts and in post-conflict rebuilding. Young women are disproportionately affected by poverty, have restricted access to healthcare and education, and are impacted by gender-based violence (GBV) (Oduro et al., 2012). For long-term development and peacebuilding, ensuring their empowerment and

engagement in peacebuilding processes is critical. Policies should also be implemented to protect the rights of youth and women while creating an environment that encourages their involvement in peace-making processes.

Achieving long-term success in African peacebuilding and development depends on engaging women and youth. Both governmental and non-governmental actors in Africa must continue to encourage and invest in women and youth, recognizing their contributions as important agents of peace and development. Engaging youth and women in peace talks is crucial for the accountability and sustainability of peace agreements, as they bring fresh perspectives and diverse experiences (Tanabe, 2017). The inclusion of women and youth in peace building and development initiatives in Africa is not a novel idea, in fact many peace and development experts have mentioned it, including the United Nations (as noted above). The practicality in certain traditional Africa contexts is a challenge due to some norms. In traditional contexts where elders are the primary decision-makers and patriarchal norms prevail, incorporating youth and women can be challenging. For instance, Tanabe (2017) notes that the due to male-dominance of the political landscape of many traditional African societies, the inclusion of females in peace talks remains a challenge.

However, given the potential benefits of youth and women inclusion in peace building and development processes, it may be worth advocating for such grassroot inclusions. To address this issue of youth and women exclusion, peacebuilders can establish formal channels for the participation of these often-excluded social groups in a way that complements traditional structures, such as youth and women's advisory councils working alongside elder councils. This balanced approach respects sociocultural norms which honors the role of elders and consider the status of women while ensuring that youth and women are not marginalized. By fostering mutual

respect and collaboration, this approach allows for a more inclusive and comprehensive peace process.

### *The Role of The State and Political Leaders in Intercommunal Conflicts*

It is crucial to investigate the diverse roles played by stakeholders in intergroup ethnic conflicts like the farmer/herder conflict in Agogo, especially the role of political and community leaders. The causes of ethnic conflicts are best understood from a multi-dimensional perspective. Byrne and Carter (2002), have proposed an integrative framework to understanding the myriad factors that interact to trigger ethnic conflicts. According to Carter and Byrne's social cubism model, economic, religious, political, demographic, psycho-cultural, and historical factors interacting together cause ethnic conflict. The economic factors are mainly socioeconomic discrimination that leads to feelings of relative deprivation; this results in struggles for equal rights and economic opportunities.

Second, political factors reinforce existing historical, economic, and socio-cultural differences, such as religion and past experiences of inter-group tensions. Group members are mobilized based on the notion of a shared future and the emphasis on in-group similarities versus outgroup differences. Political differences are used to create tensions and maintain social instability (Carter & Byrne, 2002). Political elites use existing intergroup historical feuds, political tensions, and socioeconomic inequalities to play on their members' emotions and insecurities to rally them around a so-called common goal of securing their rights and future.

They contend that the majority's evaluation of their actions influences the decisions made by political leaders during conflicts. This argument is evident in the government of Ghana's reaction to farmer/herder conflicts since the majority ethnic group and the media seem to be

influencing the conflict. Ethno-religious leaders have a significant influence on ethnoreligious and inter-ethnic conflicts (Abu-Nimer, 2013). In-group solidarity tends to influence the leaders and their roles in the conflict. Specific 'groupthink' tactics tend to escalate conflicts rather than resolve them (Fisher & Kelman, 2011). Understanding these dynamics is crucial because it reveals how conflicts can be exacerbated by political manipulation and group dynamics. This awareness highlights the need for conflict resolution initiatives that respond not only to the immediate grievances but also the broader socio-political factors that contribute to the conflict. Effective peacebuilding must consider the role of political actors and in-group solidarity in perpetuating conflicts and develop approaches that mitigate these influences to foster lasting reconciliation and stability.

Political leadership and political policies play a role in identity-related social conflicts. For example, conflicts occur when leaders construct exclusive identities and stereotypes and use prejudice to create in-group solidarity versus out-group socioeconomic exclusion (Jeong, 2019). Sometimes the actions of political leaders may not represent the interests of the group but their own selfish interests. Taras and Ganguly (2015) labeled such leaders as political entrepreneurs. During intergroup conflicts such as civil wars, some politicians and elites may use any means necessary to control and suppress those they consider opponents; socioeconomic inequalities and a lack of self-determination are the main ways they subjugate their opponents. Machiavellianism guarantees the achievement of the political group's selfish interests at the expense of the minorities (Nagle et al., 2000).

In many intercommunal conflicts in Africa, the suppression of outgroup members by those with political power is common. For example, in the Ivorian civil wars, the concept of Ivoirité was an exclusionary concept used by the country's political leadership to subjugate

Northern minorities (Bah, 2010). The leadership of the Ivory Coast, beginning with President Konan Bédié, used defamatory language and discriminatory policies to deepen existing ethnic cleavages for their political benefit. The idea of Ivoirité was created based on an imagined or perceived idea of a shared culture and history (Ogumola & Badmus, 2009). This nationalist concept subjugated those considered the outgroup or the other. The political leaders used this idea of nationalism based on indigeneity to create tensions and advance their political interests. They used existing issues of inter-ethnic animosities and socioeconomic inequality to advance their xenophobic campaign of creating an ethnically pure Ivory Coast.

Similarly, destructive stories (Senehi, 2002) can exacerbate existing tensions. For instance, destructive stories were used in Rwanda which portrayed the Tutsi as superior to the other two dominant ethnic groups (Twa and Hutu) in terms of intelligence, courage, and wealth (Magnarella, 2005). Historically, the Tutsi were perceived as superior in terms of power and wealth by local groups due to their wealth (cattle), while the Hutu were farmers, and the Twa were marginalized forest-dwellers. Colonial rule by the Belgians exacerbated these divisions by favoring the Tutsi and reinforcing existing racial hierarchies. During the 1994 Rwandan genocide, these entrenched narratives were exploited by political leaders to incite violence, leading to extreme anti-Tutsi propaganda, and mobilizing the Hutu majority against the Tutsi minority (Magnarella, 2005). Stories are powerful tools used to create the idea of victims and villains as a bid by leaders to mobilize support (Polkinghorn, 2000). These stories shape our understanding of the past and provide a vision for the future (Senehi, 2002). If the stories foretell a grim future for the group, they are more likely to rally around the idea of fighting to secure a better future.

European colonizers created distinctions and hierarchies among groups in Africa, which led to the subjugation of certain groups (Mamdani, 2020). The Europeans used indirect rule to govern the colonies, and the local elites adopted this method to rule other tribes. This created tribal and ethnic hierarchies and some discriminatory customary laws (Green, 2011). These customary laws favored some ethnic, religious, racial, or other cultural groups over others, which resulted in inter-group rivalries and an unequal distribution of resources. Those 'chosen' groups by the colonial rulers were given more power and access to wealth over the other groups (Müller-Crepon, 2020). Consequently, discriminatory laws and policies that were not repealed under post-colonial rule have aggravated the inter-group tensions. Bose (2007) noted that discriminatory and oppressive laws against one group would exacerbate tensions and thwart peacebuilding efforts.

Critical theory and Marxist theories examine socioeconomic deprivation by focusing on power imbalances and systematic inequality, emphasizing their contribution to intergroup ethnic conflicts (Fuchs, 2015). Fuchs asserts that these ideas see domination as a fundamental concern and promote a society devoid of such disparities. Marxist theory examines the mechanisms by which capitalist institutions sustain class differences and exploit marginalized populations, resulting in socioeconomic deprivation and increased conflict. Marxists assert that these economic inequalities not only perpetuate the supremacy of ruling classes but also intensify conflicts among ethnic groups vying for scarce resources and authority. Critical theory elaborates on this by analyzing how systemic injustices incite ethnic conflicts, as marginalized groups oppose their exploitation and marginalization. Both viewpoints underscore the necessity of tackling entrenched economic and social disparities to resolve ethnic conflicts and attain sustainable peace.

Discriminatory policies by the government have created unbalanced power relations between local farmers and Fulani herders in Ghana. This has had negative consequences for peace in society. According to the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, human rights are inalienable; all persons are entitled to them regardless of their status, creed, and ethnicity. As a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ideally, Ghana must ensure that the Fulani have equal rights, though they may have relatively lower economic and human capital. This conflict exposes the inadequacy of the government in upholding these fundamental human rights, states that default these declarations are usually just named and shamed, and in a few cases suffer economic sanctions. Ghana like many other member states and signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights do not adhere to all the provisions of this UN declaration. There are many socio-cultural factors that make it hard for certain states to accept some aspects of such universal declarations, for instance based on religion and culture, some states including Ghana do not accept LGBTQI+ rights as universal human rights.

Additionally, social, and political factors contribute to religious polarization and animosities based on differing religious identities (Byrne & Carter, 2002). Fear of the population explosion of an outgroup may lead to land disputes and struggles over natural resources. This can trigger ethnic skirmishes – conflict is one of the signal outcomes of the Malthusian theory of population growth (Homer-Dixon, 2015). Social scientists such as Lanrewaju (2012) and Treszkai (2018) have argued that the problems of poverty, environmental degradation, and poor health in sub-Saharan Africa have arisen because of the increase in population without a commensurate increase in socioeconomic development. In their opinion, Africa is largely caught in the Malthusian trap of epidemics, wars, pollution, famine, and poverty, among others. This

implies that demographic changes contribute to ethnic conflict, which was alluded to in Byrne and Carter's (2002) social cubism theory.

According to the social cubism theory, social, economic, political, demographic, and cultural factors interact with other proximate factors to cause ethnic conflicts. Proximate factors increase the likelihood of a conflict arising. The social cubism theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding ethnic conflicts by highlighting the interaction between broad social, economic, political, demographic, and cultural factors and proximate factors that directly trigger and escalate tensions. By integrating the analysis of both underlying conditions and immediate triggers (proximate factors), social cubism theory enhances our understanding of internal conflict dynamics and underscores the necessity for multifaceted approaches in peace and conflict studies.

It is important to recognize the role of proximate factors such as bad leadership, the media and external state actors in escalating tensions between groups using defamatory language, and the spreading of enemy propaganda. For example, Korostelina (2014) notes that "political insults" and propaganda could be used by leaders to escalate intergroup conflicts. Some bad leaders have rejected peacebuilding processes and have also used ethnic myths to deepen existing cleavages (Zagar, 2000). This is evident in many civil wars around the world, including farmer/herder conflicts in West Africa. Political entrepreneurs play on the emotions and perceived insecurities of members of their group to incite violence in pursuit of their selfish gains (Wolff, 2006). Iyorza and Andrew (2022) noted the role of the Nigerian media in framing the farmer/herder conflict through their reporting, focusing on ethnicity and cultural identities and how media reportage is shaping stakeholder perceptions of the conflicts in Nigeria. They explained that the negative framing of the actions of Fulani herdsmen has created negative

stereotypes of this group, which is also being intensified by political leaders. The construction of Fulani identity as inextricably linked to violent tendencies has been used by many political leaders, the media, and the public to incite fear and panic, exacerbating conflict in Ghana, Nigeria, and elsewhere in Africa.

Conversely, good leaders can create notions of unity and peace. Leaders can create positive beliefs about the other group rather than negative notions and prejudice; this is only possible if social cohesion is encouraged (Odak, 2021). They can de-escalate a conflict through peaceful negotiations rather than the use of force. The role of leaders in either exacerbating tensions or promoting peace must be given considerations in every peace building and conflict resolution processes, to ensure that policies and strategies are sustainable and supported.

### *Culture, Culture Clash, and Cultural Pluralism*

Culture serves as a reflection of conflicts, but it does not always initiate them (Avruch, 2020). According to Reimer et al. (2015), conflicts can become intractable when they involve a contest over a group's culture and identity. In Huntington's (1996) work on the clash of civilizations, he argued that conflicts do not occur only due to political, economic, or ideological differences but also because of cultural distinctions. These distinctions would result in cultural clashes between social groups or civilizations. Competing cultural values in heterogeneous societies could result in conflicts. People define and understand themselves based on what distinguishes them from others. They are more likely to build solidarity with people with shared social characteristics and identities while rejecting those with no similarities. This strong attachment could make a person willing to sacrifice him-or herself in order to preserve their cultural identity (Bloemraad, 2015).

Another culture-centred approach to peace building is cultural relativism, which posits that since all cultures have distinct structures, principles, and ethics, we must understand each culture on its own terms and within its own context rather than crassly comparing it to (and valuing it against) others (Darnell, 2022; Seiferle-Valencia, 2017). This perspective promotes the idea that no culture is inherently superior to another, fostering cross-cultural communication, mutual respect, and tolerance. However, cultural relativism also has notable drawbacks. It can lead to the acceptance of harmful practices that may violate universal human rights since it sometimes hinders the critical evaluation of practices deemed unethical by broader standards. For example, in certain states, adherence to some religious laws and local traditional values have been deemed to violate human rights (Lloret-Blackburn, 2011).

Additionally, according to Lloret-Blackburn, cultural relativism can inadvertently encourage cultural isolation. Cultural isolation refers to a tendency for cultures to remain separate from one another, resulting in limited interaction and understanding of different cultural practices and viewpoints. Such isolation can perpetuate stereotypes and misunderstandings, making it more difficult to address and resolve conflicts. When cultures are entrenched in their own norms and less open to engaging with others, meaningful exchange and cooperation become challenging, further complicating efforts to resolve conflicts arising from cultural differences.

Successful conflict resolution strategies need to carefully consider the socio-cultural backgrounds of those involved to ensure that peacebuilding efforts are relevant and effective. In Ghana, the farmer/herder conflicts are particularly unique compared to other West African states because they are heavily influenced by issues of citizenship. Although other issues of identity that relate to religion (culture) and place of origin also have an impact. These identity-related issues are central to the conflict and affect how it should be addressed. This is because the

perceived identity of the Fulani as non-Ghanaian is manipulated by some local actors like the media and political leaders to exacerbate existing struggles over land use and access. Through ethnocentric narratives and prejudicial othering these actors have played on the emotions and insecurities of their in-group members (the farming community) to fuel tensions. While peacebuilding strategies should be sensitive to cultural factors, they must also address the challenges these cultural elements present, especially in relation to human rights and effective conflict resolution. Understanding the role of citizenship and other socio-cultural factors in the case of Agogo's farmer/herder conflicts is crucial for developing solutions that can contribute to lasting peace.

**Conclusions**

This chapter provided the foundational theoretical framework for the study by exploring key theories on identity and their relevance to intergroup conflicts. It began with a comprehensive discussion on the various ways in which identity influences and is influenced by intercommunal conflict. The relationship between identity and intergroup conflict was examined through the lens of identity theory, emphasizing how group identities are formed, maintained, and contested within conflict settings. The chapter elaborated on how issues related to identity, such as ethnic, religious, and cultural affiliations, play a central role in fueling intergroup tensions, often transforming what might be perceived as political or economic disputes into identity-based conflicts.

The chapter delved into the psychological and sociological dimensions of identity, particularly focusing on how group members define themselves and others in opposition, creating a distinct "us versus them" mentality. This binary opposition often forms the basis for

the dehumanization and marginalization of out-groups, leading to a cycle of prejudice and conflict. Social identity theory was used to explore how individuals and groups often feel threatened by perceived challenges to their identity, which can escalate conflict situations. Furthermore, the concept of "othering" was discussed in depth, illustrating how groups construct enemies based on shared historical narratives, traumas, and cultural differences.

The chapter also analyzed the significant role that political leaders play in intergroup conflicts, particularly in how they manipulate identity to advance their political agendas. Leaders often use identity as a tool to consolidate power by exacerbating divisions between groups, fostering fear, and justifying exclusionary or violent actions. The chapter explored how state policies and political discourse contribute to the polarization of groups and how political actors capitalize on identity-based narratives to rally support or incite violence. In this context, the role of the state as a potential catalyst or mediator in identity-based conflicts was also examined, highlighting the challenges faced by political leaders in navigating deeply entrenched identity divisions.

In addition, the chapter addressed the complexities of cultural clashes in intergroup conflicts. Cultural differences, ranging from language and traditions to values and norms, are often at the core of intercommunal disputes. The analysis underscored how cultural identity shapes the way groups perceive the world, interact with others, and respond to conflict. Cultural clashes are not only about differing customs and beliefs but also about competing values and worldviews, which can create intense friction in diverse societies. The chapter examined how cultural misunderstandings or misinterpretations can escalate tensions and further entrench divisions, making peacebuilding efforts more difficult.

An essential component of this chapter was the exploration of gender dynamics in intergroup conflicts. The role of gender in shaping both the experience of conflict and the strategies for conflict resolution was critically analyzed. It was emphasized that gender identity and gender dynamics within conflicts are often overlooked, despite their profound influence on how individuals engage with and experience conflict. The chapter highlighted the ways in which gender roles and expectations intersect with other aspects of identity, such as ethnicity or religion, creating unique experiences for men and women in conflict situations. Moreover, it discussed how gendered violence, power imbalances, and the exclusion of women from peace processes can contribute to the perpetuation of conflict.

Through these various lenses, the chapter provided a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted relationship between identity and intergroup conflict, revealing key details of the psychological, sociopolitical, and cultural factors that drive conflict. The analysis also underscored the importance of addressing these dimensions when considering peacebuilding and conflict transformation strategies. The chapter concluded by highlighting the need for a comprehensive approach to understanding identity in conflict, one that incorporates the role of political leadership, cultural dynamics, and gender perspectives to create more effective and inclusive peacebuilding solutions.

# CHAPTER 4: CRITICAL AND EMANCIPATORY THEORIES, APPROACHES AND CONCEPTS OF PEACEBUILDING

Chapter Four examines peacebuilding from the critical and emancipatory peacebuilding perspectives, highlighting the role of civil society, decolonizing research, and the significance of providing a voice to underrepresented groups. Additionally, it discusses the concepts of a culture of peace, conflict transformation, and hybrid peacebuilding approaches, emphasizing their relevance to sustainable peace. This chapter further addresses the role of peace journalism, psychosocial interventions, and how decolonizing peace research can contribute to building lasting peace in conflict and post-conflict societies.

## Critical and Emancipatory Peacebuilding

The critical and emancipatory theory of peacebuilding is a school of thought in Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS). Proponents of this school argue that liberal and neoliberal approaches to peacebuilding are discriminatory, elitist, biased, and perpetuate ideologies of westernization and colonization, and by so doing pose a threat to social justice (Thiessen, 2011). Thiessen contends that the so-called war on terror has strengthened a form of neo-colonialism inherent in the westernized or liberal approach to peacebuilding. Mac Ginty (2013;2010) disagrees with what he refers to as the "Ikea" model of liberal peacebuilding, whereby peacebuilders or interveners transfer pre-arranged universal strategies from elsewhere to the recipient community

based on previously acquired skills and ideas about "best practice," all the while ignoring the sociocultural context, local peacebuilding methods and practices, and particular needs of the people being "helped." These critics have advocated for what they term the "local turn" and more directly emancipatory peacebuilding approaches that facilitate social justice practices (Byrne et al., 2020).

In response to these advocacy efforts, peacebuilding experts and practitioners have begun to acknowledge and use indigenous peacebuilding processes to resolve conflict. These approaches, which tend to be more participatory and inclusive, have proven successful even when states have collapsed or failed (Boege, 2006). This is because they are emancipatory in nature and employ bottom-up strategies whereby the community itself uses local resources to transform the conflict situation (Byrne, et. al., 2018). The inclusion of locals in peacebuilding processes by peacebuilding experts and other stakeholders allows the former to become self-reliant by developing their social and economic skills (Oloke, et. al., 2018).

Indigenous peacebuilding approaches are more holistic since they both emerge from and respect local norms and perspectives of the individual, the community, their environment, and their history (Adebayo et al., 2014; Ross, 2013). Groups in conflict are not treated like dependent objects needing the help of external interveners but rather as rational actors who can build their own peace through work undertaken at the local or grassroots level (Thiessen, 2011). The indigenous approach encourages community participation, and this form of inclusion may resolve part of the grievances of a group that feels excluded from decision-making processes and structures. An indigenous approach, therefore, can become a major step towards successful peacebuilding. The inclusion of grassroots or local representation at all stages of peacebuilding processes is an important feature of critical and emancipatory approaches (Thiessen, 2011).

As noted above, including marginalized groups such as women and youth, people who identify as LGBTQ+, persons living with disabilities, immigrants, and ex-combatants is essential for the success and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. Although integrating these groups can be challenging due to cultural barriers, such as norms that restrict women's roles or limit youth participation, these obstacles are worth addressing. Overcoming these barriers can lead to more inclusive and effective peacebuilding outcomes. However, there are instances when it may be necessary to override local perspectives in favor of more universal principles that promote broader human rights and equity. Balancing grassroots views with universal standards is crucial to ensure that peacebuilding efforts are both contextually relevant and aligned with fundamental human rights, ultimately contributing to more sustainable and comprehensive peace, for instance (Paalo, 2022). Achieving such a balance may be difficult in certain contexts. However, the potential benefits of a more inclusive and yet balanced peace building approach make it a worthwhile endeavor to pursue despite the difficulties.

Similarly, indigenous worldviews have useful and positive contributions to make to peacebuilding knowledge and practice, working with them presents some inherent challenges. For example, some indigenous practices and ideologies may entrench existing social inequalities and injustices, such as patriarchy (Tuso, 2012). Some indigenous practices may be discriminatory in other ways, and they may ignore the differential effects of certain indigenous peacebuilding practices on different gender groups. For instance, they might insist on revenge as part of their understanding of a healing process, but this emphasis on vengeance may not aid in reconciliation, but rather prolong conflicts (Orakzai, 2015). Likewise, certain rituals and ceremonies, such as truth-telling and reconciliation, may re-traumatize victims instead of providing them with the healing they require (Wanis-St. John, 2013). Peacebuilders, on the other

hand, must be discerning and balanced in their approach when incorporating indigenous worldviews into their peacebuilding processes.

In addition, the inclusion of grassroots perspectives in peacebuilding processes, though essential, does not automatically translate into effective or positive outcomes. McEvoy-Levy (2013) warns against the uncritical celebration of youth as agents of peace, urging peace experts to consider the structural and socio-political challenges young people face. Often, youth are positioned as symbols of hope and transformation without adequate support systems, leading to the instrumentalization of their participation rather than meaningful empowerment. Similarly, critical and emancipatory peacebuilding approaches, while aiming to challenge top-down, externally imposed models, face their own significant hurdles. Tuso (2012) points out that such approaches are frequently hampered by a lack of resources, both financial and human, as well as the sheer energy and time required to build peace from below. These limitations can hinder the continuity, scale, and sustainability of peace initiatives rooted in local agency and critical resistance.

Moreover, the rise of authoritarianism around the world has increasingly constrained civic spaces and undermined the emancipatory potential of local peacebuilding efforts. Ejdus (2021) notes that authoritarian regimes often view participatory or critical forms of peacebuilding with suspicion and may actively suppress grassroots actors or civil society organizations. Even within local contexts, power asymmetries persist. Certain traditional or community leaders may act as gatekeepers, reinforcing exclusionary norms and obstructing the inclusion of marginalized populations, especially women and young people, in peacebuilding processes. This highlights the complex and often contradictory nature of "the local," which is not a neutral or uniformly emancipatory space.

Compounding these challenges is the enduring influence of liberal political policies and the global trend toward the marketization of peace and development. Pugh (2005) argues that the imposition of neoliberal economic reforms, such as privatization, deregulation, and the opening of markets, often undermines local economies, disrupts traditional livelihoods, and erodes community resilience. In the context of post- conflict settings, such policies are frequently introduced through peace agreements or development aid packages that prioritize macroeconomic stability over social equity. While intended to promote economic growth and attract foreign investment, these reforms can inadvertently deepen existing inequalities and social grievances, making peacebuilding more fragile. For instance, the influx of international actors and donors may displace local knowledge systems and reduce community ownership of peace processes. In this context, the liberal peace model becomes more than just a technocratic framework; it also serves as a vehicle through which external interests and economic logics override local priorities and exacerbate local vulnerabilities.

As peacebuilders and scholars, it is crucial to recognize that no single model, whether liberal, critical, or indigenous, can universally resolve conflict. Mac Ginty (2013) emphasizes that peacebuilding must be seen as a dynamic and socially constructed process that reflects the complexity of human societies. Conflicts are not merely disruptions of peace, but expressions of deeply embedded historical, structural, and cultural factors. A peace building approach that is effective in one setting may be unsuitable or even harmful in another due to vastly different political, economic, and cultural realities. Furthermore, societies themselves are not static. An approach that previously contributed to peace may become obsolete or counterproductive as social conditions evolve. Indigenous peacebuilding methods, for instance, may not be capable of producing widespread or systemic peace, especially in ethnically or geographically divided

societies. However, they can create “islands of peace” (Boege, 2006), which are localized zones of relative calm, coexistence, and stability rooted in cultural legitimacy and social trust. These micro-level successes, while limited in scope, are not insignificant. They highlight the value of local agency and the importance of trust-building, even when national-level reconciliation remains elusive.

Lastly, given this complex landscape, it is imperative for peacebuilders to adopt a balanced, reflexive, and context-sensitive approach. This involves harnessing the strengths of critical and emancipatory peacebuilding, including indigenous practices, and complementing them, where appropriate, with elements of liberal peacebuilding that offer institutional support and broader political frameworks. However, this must be done with a clear-eyed awareness of the limitations and potential harms of each approach. By critically engaging with the assumptions and impacts of different peacebuilding paradigms, and by centering local agency without romanticizing it, peacebuilders can work toward more inclusive, adaptive, and just pathways to peace.

### *Indigenous Peacebuilding Approaches*

Indigenous peace building approaches are emancipatory and community driven strategies for conflict resolution and peace building usually rooted in culture, spirituality and social norms of local groups (Wanis-St. John, 2013). These methods prioritize participatory strategies, reconciliation and restorative justice, healing and restoring relationships. Indigenous peace building approaches generally follow the tenets of critical and emancipatory peace building theories. As part of the broader local turn in Peace and Conflict Studies, the critical and emancipatory theory of peacebuilding constitutes what Richmond (2022) identifies as the

seventh school of thought. This theoretical framework is notably skeptical of the liberal and neoliberal models that have historically shaped post-conflict reconstruction. Scholars such as Thiessen (2011) critique liberal and neoliberal models for being overly technocratic, Western-centric, and potentially neo-colonial, reinforcing structures of inequality under the guise of liberal democratic peace. His critiques point to the ways in which neoliberal peace approaches sidelines the voices and experiences of local stakeholders, undermine their agency and ignores the need for inclusive peace processes.

Converse to liberal and neoliberal models, emancipatory peacebuilding centers participatory and democratic strategies. Rather than viewing conflict-affected populations as passive recipients of peace, this approach recognizes them as rational and capable agents of change. It prioritizes bottom-up strategies, wherein communities develop and enact their own peacebuilding solutions tailored to their lived realities (Thiessen, 2011). This approach also acknowledges the significance of inclusion, especially of groups that are often marginalized in conventional peacebuilding efforts, such as women and youth. By actively involving these groups, critical peacebuilding seeks not only to transform conflict but also to address the underlying structures of exclusion and inequality (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015).

International development actors, including the United Nations, have increasingly recognized the relevance of Indigenous peacebuilding approaches in promoting culturally resonant and sustainable peace processes. Genger (2020) emphasizes the need to mainstream culture in conflict resolution, aligning with the principles of critical and emancipatory peacebuilding that prioritize local ownership and contextual understanding. Indigenous peace building and other emancipatory approaches challenge the dominance of externally driven, top-down interventions by centering the knowledge, traditions, and agency of local communities. At

the core of emancipatory peacebuilding is the belief that sustainable peace must emerge from within societies themselves, particularly through the mobilization of traditional and indigenous resources that foster intergroup dialogue and cooperation (Kroeker, 2022). Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), a method increasingly employed in global peacebuilding contexts, mirrors many of these indigenous practices. It draws upon principles such as dialogue, mutual respect, social justice, and long-term conflict transformation, which are often embedded in local customary systems (Mac Ginty, 2010).

More importantly, indigenous peacebuilding approaches are often holistic in nature, engaging with the interconnectedness of individual, community, environment, and history (Ross, 2014). This orientation is exemplified by the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which emphasizes interdependence, solidarity, and communal responsibility. Ubuntu's central tenets "I am because you are" and "we are together", reflect a worldview that sees human beings as fundamentally interconnected and reliant on mutual support (Ujomu & Bature, 2018). Murithi (2008) argues that this philosophy underpins nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution, reconciliation, and cooperation, fostering trust and neighborliness. The value of Ubuntu and similar indigenous knowledge systems has gained renewed attention among African scholars, who see them as offering alternative pathways to peace that resonate deeply with local values and contexts (Peterson et al., 2023).

Nonetheless, indigenous approaches are not without limitations. While they contribute positively to peacebuilding by promoting cultural legitimacy and community engagement, they can also reproduce existing social hierarchies and injustices (Mac Ginty 2008 cited in Mac Ginty, 2013). Tuso (2012) cautions that some indigenous practices may entrench patriarchy or marginalize certain voices, particularly those of women. In some cases, traditional justice

mechanisms may call for revenge or restitution that prolongs conflict rather than resolving it. Additionally, rituals intended to foster healing, such as truth-telling and reconciliation ceremonies, can inadvertently re-traumatize victims, especially if these practices are not handled with psychological sensitivity or do not prioritize victim agency (Wanis-St. John, 2013). The assumption that grassroots inclusion inherently leads to positive outcomes must also be interrogated. As Tuso (2012) notes, local contexts are not devoid of power imbalances. Certain community leaders may act as gatekeepers, restricting participation and reinforcing exclusionary dynamics. Thus, critical engagement with indigenous approaches must also include an awareness of local political dynamics, social stratification, and the potential for exclusion or abuse.

In this regard, peacebuilding must be approached with flexibility. One-size-fits-all solutions are insufficient, as conflict is socially constructed and contextually contingent. A peacebuilding model that proves effective in one setting may be inappropriate or even detrimental in another. Even within the same community, the evolving nature of social, political, and economic dynamics can render previously effective approaches obsolete. Indigenous peacebuilding strategies, rooted in local traditions, norms, and worldviews, offer valuable tools for addressing conflict in ways that resonate with the lived experiences of communities. They often emphasize restorative justice, collective healing, community participation, and relational harmony. While such approaches may not ensure peace at the national level, they can foster "islands of peace", localities marked by relative calm and stability (Boege, 2006). These micro-zones, though limited in scope, can serve as instructive models for broader peacebuilding efforts, illustrating how culturally embedded practices can build trust, resolve grievances, and strengthen communal bonds.

Empirical examples from Ghana highlight the practical relevance of indigenous mechanisms in peacebuilding. The relationship between Fulani herders and farming communities varies across regions, reflecting the influence of local dynamics on conflict trajectories. While some areas have experienced violent clashes, others have maintained long-standing cooperation and peaceful coexistence. Paalo (2021) documents how traditional and religious mechanisms in parts of northern Ghana have facilitated the resolution of disputes between farmers and herders, helping sustain local peace. Abdulai and Smucker (2024) further point to factors such as shared religious identity, intermarriage, and economic interdependence as crucial in promoting tolerance and reducing conflict. These observations are supported by Bekerman's (2018) contact hypothesis, which argues that sustained, positive interaction between groups, especially when grounded in shared identities, can reduce prejudice and foster empathy. In these Ghanaian communities, shared Islamic faith has acted as a social bridge, promoting cohesion and mutual understanding between groups that have been in conflict elsewhere.

Despite their many strengths, indigenous peacebuilding approaches are not without limitations. As Tuso (2012) cautions, certain customary practices may reinforce exclusionary structures or perpetuate injustices, such as gender inequality or the marginalization of youth and minority voices. Some traditional mechanisms may also lack the capacity to address complex structural violence or may be vulnerable to manipulation by local elites. Moreover, rituals associated with healing and reconciliation can, in some cases, re-traumatize victims or fail to deliver substantive justice (Wanis-St. John, 2013). These limitations point to the need for critical engagement with indigenous approaches, ensuring that their application is neither romanticized nor uncritically adopted. Some Indigenous groups themselves have acknowledged the usefulness

of approaches that are hybrid and combine both indigenous perspectives and some liberal models for example through transitional justice processes (Wanis-St. John, 2013).

In conclusion, the literature underscores that indigenous and critical peacebuilding approaches offer meaningful insights and culturally grounded strategies for promoting inclusive and sustainable peace. However, their effectiveness hinges on a context-sensitive application that remains critically aware of both their transformative potential and inherent limitations. Ultimately, peacebuilding is a negotiated and iterative process, requiring a careful balance between local traditions and broader frameworks, as well as between competing cultural values and visions of peace.

### *The Importance of Decolonizing Peace Research as part of Indigenous Peace building*

Research is essential in every field of study, including those concerned with peace and conflict. PACS is a transdisciplinary field that engages stakeholders from civil society, academia, government, and international development actors such as the United Nations. This field aims to analyze social problems and construct conflict theories to promote social justice and peace. There is a need for more collaboration between other social science fields and even other academic fields, such as the natural sciences, to build on related work and develop PACS. Part of such collaboration can be through research approaches.

Decolonizing peace research is an important step in advancing indigenous peace building and aligning scholarly inquiry with critical and emancipatory peace approaches. Liberal peace building research have often been grounded in westernized paradigms that marginalize or exclude indigenous ways of knowing, perpetuating epistemic violence and colonial power structures (Cárdenas, 2023). Cárdenas further notes that, it is crucial to decolonize peace research

with an emancipatory approach through partnerships among all stakeholders to work toward a common goal of sustainable peace in societies. Peace research and praxis must also engage grassroots youth on the ground in conflict zones to ensure that youths do not feel marginalized by peace processes (McEvoy-Levy, 2013).

According to Wilson (2001), an indigenizing approach to research is a process of mutual respect and reciprocity whereby the participants are not just passive objects of inquiry. Instead, the researcher and the research subject work together in an interdependent relationship. Within this relationship, knowledge is not acquired abstractly but rather through a process in which each party creates and shares some form of knowledge. Indigenous research is bi-directional and transcultural, where both participants and researchers share knowledge.

On the other hand, one-way and top-down systems of knowledge and worldviews are limited in their usefulness and relevance. Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) reiterate that indigenous knowledge systems are dynamic because they are based on culture, constantly changing in response to new conditions. This knowledge is used to sustain society, preserve cultural heritage, and maintain the biodiversity necessary for its survival. As a bottom-up approach to research, an indigenizing method of inquiry would allow Indigenous people to address issues concerning them sustainably and effectively (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005). To understand the deeper meanings and concerns of the Fulani herders and the local farmers in Agogo, it was useful for me to employ a phenomenological research approach. This approach aided in further decolonizing the research while providing a nuanced view of the root causes of the conflict and available emancipatory approaches to building sustainable peace.

### *The Role Civil Society Groups in Peacebuilding*

Africa has faced enormous obstacles to securing peace and prosperity partly due to violence, poverty, and inequality. Civil society groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Africa have made significant contributions to promoting peace and development on the continent by addressing these issues (Mwambari, 2017). The impacts of civil society agents and agencies in peacebuilding is not limited to Africa or less developed nations; there are accounts of their engagement in the peace process in "developed nations" like Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2023) and elsewhere as well. CSOs assume a crucial role in peacebuilding processes, particularly with the backing of the international community, which extends economic help to CSOs involved in peacebuilding endeavors (Luna & Byrne, 2021). They frequently act as mediators between conflicting parties, promoting dialogue and settlement. For instance, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) organizes peacebuilding initiatives in many West African nations, including Sierra Leone and Liberia (Calléja, 2022). Search for Common Ground, an NGO, has assisted in fostering peace in post-violent conflict societies and reducing bloodshed in many African countries that have experienced conflicts (Ground, 2017; Maweu, 2019). These organizations employ approaches such as grassroots initiatives, community involvement, peace education and advocacy workshops to contribute to peace building in African nations.

NGOs and CSOs support the development of social cohesion in African communities (Akinyetun et al., 2021). They promote inclusivity, tolerance, and respect for diversity, which promotes peacebuilding by bridging gaps caused by racial, religious, and cultural differences (Paffenholz, 2015). These organizations encourage intergroup contacts, organize cultural events, and foster community dialogue to promote social cohesion, solidarity and shared purpose. By

involving local communities, these organizations strengthen social cohesiveness, lower tensions, and aid in the healing process necessary for lasting peace.

Additionally, NGOs and CSOs recognize the need to empower local communities to advance sustainable development. To promote marginalized groups' involvement in decision-making, they work closely with vulnerable populations, youth, and women (Lewis et al., 2020). CSOs and NGOs are important advocates for legislative changes that aim to tackle the underlying factors contributing to conflicts in Africa. These NGOs and members of civil society engage in active lobbying and oversight activities to advance good governance in African nations (Mlambo et al., 2020). For instance, the media, as an important civil society group, have some times encouraged transparency, accountability, and citizen involvement in order to curb corruption (Adebanwi, 2016). Through research, capacity building, and policy advocacy, these organizations support responsive leadership and socioeconomic development. Although, Adebanwi, also notes that the media, for example in Nigeria, have also been corrupt in their practices, accepting bribes from corrupt politicians to stay quiet.

More importantly, NGOs and members of civil society work to reduce socioeconomic disparities in Africa through initiatives (such as skills development, education and microfinance opportunities) that support the poor and other vulnerable groups (Adjei et al., 2012). Considering that socioeconomic inequalities are a well-known source of intergroup conflict, reducing such inequalities contributes to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. NGOs and CSOs are crucial for promoting peace and prosperity in Africa. By acting in conflict resolution, fostering social cohesion, promoting good governance, and addressing socioeconomic inequalities, these organizations contribute to the growth of resilient and inclusive societies (Paffenholtz, 2010). Their programs improve people's lives and communities throughout the continent. Promoting

and enhancing the capacity of NGOs and CSOs is essential to achieving long-term peace and socioeconomic development since these groups have the potential to be agents of positive change in Africa.

Although civil society groups have contributed to peace and development in Africa and beyond, they have also faced some challenges, particularly in authoritarian environments (Annan et al., 2021). Yet, they have constantly found innovative ways to overcome these challenges in the so-called shrinking civic spaces (Annan et al., 2021). Also, the provision of economic financing from international agencies to local CSOs might give rise to unexpected consequences (Byrne, 2023). For instance, Byrne (2023) study on the role of CSOs in cross community peacebuilding efforts in Northern Ireland revealed that some workers employed by these CSOs often face a lack of acknowledgement for their initiatives by government, and unfortunately, their employment is contingent upon the availability of funds. Some CSOs have also been accused of corruption, bribery and misusing donor funds. For example, Adebanwi (2016), noted how corrupt media may misinform the people in Nigeria and elsewhere in West Africa. Civil societies are a strong force in politics, development, and peacebuilding. CSOs and NGOs may be able to reach local groups and promote peace and support socioeconomic development where state agencies have failed. However, if they continue to be overly dependent on donor funding from external actors and if certain political leaders continue to thwart their initiatives, their contributions to peacebuilding may be limited.

### *The Role of Religion in Peacebuilding*

Religion has long played a significant role in peacebuilding, offering both opportunities and challenges in the process of conflict resolution (Matyók et al., 2014; Owen & King, 2019).

PACS scholars increasingly emphasize the importance of integrating religious perspectives and practices into peacebuilding frameworks (King & Owen, 2020). Religious institutions and leaders hold unique capacities to mediate conflicts, foster dialogue, and promote mutual understanding. For instance, Abu-Nimer (2013) asserts that interfaith dialogue initiatives have proven effective in overcoming negative stereotypes and fostering trust between divided communities. These dialogues have been successful in various contexts, including Egypt and Sri Lanka, where religious leaders have worked together to create spaces for peace and cooperation. However, the full potential of religious peacebuilding strategies has yet to be realized, and challenges such as political instrumentalization of religion and the lack of inclusivity remain, particularly in the political and social landscapes that influence religious practices (Abu-Nimer, 2013).

In addition to dialogue, religion can offer both ritualistic and rational approaches to peacebuilding (Cárdenas, 2019; Schirch, 2015). Rituals, such as prayer, fasting, and communal gatherings, have the power to heal societal divisions by creating opportunities for reconciliation and transforming attitudes toward conflict (Cárdenas, 2019). Schirch (2015) argues that religious rituals often offer non-violent, culturally relevant means of conflict transformation, especially in communities where formal peacebuilding interventions may be seen as foreign or ineffective. These rituals can reinforce values of peace, forgiveness, and community solidarity, contributing to long-lasting and sustainable peace. Moreover, religious teachings on non-violence, such as those in the Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu traditions, provide critical frameworks for non-violent resistance movements and peacebuilding efforts (Obiekwe, 2009).

Further, religious principles rooted in justice and compassion have played pivotal roles in movements for social change and peace, for example, the African American civil rights

movement was heavily influenced by religious principles, particularly those derived from Christian teachings on justice and equality (Roberts, 2024). Similarly, faith-based organizations worldwide have been instrumental in advocating for social justice, peace, and reconciliation. The involvement of religious groups in peacebuilding has proven particularly effective in addressing grassroots concerns and promoting local ownership of peace processes (Obiekwe, 2009). However, as Brewer (2013) notes, the role of religion in peacebuilding is often overlooked in academic discourse and practice, with secular peacebuilding frameworks dominating mainstream peacebuilding policies.

While religion holds substantial promise as a peacebuilding tool, scholars caution against idealizing its role. In PACS research and praxis, the role of religion in peace building and conflict resolution is seen as both a challenge for conflict and an opportunity for reconciliation (Funk & Woolner, 2011). Appleby (2015) noted that religion has a dualistic relationship with peace, whereby it has a dual potential to either support peace or incite violence, depending on how it is interpreted, practiced, and mobilized in specific contexts. Religion can serve as a moral compass that promotes forgiveness, compassion, and social justice, offering powerful narratives for healing and unity. At the same time, religious doctrines and institutions can be co-opted to legitimize exclusion, discrimination, and violence, especially when tied to political agendas or identity-based conflicts. The ambivalence that Appleby highlights urge peacebuilders to critically assess the role religion plays in each conflict setting, rather than assuming its inherently positive or negative influence. For instance, (Prügl et al., 2021) warn that certain sociocultural and religious practices may perpetuate patriarchal structures that promote violence and social inequalities. Furthermore, religious divisions have historically been at the root of many conflicts, with religious differences being manipulated by political actors to incite violence and unrest

(King & Owen, 2020). The danger of romanticizing religion as a peaceful force is evident in instances where religious communities have been complicit in violent conflict, such as in the case of the Rwandan genocide, where churches reinforced ethnic divisions and supported state power (Longman, 2010).

Also, religion's impact on peacebuilding is also deeply influenced by the narratives crafted by religious leaders and institutions. Religion can be a dividing factor and a motive for going to war (Byrne & Nadan, 2012). Narratives of peace rooted in religious teachings can serve as powerful tools for promoting reconciliation and fostering social cohesion (Haynes, 2011). However, when religious groups exploit their influence in order to further sectarian or exclusionary agendas, they can exacerbate conflict and violence (Longman, 2010).

Scholars such as Huntington (1996) argue that religion has become increasingly influential in global politics, filling a perceived void left by secular ideologies. Huntington's thesis suggests that religion's growing importance in shaping conflicts and political interactions is a product of globalization and increasing interfaith interactions. However, while religion undeniably plays a central role in shaping the identities of individuals and communities, politics and diplomacy should not be disregarded as critical contributors to global peace (Fox & Akbaba, 2014). Rather, a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding must recognize the interplay between religious, political, and social forces to address the root causes of conflict and build sustainable peace.

Finally, the role of religion in peacebuilding, therefore, is complex and multifaceted. It holds the potential to foster peace and reconciliation, but also to perpetuate violence and division (Haynes, 2011; Matyók et al., 2014). To effectively harness the positive potential of religion in peacebuilding, it is necessary to adopt a nuanced approach that accounts for both the benefits and

challenges associated with religious involvement. Ultimately, the integration of religion into peacebuilding requires a careful balancing of religious teachings, local cultural practices, and secular peacebuilding methods in order to create inclusive and sustainable peace processes (Gopin et al., 2015).

### *Peace Journalism as part of Critical and Emancipatory Peace building*

Peace journalism has been an essential aspect of PACS for decades and is gradually emerging as a crucial element in African peacebuilding and mass communication literature (Maweu, 2019). Given that conflicts impact various groups differently, post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding must address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different populations, particularly those affected by violence (Justino & Santos, 2013). The media, as a critical component of civil society, plays a pivotal role in addressing peace and justice issues at both local and household levels. Its involvement enhances the effectiveness of macro-level peacebuilding efforts.

Scholars and practitioners have increasingly advocated for conflict-sensitive reporting over sensationalist approaches in conflict journalism (Peterson et al., 2023). Galtung and Fischer (2013) liken peace journalism to medical reporting, emphasizing the identification of conflict causes and the proposal of preventive and therapeutic measures. Peace journalism aims to address the root causes of conflict while providing proactive solutions, recognizing all types of violence, including indirect violence. By minimizing the focus on conflict triggers such as cultural differences and ethnic polarization, peace journalism promotes conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Gouse et al., 2019; Peterson et al., 2023).

Peace journalism examines the content, sources, and outcomes of conflict reporting, focusing on promoting peace and ensuring all conflict parties have a voice. It avoids binary perspectives and strives to offer a comprehensive, impartial analysis of conflicts (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013). Reports of peace journalists should not only address violence and radicalization but also accurately reflect historical and cultural contexts (Peterson et al., 2023). Peace journalism provides a platform for diverse voices and emphasizes the potential for negotiation and resolution (Nicolas-Gavilan, 2018).

Studies using Galtung's model have consistently found that war frames dominant conflict reporting (Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016). The shift from violence-oriented journalism to peace journalism is crucial for fostering peaceful societies through media. Critics argue that peace journalism's principles overlap with general journalistic ethics, suggesting no need for a paradigm shift (Shehu & Alhassan, 2018). However, journalistic orientation can influence whether a conflict is reported from a war or peace journalism perspective (Peterson et al., 2023). Factors such as the conflict's state, journalist's background, and public opinion affect the adoption of peace journalism (Bläsi, 2009).

The public's interest influences both the choice of conflicts reported and the reporting approach. According to Galtung (2015), peace journalism should highlight forces for and against peace and make them visible as potential solutions. Media reporting shapes public perceptions, which can affect behavior and exacerbate conflicts. Historical instances, such as the Rwandan genocide and the Muslim-Christian conflicts in Indonesia, demonstrate how biased reporting can incite violence and deepen animosities (Hanitzsch, 2004; Shehu & Alhassan, 2018). For example, negative media framing of farmer/herder conflicts has worsened tensions between these groups (Mohammed et al., 2018).

Effective communication is crucial for conflict resolution, as poor reporting can exacerbate or perpetuate conflicts, especially those related to identity and power. The media's framing of issues can either escalate or de-escalate conflicts. When groups are not open to alternative viewpoints, conflicts can become entrenched, fostering prejudice and division (Babatunde et al., 2020). The media's responsibility in reporting balanced information is vital for shaping public discourse and promoting peace. The media as an agent of socialization significantly influences societal behavior. Biased reports on conflicts, such as those concerning the Fulani in Ghana, can distort public perceptions and impact social cohesion (Bukari & Schareika, 2015). Peace journalism is therefore essential for fostering peace in communities like Agogo, with the media acting as a change agent to support social causes and societal well-being.

Conflict-sensitive reporting emphasizes conflict resolution, transformation, and nonviolence rather than exacerbating violence. Grassroots media can facilitate peace by reframing conflicts and fostering dialogue (Babale & Nasidi, 2019; Eti, 2009). All journalism is an intervention, and its ethical approach determines whether it contributes to peace (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013). Peace journalism, through accurate and ethical reporting, fulfills the media's civic responsibilities and supports conflict resolution and management. Peace journalism serves as a research tool for finding common ground and promoting conflict transformation. Effective peace journalism requires rigorous training in ethical standards. In the field of mass communication and journalism, agenda-setting and social responsibility explain the media's role in shaping political realities and addressing key social issues (Babale & Nasidi, 2019). The media's capacity to highlight important issues and support security efforts is crucial for peacebuilding.

Further, peace journalism, has been promoted as an emancipatory tool for peacebuilding and empowerment in many societies including African conflict and post-conflict settings. According to Maweu and Mare (2021), there is an increasing need to distance journalism practices in the Global South from Western influence. They advocate for Afrocentric peace journalism rooted in African ideals like *Ubuntu, utu, umoja*, and *harambee*. Ubuntu, meaning humanism, emphasizes the importance of shared human connection and compassion. Utu, umoja, and harambee are Swahili concepts related to the concept of ubuntu. All three concepts speak to the importance of interconnectedness and shared communal values for a harmonious society. Utu signifies humanity and mutual respect, emphasizing the importance of compassion and dignity in social interactions. Umoja means unity, highlighting the value of collective solidarity and working together towards common goals. Harambee translates to "pulling together," representing the spirit of cooperative effort and mutual assistance in addressing community needs and achieving development.

Together, these principles underscore the significance of interconnectedness, solidarity, and collective action in fostering harmonious and resilient communities. The authors argue that implementing this Afrocentric approach to peace journalism in Africa provides a strategic and innovative opportunity to investigate the interrelationships between journalists, their sources, the issues they report on, and the influence of their coverage on African sociocultural norms and indigenous peace practices.

Lastly, peace journalism represents an emancipatory approach to peacebuilding, engaging the grassroots and civil society groups. Recent shifts from liberal to emancipatory approaches emphasize the need for inclusive, bottom-up peacebuilding strategies (Mac Ginty, 2013). Despite

potential for discord, the media can be a force for unity and peace, as demonstrated by initiatives in the Ivory Coast and Rwanda (Mtukwa, 2015; Ratnavale, 2015).

### *Hybrid Approaches to Peacebuilding*

Hybrid peace approaches represent an evolution in conflict resolution, combining insights from various peacebuilding theories to address their respective limitations and enhance their overall effectiveness. This integration acknowledges the complexity and diversity of conflicts, allowing for more nuanced and adaptable solutions (Mac Ginty, 2015). Historically, liberal peacebuilding frameworks have focused on promoting democratic governance, human rights, and institutional development as the core components for achieving peace (Richmond & Mitchell, 2011). These approaches prioritize the establishment of democratic institutions, the protection of civil liberties, and the creation of legal frameworks designed to safeguard individual rights (Chandler & Richmond, 2015). Despite their broad appeal, liberal peace approaches have been critiqued for often overlooking the specific needs and social dynamics of local communities. Critics argue that these models can exacerbate existing inequalities and fail to account for the cultural and historical contexts that shape conflict in diverse regions (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2016). The emphasis on top-down governance structures can, at times, lead to the imposition of policies that do not align with the social realities or aspirations of the local populations, thus hindering the overall effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts.

In contrast, neoliberal peacebuilding strategies prioritize economic liberalization and market-driven reforms as key strategies for fostering peace and stability. These approaches advocate for the privatization of state-owned enterprises, liberalization of markets and the incorporation of domestic economies into the global economic framework, with the belief that

economic development will create interdependencies that reduce the likelihood of conflict (Thiessen, 2011). The emphasis on economic growth and stability as pathways to peace has found significant support in many post-conflict regions where economic deprivation has fueled social unrest. However, neoliberal peacebuilding has been criticized for neglecting the cultural appropriateness of its reforms and the social impacts that economic liberalization may have on vulnerable communities. By focusing primarily on economic objectives, neoliberal models often fail to address the deeper cultural and societal challenges that contribute to conflict, such as historical grievances, social inequalities, and community fragmentation. As a result, these approaches can inadvertently exacerbate existing tensions and widen the gap between wealthy and marginalized populations, undermining long-term peace efforts (Chandler & Richmond, 2015).

Hybrid peace models, as proposed by scholars such as Mac Ginty and Richmond (2010) and Boudreau (2012), seek to bridge the gap between liberal and neoliberal peacebuilding by integrating local, culturally sensitive practices into peacebuilding strategies. These models acknowledge that peacebuilding is not a one-size-fits-all process and that the diverse nature of conflicts requires context-specific, multifaceted solutions. Hybrid peace approaches draw on the recognition that no single approach can effectively address the complex dynamics of conflict, particularly in regions marked by historical injustices, social inequalities, and diverse cultural identities. By incorporating local knowledge, practices, and indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms, hybrid peacebuilding provides a more inclusive, participatory framework that is better suited to address the primary drivers of conflict and promote durable peace (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2010). This approach is grounded in the understanding that local communities are not

passive recipients of peacebuilding interventions, but active stakeholders in creating their peace processes (Boudreau, 2012).

Furthermore, the hybrid approach further emphasizes the importance of local agency, autonomy, and resistance in conflict transformation. While it acknowledges the value of external support in peace building efforts, it insists that external actors should not impose solutions but rather work alongside local stakeholders to design and implement initiatives that reflect the values and needs of the communities involved. Hybrid peace models recognize that local institutional frameworks may often be insufficient in addressing large-scale crises, such as armed conflict or systemic social injustice, and thus call for a collaborative approach that draws on both local and external resources (Bräuchler, 2015). At the same time, the hybrid approach cautions against the potential for external actors to co-opt or undermine indigenous peacebuilding practices. By combining external expertise with local knowledge, hybrid models seek to avoid the pitfalls of both liberal and neoliberal peacebuilding, such as the marginalization of local voices or the imposition of Western-centric solutions that do not resonate with the specific cultural, historical, or social realities of the communities involved (Chandler & Richmond, 2015).

Critics of liberal peacebuilding have argued that it often leads to the marginalization of less powerful groups, especially in contexts where power dynamics are skewed in favor of certain ethnic, political, or economic elites (Christie & Morrison, 2021). Similarly, neoliberal strategies have been criticized for overlooking the cultural and social dimensions of conflict, particularly in societies where economic liberalization can exacerbate inequality and deepen social divisions. Hybrid peace approaches seek to address these shortcomings by emphasizing inclusivity, equality, and social justice. These models advocate for the decolonization of

peacebuilding processes, ensuring that policies and practices are context-specific and culturally appropriate (Brown, 2019). Rather than imposing Western norms and frameworks, hybrid peacebuilding models aim to integrate alternative, non-Western strategies that reflect the diverse cultural landscapes of conflict-affected communities.

At the heart of the hybrid peace approach is the idea of fostering cooperation among all stakeholders, from local communities to state and international actors, in a manner that emphasizes a "power-with" rather than a "power-over" dynamic (Palmiano-Federer, 2021). This cooperative approach seeks to build peace from the ground up, involving local communities in every step of the peacebuilding process. It emphasizes the importance of empowering local stakeholders by providing them with the skills, training, and resources needed to manage conflicts, heal from trauma, and contribute to the development of sustainable peace cultures. By emphasizing a multi-dimensional, multi-track approach to peacebuilding, hybrid models aim to create peace that is not only contextually relevant but also broadly supported across diverse societal groups (Christie & Morrison, 2021).

More importantly, through the hybrid peacebuilding framework, scholars and practitioners alike are recognizing the need for more inclusive and context-sensitive approaches that are adaptable to the complexities of modern-day conflicts. These models offer a more holistic understanding of peacebuilding, one that integrates both traditional and innovative methods to address the social, political, and economic dimensions of conflict. Ultimately, hybrid peacebuilding aims to achieve a positive peace—one that is not merely the absence of violence but the establishment of inclusive justice, equal opportunity, and long-term stability (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2016). This comprehensive approach to conflict resolution ensures that

peacebuilding efforts are not only effective in the short term but also sustainable in the long run, providing the foundation for resilient, harmonious societies.

## Conflict Transformation and Peace building

### *Elise Boulding's Idea of Building a Culture of Peace*

Elise Boulding's conception of peacebuilding, which emphasizes instilling cultures of peace through peace education, is widely regarded as the cornerstone of civil society and grassroots peacebuilding (Boulding et al., 2016). Boulding's peacebuilding ideas acknowledge the importance of gender perspectives and youth inclusion in peace processes. Her work has influenced peace research and praxis in contemporary times.

Culture is a socially constructed shared body of knowledge as well as a way of life. A culture of peace encompasses a comprehensive framework of principles, beliefs, behaviors, and societal norms that actively reject the use of violence and proactively addresses the underlying causes of conflicts. It promotes the resolution of issues using constructive communication and negotiation, fostering positive relationships among individuals, communities, and nations. (Macionis, 2011). According to Boulding, appreciating cultural differences and diversities serves as the foundation of peacebuilding (Cavin-Hambrick, 2019). In addition, the family, as the community member's primary agent of socialization, is the catalyst for social change and peace.

Moreover, Boulding's conception of a culture of peace promotes the use of non-violent strategies to resolve conflict, including peace talks, mediation, and negotiation (Boulding et al., 2016). Peace education is required in the attempt to establish a culture of peace (Reardon, 2021). Peace education promotes empathy, cooperation, and community building in every society and it is very useful in conflict-ridden, post-war societies and post-conflict reconstruction (Lopes &

Hoeks, 2015). Stakeholders such as the United Nations and world leaders have recognized the importance of building cultures of peace in societies. For instance, the primary objective of the UN Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace (1999) is to attain widespread education among youths regarding the principles and cultures necessary for peaceful conflict resolution and respect for diversity.

Culture provides a rich representation of how groups and individuals live, and what they care about. Although culture is essential to peace building, it can be harmful in specific ways and may perpetuate violence. Cultural violence refers to the set of value systems and behaviors that create and entrench injustice within societies (Reber- Rider, 2008). Both material and non-material cultures, including music, literature, art forms, language, and constructs like gender roles, ethnicity, religion, and race, can transmit violence (Reber- Rider, 2008). Considering how some non-material and material culture can transmit violence, human rights activists have begun to advocate for the unlearning and abolishment of violent aspects of cultures such as female genital mutilation. Human rights activists have encouraged many societies to inculcate and develop cultures of peace, particularly through a renewed focus on children and youths (Georgakopoulos et al., 2019).They have also begun to consider the youth an important civil society group in peacebuilding.

Youth inclusion in peacebuilding through peace education is seen as important by many human rights activists and peace advocates because the youth and children are seen as the future of their societies and therefore inculcating a culture of peace and non-violent ways of resolving conflicts, may help to create a peaceful society in future (Pruitt, 2019). For instance, McKeown and Taylor (2017) investigated the peacebuilding potential of youth in post-peace accord Northern Ireland. They noted that peace education includes teachings about peace that help

deconstruct the image of the "other" as an "enemy". Peace education involves processes that promote a culture of peace by using strategies and skills like negotiation, reconciliation, and non-violent protests to address social conflicts (Brantmeier, 2013). Peace education aims to prevent conflict recurrence and promote peace and social justice. Peace education involves training and empowering people(children) to have attitudes (culture) of peace right from home (Boulding et al., 2016). Boulding believes that teaching children to have non-violent and peaceful attitudes would spread throughout the community and eventually lead to global peace. Sustainable peace may be achieved in a conflict when all parties agree to practice tolerance and work on improving the situation; this is the main idea that peace education teaches (Johnson et al., 2013). Peace education fosters non-violent attitudes by teaching values and skills that promote respect for human rights, social justice, and freedom (Peterson et al., 2016). While some societies may resist peace education due to adherence to traditional values that may be violent, encouraging the adoption of non-violent norms is still valuable and worth pursuing, even if it cannot be enforced.

Further, peace education has the potential to reduce the incidence of violence through the inculcation of peaceful attitudes; however, peace education without structural changes and durable solutions to the causes of conflict will be ineffective in preventing conflicts (Maulden, 2013). This is because individuals are rational actors who would fight for their human needs and rights if they were constrained. Boulding also advocates paying special attention to the gendered dimensions of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The contributions of women and other marginalized gender groups to peacebuilding in farmer/herder conflicts have not been adequately explored. This has been one of the primary goals of my study, which argues that consideration of women's role in intergroup conflicts is critical for peacebuilding because they may be both

victims and perpetrators of violence. However, evidence suggests they are usually the victims in the case of farmer/herder conflicts, especially in Agogo-Ghana.

Finally, peace education has the potential to transform violent situations and promises hope for a future generation of peaceful citizens. However, the idea of peace education may not be welcome in every society. For instance, violent behaviours that are part of the cultural norms and practices of a society may be difficult to change. Furthermore, the inclusion of all stakeholders including the grassroot such as the youth may be difficult. It is also worth noting that building a culture of peace takes time since it involves active listening and ideally, the engagement of all stakeholders, including those at the grass-root level. Yet the hope that peace education can bring peace in the future makes it worth trying, if peace education is successful in building cultures of peace, the result can be sustainable peace.

### *Galtung's Positive Peace Concept*

In exploring the dynamics of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, a critical concept is the differentiation between positive and negative peace. Negative peace is often defined simply as a context or situation devoid of direct violence, while positive peace encompasses deeper, more structural elements, including the elimination of the primary drivers of conflict, such as social inequality, discrimination, and injustice (Galtung & Fischer, 2013). Galtung's concept of positive peace, influenced by Gandhi's non-violence ideology (Lee, 2018), argues that peace cannot be achieved solely through the cessation of physical violence. It requires addressing the underlying societal issues, such as xenophobia, prejudice, and socioeconomic disparities, that perpetuate conflict. Positive peace fosters resilient societies by eliminating both structural and cultural violence, promoting social justice, and ensuring the long-term stability of

the community (Toohey, 2013). In this context, peacebuilding must move beyond the absence of violence and emphasize on creating systems of social justice and equity.

The process of reconciliation plays a vital role in achieving positive peace, especially in post-conflict settings. It is not only essential for healing trauma but also for rebuilding relationships and societal trust (Christie & Morrison, 2021; Ross, 2013). Reconciliation is more than a symbolic gesture; it involves both psychological and emotional healing, providing a space for individuals to express their grievances and to process past wrongs. This can help bridge divides and foster a sense of shared understanding between adversaries (Bräuchler, 2015). The importance of collective memory in reconciliation is significant, as it offers a platform for acknowledging past injustices while simultaneously building hope for a peaceful future (Lederach, 1997). Reconciliation efforts must be carefully timed and context-sensitive, as initiating these processes too early or under the wrong conditions can hinder healing (Stimec et al., 2011).

Moreover, reconciliation must consider the psychological well-being of individuals who have suffered trauma. For victims, reconciliation provides closure, validation, and an opportunity to restore dignity, which is essential for their reintegration into a peaceful society (Lederach, 1997). The emotional recovery of individuals is closely tied to their ability to rebuild trust and engage with others in a peaceful manner. Through communication, acknowledgment of grievances, and the promotion of forgiveness, reconciliation can rebuild dignity and foster long-term healing.

Amartya Sen's (2001) concept of development as the expansion of fundamental freedoms underscores the importance of addressing socioeconomic rights in conflict transformation processes. When individuals, particularly those from marginalized groups, are denied their basic

rights, such as access to economic opportunities, security, and social services, the deprivation of these freedoms can lead to conflict and violence (Arjun, 2017). For peace to be sustainable, it must be linked to development, as the absence of development and the denial of human rights serve as major drivers of unrest. Marginalized groups, such as immigrants, women, and children, are particularly vulnerable to such deprivation and may resort to violence to demand equal rights and protections (Cook-Huffman, 2010).

Therefore, reconciliation and the acknowledgment of grievances must be integral to any peacebuilding or conflict resolution strategies. This process allows communities to heal, express their needs, and work toward shared solutions. Addressing issues of socioeconomic inequality is central to these efforts, as it ensures that both groups engage in dialogue to identify solutions that promote equal opportunity and social justice. The process of reconciling grievances may not immediately resolve all conflicts, but it is a crucial step toward building lasting peace (Hill & Hansen, 2011; Lederach, 1997).

In the findings section of this study, the people of Agogo articulate their desire for peace in their community, and their description aligns with the concept of positive peace. They envision a future where not only the physical violence is stopped but where the deeper social injustices, such as prejudice and inequality, are addressed. This reflects Galtung's idea of positive peace, which is founded on creating a just and resilient society that goes beyond the mere cessation of violence to include the resolution of underlying structural issues.

### *Lederach's Idea of Conflict Transformation*

According to Lederach (2015, p. 16), "conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change

processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships." Lederach (2015) identifies three levels: the immediate solution, the fundamental structures of relationship (which considers the background of the conflict), and a conceptual structure that integrates these two perspectives to establish connections between problems and their underlying relational patterns. This paradigm focuses on the circumstances and structure of individuals in conflict.

The conflict transformation approach recognizes that conflicts are a natural part of human relationships and interactions. Moreover, it acknowledges that some of the factors initiating and sustaining a conflict are constantly evolving. Conflicts play a role in bringing about changes in relationships and society. However, these modifications may not consistently yield favorable results. The conflict transformation approach believes although conflicts are a natural part of human interactions and relationships, human beings are not inherently inclined toward violence; instead, violent conflicts are shaped by sociocultural, political and other relational factors (Mac Ginty & Williams, 2016).

Similarly, the Seville Statement on Violence rejects the idea that humans are biologically predisposed to violence, emphasizing that it is socially and culturally conditioned rather than inevitable (Fiala, 2018). While trauma, devaluation, and community disruption can lead to cycles of violence (Catani, 2010), they do not make violence a necessary response to pain and injustice. Likewise, pacifism challenges the idea that violence, particularly war, is a necessary or justified response to conflict, promoting peaceful resolution strategies instead (Fiala, 2018). Fiala also mentions that pacifists and feminists argue that nonviolent approaches like peacebuilding and reconciliation through strategies like constructive dialogue and conflict transformation can break the cycle of violence.

According to (Shapiro & Fisher, 2005), we can transform our relationships and improve our structural connections with others through our shared interests and links, and even our disagreements. A conflict transformation approach does not view peacebuilding as a one-time event but as a continuous practice. It tries to understand the issues from a broader perspective, not a particular episode (Lederach, 2015). Dialogue is an essential part of conflict transformation at both personal and group levels.

Additionally, conflict transformation provides "a space for creating adaptive responses to human conflict through change processes that aim to promote social justice while reducing the use of force and violence" (Lederach, 2015, p. 22). Conflict transformation allows disputants to understand the social norms that have contributed to their disagreements. It also allows parties to identify and build mechanisms within their cultures; so that they can constructively respond to their differences rather than resort to the use of violence.

Conflict transformation is not a new concept. For centuries, traditional societies have employed conflict transformation. For example, in Arab societies, *Sulha* and *Hudna* have been used to address conflict without violence and as a way of improving the relationship through compensation for the aggrieved party (Wilmer, 2020). Sulha and Hudna have been used across societies as well, for example Pely (2016), mentions that Sulha has been used to mediate conflicts between Muslims, Druze and Christians in Northern Israel. Conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies have ranged from constructive conflict resolution (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2016), conflict management, interventions, and peacekeeping missions to peace treaties.

Peace agreements and treaties have sometimes ignored power asymmetries within groups, which have sometimes made these peace agreements unsustainable. Some of these practices and approaches have resulted in stalled peacebuilding efforts. Recently, the attention

has shifted to conflict transformation and the grassroots. This idea aims to transform societies and deal with conflicts through non-violent means, bearing in mind the socio-cultural context and the broader issues of power, history, and the deeper interests of all parties.

Further, conflict transformation has helped bring parties to the negotiating table, for example, as with the Oslo Agreement in the Israel-Palestine context (Del Sarto, 2019) and the Northern Ireland Belfast or Good Friday Agreement (Fenton, 2018). However, due to several factors such as politics and external influences, some agreements have not always held (Del Sarto, 2019). The failure to achieve equal social, political, and economic opportunities in these societies can also be blamed. Certain groups were ignored at the grassroots level when making these agreements which may have contributed to their failures.

Grassroot women have engaged in peace building efforts worldwide. Women took part in grassroot activism and peace building in Northern Ireland (Jarman, 2016). Anecdotal evidence suggest that women have been involved in peace building during farmer/herder conflicts in West African states like Ghana and Nigeria. Even in recent conflicts in South Sudan, women have been peace activists. Despite women's contributions to peacebuilding in South Sudan for example, their efforts have not received adequate attention (Adeogun & Muthuki, 2018), similarly women's contributions to peace building and conflict transformation have been less highlighted in the farmer/herder discourse in West Africa. Conflict transformation has brought some positive changes to peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. Nevertheless, challenges to sustainable peace still exist. This shows the complex and fluid nature of social conflicts.

In recent times, there has been increasing concern with conflict transformation in Africa. For instance, the Africa Union (AU) in 2000, took the initiative to promote sustainable peace and

development through its Constitutive Act. This Act allows AU member states to intervene in another state during conflicts to prevent grave circumstances like war crimes and genocide (Ekwealor, 2017). The goal of this AU Act is to transform the conflict situation from violence to peaceful negotiations. The AU Constitutive Act has achieved notable successes, such as enabling intervention in member states to prevent instability, strengthening Africa's global presence, and effectively coordinating responses to crises like civil wars and coups (Ekwealor, 2017). While the AU through its Constitutive Act has made strides in regional cooperation and conflict intervention, its effectiveness is often undermined by some challenges, including weak institutions, inconsistent enforcement of its protocols, and limited impact on human rights (Masuku, 2022). For instance, Masuku notes that there are treats to implementation of the Act; despite its mandate the AU has struggled to significantly impact human rights, with its African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights having limited jurisdiction and unable to sanction incumbent presidents.

Conflict transformation enables parties to resolve their differences without resorting to violence. Conflict transformation can be introduced as part of peacebuilding in farmer/herder conflicts and other intercommunal ethnic conflicts in West Africa. Conflict transformation, as described by Lederach (2015), involves viewing and responding to social conflicts as opportunities for constructive change, reducing violence, and increasing justice by transforming dysfunctional relationships and structures. This approach emphasizes addressing immediate solutions, understanding deeper relational patterns, and integrating these perspectives to address underlying issues. It acknowledges that conflicts are natural, evolving phenomena that can lead to societal changes but also highlights the necessity for ongoing peacebuilding practices rather than one-time interventions (Lederach, 2015). Historical and contemporary examples, such as Sulha in Arab societies (Pely, 2016) and women's roles in grassroots peace building activism,

illustrate the long-standing application of conflict transformation principles. Conflict transformation provides an effective paradigm for addressing and resolving disagreements non-violently by concentrating on fundamental relational patterns and social structures (Jeong, 2019). Although the conflict transformation approach has demonstrated potential in numerous historical and modern contexts (Chandler, 2017), including the AUs initiatives in Africa, the method encounters practical problems, notably with institutional effectiveness and in addressing human rights violations (Moerane, 2024). Yet, there is a hope that by applying conflict transformation principles to conflicts in West Africa, particularly in farmer/herder and intercommunal disputes, there is potential to build more resilient, peaceful communities and address the root causes of conflict in a manner that promotes long-term stability and justice.

*Lederach's Levels of Peacebuilding*

Peace-building practitioners and academics continue to debate the most effective methods for achieving peace. These arguments have typically been based on whether peace should be built from the ground-up, middle-out, up-bottom or as a hybrid of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Such arguments form the basis of significant conceptual and theoretical frameworks in peacebuilding research and practice. John Paul Lederach (1997), one of the most well-known authorities on peacebuilding, asserted that there are three levels of peacebuilding. According to Lederach, these three levels are the levels of leadership involved in any conflict.

According to Lederach (1997), to develop effective peacebuilding strategies, peacebuilders must have a thorough understanding of the various actors involved at different levels of leadership and the most suitable actions for each of them. Lederach's three-tier peacebuilding paradigm is conceptualized as a pyramid, with the elite level positioned at the

upper level, mid-level actors in the middle, and grassroots actors at the bottom. Thinking of peacebuilding as a pyramid makes it easier to explain how many people are involved at each level. The highest-level elite leadership is composed of a limited number of individuals, often consisting of a small group of significant actors. The grassroots level consists of a significant number of individuals who effectively represent the local population.

*The Three-levels of Peacebuilding Actors*

Lederach (1997) explains that the upper levels of privileged leadership comprise the most influential actors in any conflict. This level includes politicians, military, and religious authorities. Upper-level leaders serve as main representatives of their groups, which makes them highly visible and influential in their groups. Their prominence often leads them to adopt specific positions on substantive issues over which there is conflict. These upper-level leaders are usually connected to the formal government which makes them resistant to persuasion. Upper-level track one leaders usually try to maintain a specific ideology or position because of the public perceptions. They usually work on high-level negotiations and sometimes aim for cease-fires. Since peace negotiations are usually public, the top-level actors may find themselves in a dilemma whereby they must maintain a particular position that align with the goals of their constituencies but at the same time move toward a compromise without losing the support of their constituencies.

In peacebuilding, middle-level leadership refers to leaders from mid-level non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and state institutions who hold important positions but are not directly associated with the formal government or major opposition movements (Aganah, 2023; Lederach, 2010). These middle-tier actors are considerably greater in number than top-tier

leaders. They have numerous interpersonal relationships and play a crucial role as important track two links between top-tier leaders and grassroots actors. Due to their lower visibility, middle-level leaders have more flexibility in their actions and play a crucial role in the peacebuilding process (Lederach, 1998). Middle-level leaders are flexible because they are usually not part of the formal government and serve as a connection between the top and grassroot levels. Also, middle-level professional leaders derive their status through their connections with those at the top and the grassroots which makes it easier for them to be a broker between those at the top-level and the grassroots level.

According to Lederach (1997), at the bottom level are the grassroots, people who are usually involved in local communities as members of community-based organizations, local groups, etc., carrying out relief projects and other peacebuilding and development activities or their day-to-day activities. These grassroots leaders advocate for the general population, who often encounter daily challenges in accessing essential resources like food, water, shelter, and safety in regions affected by conflict. During times of war, grassroots actors often encounter hostility from the different factions involved in the conflict (Lederach & Peace, 1997). The grassroot level actors have less decision-making power compared to those at the top-level leadership positions; however, these grassroots are the ones who usually suffer the most consequences of the decisions made by the top leaders.

In conclusion, Lederach (1997) identifies that conflict-generating conditions such as socioeconomic marginalization, political injustice, and the abuse of rights often arise at the local level, impacting those at the bottom of the social hierarchy. However, conflicts can also affect higher levels, such as former political leaders and political dissidents targeted by those currently in power. Group-identity conflicts are typically characterized by vertical divisions, involving

unequal power dynamics between groups, but horizontal conflicts between groups with similar levels of power can also occur. Understanding both vertical and horizontal dynamics is crucial for effectively applying Lederach's three levels of peacebuilding actors, as it helps address grassroots grievances, manage higher-level conflicts, and foster comprehensive peace.

*Strategies at Lederach's Various Levels*

According to Lederach (1997), peacebuilding operates on three different levels, each of which has a distinct function and calls for the implementation of a specific set of dispute mediation techniques, methods, and practices in a comprehensive way. For example, the top-level actors' goal is to create a peaceful transition through ceasefires and negotiations in the short term while preparing for elections and the transition back to democratic rule in the long term. Maintaining a compromise and a truce is usually challenging at the top level.

Although attaining consensus at the highest level is crucial, it does not inherently ensure long-lasting peace. To establish a thorough peace process, it is crucial to involve different levels of leadership and engage the affected population. Due to their extensive cross-conflict networks, mid-level leaders are important for rebuilding relationships, making connections, and resolving conflicts. Participatory and democratic peacebuilding groups and activities, conflict resolution training, and peacebuilding organizations play a crucial role in promoting peace at an intermediate level (Lederach, 1998).

Lederach (1997) states that the training of middle-tier actors for advocacy and capacity building initiatives aids in reconciliation processes by encouraging scrutiny of the perspectives of the combatants and their roles in the conflict. Peace commissions (which is usually a mid-tier initiative), comprising representatives from all sides of the conflict, strive to improve

communication across multiple levels. Grassroots peacebuilding efforts are essential to complement higher-level approaches. At the grassroots level, local peace conferences, programs, and seminars bring communities together, assisting in coping with post-war trauma and improving decision-making. These initiatives play a significant role in reconciling former adversaries and mending broken relationships.

Lederach (2010) acknowledges the limitations of his hierarchical structure in the pursuit of sustainable peace. According to Lederach, although the top-tier level has more decision-making authority and access to information, the grassroots are those who bear the brunt of the top-level actors' decisions. Lederach further concludes that strategic peacebuilders take advantage of cooperation among the different actors at the various levels to maximize the resources, expertise, and knowledge available at each level (Lederach, 2010).

Obiekwe (2009) notes that Lederach's model provides an appropriate framework for dealing with identity related conflicts in Africa. Obiekwe further indicates that the inclusion of the grassroots in a bottom-up strategies to conflict resolution has resulted in the creation of peace agreements in countries such as Ethiopia and Somalia, for example, in the case of the Grand Borama Peace Conference in Somalia. Within the context of my study, Lederach's model provides a framework for understanding how various actors at each level in Agogo have been involved in or excluded from the peace process, and for clarifying the implications for the future of sustainable peace in Agogo (as presented in the findings of my study).

### *The Importance of Psychosocial Interventions in Critical and Emancipatory Peacebuilding*

A holistic approach to peacebuilding is essential for addressing the multifaceted nature of conflict transformation, particularly when considering the psychological and emotional

dimensions of healing (Ba & LeFrancois, 2011). While traditional peacebuilding efforts often prioritize social and economic strategies, they risk overlooking the significance of psychological and emotional healing in fostering lasting peace. Recently, peacebuilding experts are increasingly acknowledging the crucial role that social psychology plays in understanding and resolving conflict (Luke, 2013; Nelson & Milburn, 1999). Vélez and Gerstein (2021) assert that applying Albert Bandura's (1986) social cognitive learning theory, for instance, provides valuable insights into individual and group conflict resolution capabilities, highlighting the need for emotional and psychological development alongside material and structural interventions.

Social psychology, which delves into human motives, behaviors, and emotions, offers a deeper understanding of intergroup relations and conflict dynamics (McKeown, 2013). Social psychology offers critical insights into the dynamics of conflict by examining the underlying motivations, emotions, and behaviors that drive intergroup interactions. At its core, social psychology explores how individuals' identities and group affiliations shape their perceptions of others and their responses to conflict. This perspective helps explain why seemingly trivial differences, such as ethnicity, religion, or nationality can become deeply entrenched sources of tension, leading to conflict. Social identity theory, for example, posits that people derive part of their identity from the groups to which they belong, such as ethnic or national groups. This affiliation can create an "in-group" versus "out-group" mentality, whereby individuals favor their own group while viewing members of other groups with suspicion or hostility.

According to Fisher and Kelman (2011), collective fears and needs, combined with factors such as a nation's resources and the ethnic diversity of the people, influence what becomes the national interest. Local leaders can use politics of identity to garner support from their groups and exacerbate their group's collective fears through narratives that promote

prejudicial “othering”. Such “in-group” versus “out-group” often leads to group polarization, where intergroup interactions exacerbate the divide, intensifying conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, cited in Brown, 2020). Theories such as social identity theory, relative deprivation, and social dominance, all grounded in social psychology, suggest that group identities, often shaped by collective emotions like trauma and anger, can play a significant role in both fueling and resolving conflicts (McKeown, 2013).

Additionally, theories such as relative deprivation and social dominance help to explain the psychological foundations of conflict. Relative deprivation is the feeling of being deprived of what one feels entitled to (Gurr, 2011). This leads groups to compare what they have access to versus what others have. Scarcity of resources and the unequal distribution of these resources among groups leads to relative deprivation, which often results in collective action by the aggrieved party against those perceived as the cause of the deprivation (Rubenstein, 2001).

Even in a situation of economic and social equality, the relative assessment of in-group and out-group leads to underestimating the economic and social position of the in-group and perception of relative deprivation, or disadvantage, and negative attitudes toward the out-group (Korostelina, 2010). Relative deprivation occurs when people or groups consider themselves to be unfairly disadvantaged compared to others, creating feelings of frustration and resentment. This perceived inequality can fuel anger and even incite violent behavior as groups seek to redress what they view as an unjust imbalance. The social dominance theory argues that societies are structured in hierarchical ways, and those at the top of the hierarchy, whether in terms of race, class, or ethnicity, are motivated to maintain their dominant position by suppressing the rights and opportunities of subordinated groups (Küpper et al., 2010). These dynamics contribute

to the persistence of inequality and conflict, as marginalized groups struggle for recognition and access to resources, while dominant groups resist these demands to preserve their status.

Moreover, social psychology underscores the significance of emotions such as fear, anger, and mistrust in conflict dynamics. Emotions can act as both triggers and amplifiers of conflict. Fear of the "other" often arises from a lack of familiarity and understanding between groups, which can be exacerbated by stereotypes and prejudices. These negative emotions can transform into destructive behaviors, as groups feel compelled to protect themselves against perceived threats, even when these threats are exaggerated or unfounded. Social psychologists also emphasize the role of collective memory in shaping intergroup conflict. Historical grievances, whether real or perceived, often fuel ongoing cycles of resentment and distrust between groups. The emotional intensity of these collective memories can prevent reconciliation and make it difficult to move beyond past injustices (Ross, 2013).

Further, social psychology offers essential tools for peacebuilding by providing a deeper understanding of how group identities and emotions shape conflict. Interventions based on these insights focus on fostering empathy, reducing intergroup biases, and creating spaces for dialogue that address the emotional and psychological roots of conflict. In conflict resolution, understanding these dynamics is crucial for designing strategies that move beyond merely addressing the surface-level causes of conflict, such as territorial disputes or resource competition, to engage with the deeper emotional and psychological drivers that sustain these conflicts. By acknowledging and addressing these factors, peacebuilders can create more meaningful and lasting solutions that promote mutual understanding, reconciliation, and social cohesion.

In the context of the Agogo community, for example, understanding the psychological barriers that prevent peace, such as fears of "the other" or historical grievances, could significantly enhance peacebuilding strategies. Addressing these emotional and identity-based conflicts, rather than focusing solely on material needs or political power, offers a more comprehensive approach to conflict resolution. The experiences of the Fulani herders provide a pertinent example of how social injustices, especially the denial of psychosocial support, perpetuate negative peace. The state's actions, such as the use of the "operation-cow leg and shoot-to-kill" policies, which sought to forcibly remove Fulani herders and their livestock, not only escalated the violence but also exacerbated the psychological and emotional trauma of both the herders and the farming community (Penu & Paalo, 2021). These policies reflect the deep-seated insecurities and fears prevalent among both groups, which continue to hinder efforts toward reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Moreover, the exclusion of marginalized groups, such as the Fulani, who are often perceived as non-Ghanaians from access to psychosocial support further compounds their sense of injustice and marginalization, reinforcing the negative peace that exists in the region. This aligns with the findings in this study, where participants expressed a sense of exclusion and injustice based on their status as non-Ghanaians, revealing how identity and perceived belonging (or lack thereof) can perpetuate conflict.

However, despite its potential, many peacebuilding initiatives in West Africa, including the case of Agogo, have underutilized psychosocial interventions and indigenous approaches, both of which emphasize emotional healing as a foundational aspect of peacebuilding. Indigenous peacebuilding practices, which are often rooted in holistic frameworks, acknowledge the profound influence of emotions on people's perceptions of conflict and peace. These practices,

which include trauma healing and dialogue, can be particularly effective in addressing the emotional scars left by conflict (Hutchison & Bleiker, 2013). The need for trauma healing within peacebuilding processes is clear, as unaddressed emotional wounds can fuel renewed violence and obstruct reconciliation efforts. Social psychologists assert that acknowledging and addressing these emotional dimensions are necessary to achieve sustainable peace and conflict transformation (McKeown, 2013).

In addition, psychosocial interventions, such as storytelling, can provide a vital space for individuals to process their emotions and express their grievances in a non-violent manner (Senehi, 2015). These interventions not only offer emotional release but also facilitate dialogue and reconciliation, which are essential for building a foundation for lasting peace. For peacebuilding to be effective in such contexts, it must go beyond addressing material needs and include psychological healing, reconciliation, and the restoration of dignity. This holistic approach is crucial for addressing the underlying emotional and psychological trauma that sustains conflict and impedes the creation of positive peace.

The findings of this study (as discussed in chapter 6) indicate that the need for psychosocial support in peace building in the Agogo community. Some participants expressed a lack of access to psychosocial support, particularly due to their status as non-Ghanaians, which highlights a form of social injustice that perpetuates negative peace. Negative peace is not only the nonexistence of physical violence but also encompasses the absence of justice, security, and support for marginalized groups. In this case, the failure to provide adequate psychosocial care contributes to the continued marginalization of certain groups and reinforces their exclusion from the broader peacebuilding process. Addressing these psychosocial needs is therefore essential for

transforming negative peace into positive peace, where social justice, emotional healing, and reconciliation are central to the peacebuilding process.

## Conclusions

The chapter discussed the significance of a culture of peace, conflict transformation, and hybrid peacebuilding approaches in fostering sustainable peace. It also highlighted the contributions of peace journalism, psychosocial interventions, and indigenous knowledge to peacebuilding efforts. In conclusion, sustainable peace requires an inclusive and context-specific approach that integrates local perspectives, challenges structural inequalities, and prioritizes grassroots-led initiatives. Despite the complexities of intercommunal conflicts, communities possess the agency and resilience to develop effective peacebuilding strategies rooted in their lived realities.

# CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

This qualitative study uses both phenomenology and storytelling research methodologies to explore the Agogo conflict's complexities. This study aims to explore the diverse views, emotions, and stories that underpin Agogo's farmer/herder tensions and grassroots peacebuilding practices by merging these two research methodologies. A phenomenological approach is used to gain a holistic and empathetic understanding of the diverse perspectives, emotions, and stories that underlie the tensions between farmers and herders in Agogo, as well as identifying the opportunities for grassroots peacebuilding.

Additionally, a storytelling research methodology has been used in acknowledgement of the influence of narratives on the shape of our worldviews and conflicts. Stories uniquely encapsulate human experiences, emotions, and cultural values. Semi-structured interviews and participant observations were conducted to highlight the perspectives of individuals directly involved in these conflicts and, to evoke their unique stories, struggles, and aspirations for peace. Interviews were conducted with farmers, Fulani herdsmen, journalists, law enforcement officers living and working in Agogo, traditional and opinion leaders, youth from both the farming and

the Fulani communities, representatives of the Agogo municipal assembly and staff of NGOs working on peacebuilding in Agogo.

Both phenomenological and storytelling research methods were used in this study to generate stories of the actual encounters and participants' experiences. Through this integrative approach, this study generated the participants' stories of peacebuilding efforts and the struggles they have faced in their efforts. Their narratives allowed me to explore the indigenous peacebuilding practices that exist in the Agogo Municipality.

In the following sections, I outline the specifics of my data collection methods, as well as the research methodologies I have selected, benefits, risks, and challenges I faced in the field, data analysis and interpretation methods and processes, and the ethical considerations that loomed largest for me.

**Research Approach**

The study employed both phenomenological and storytelling research approaches. The aim was to understand participants' experiences of peacebuilding and the conflict in Agogo. Another goal was to overcome the challenges of using only one of these methodologies and to benefit from the advantages of each approach. Phenomenology and storytelling are complementary research approaches; thus, using them together allowed me to learn even more about the experiences of the people of Agogo with regards to this conflict, their indigenous approaches to peacebuilding, and the root causes of the conflict as seen from the participants' own perspectives.

## Phenomenological Research Methodology

Phenomenological research is a research methodology that centers on understanding phenomena in their purity and investigating the subjective experiences of individuals (Rasid et al., 2021). Phenomenological research explores the subjective aspect of human experience, aiming to reveal the fundamental nature of different phenomena by conducting a thorough analysis of the interpretation individuals assign to their personal encounters in the world (Pham, 2021). Phenomenological research is a qualitative strategy that seeks to understand and interpret the lived experiences of individuals, emphasizing how they comprehend and respond to certain life events. This method relies on in-depth engagement through interviews or focus groups, requiring researchers to embody empathy and openness (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Furthermore, a phenomenologically grounded research methodology requires researchers to effectively set aside their own preconceptions, opening space for genuine exploration of participants' experiences (Pham, 2021). Researchers should demonstrate strong analytical skills in their identification and articulation of themes and meanings while also upholding rigorous ethical standards, such as maintaining confidentiality and respecting participants' dignity. Phenomenological researchers characterize the meaning of a lived experience by developing themes from the analysis of important narratives to come up with a common meaning of several individuals' lived stories without seeking to fit data into preexisting theories (Rich et al., 2013).

Ultimately, this approach captures the richness of human experience, demanding a reflexive and thoughtful stance from researchers (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This research methodology has been embraced by psychologists, sociologists, and other social scientists. Phenomenological researchers employ diverse methodologies for data collection (Qutoshi, 2018), such as personal stories, interviews, open-ended surveys, case studies, and participant

observations, are used in phenomenological research. To maintain credibility of its findings, phenomenological research places a significant emphasis on ensuring rigor and validity (trustworthiness) (Qutoshi, 2018).

Phenomenological research can make a substantial contribution to policy development and social interventions by considering human experiences from participants' own viewpoints. Phenomenological research has shown itself to be a useful asset in enhancing our comprehension of human behavior and social problems such as conflicts (Dossa et al., 2014; Korostelina, 2020). The phenomenological approach is useful in peacebuilding research and praxis (Behr, 2020), particularly with regards to critical and emancipatory peacebuilding approaches that encourage the involvement of the locals and considerations for their sociocultural contexts and lived experiences. PACS scholars are increasingly turning to phenomenological approaches because they have proven to be an essential tool for elucidating some of the inner dimensions of the complexities involved in sustainable peacebuilding and conflict resolution practices. As a PACS researcher, I chose the phenomenological methodology because I believed that it would empower me to delve more deeply into the personal experiences shaping individuals' perceptions of conflict and peace. This is because phenomenological research recognizes and respects the subjective realities of those affected by conflicts, thus helping the researcher to capture the nuanced insights into how the study participants interpret their experiences, cope with trauma (Ray, 2017), and perhaps envision reconciliation. By focusing on lived experiences, phenomenology reveals the underlying motivations, emotions, and beliefs that are sometimes overlooked in other qualitative methods. This depth of understanding is crucial for developing effective, context-sensitive strategies for peacebuilding, which made the phenomenological research approach an ideal choice for my study.

In this study, using interviews and participant observations is uniquely phenomenological because doing so seeks to cultivate understanding of the personal experiences of participants regarding peace-building efforts in their community affected by conflict (Ray, 2017). In short, the phenomenological approach allowed me to uncover how participants define peace, revealing that to some of the people of Agogo, a lack of social amenities often translates to a lack of peace in their lives. By emphasizing individual stories, I gained insights into traditional peace-building efforts and the challenges people face in these processes. This rich understanding highlights the deeper meanings behind their experiences and illustrates how their lived realities shape their perceptions of peace, making my use of interviews and participant observations distinctly phenomenological.

**Storytelling Research Approach**

The interviews obtained for analysis here were guided by the philosophy behind the storytelling research methodology, which is an approach to peacebuilding that allows people to come together to recount stories of the past and to envision the future (Senehi, 2015; 2019). The use of storytelling in my study aimed to provide a space for the people of Agogo, those who have experienced these conflicts, to share their grievances, experiences, and hopes for how sustainable peace can be built into their community. The group observations were also influenced by the idea behind indigenous peace circles. The objective was to observe how local groups discuss communal issues, particularly those related to peacemaking and community development. Storytelling is a qualitative research method which permits a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The participants would be able to express their feelings, motives, and perceptions that underlie their behaviors.

**Storytelling as an Indigenous Data Collecting tool.**

According to Senehi (2019), storytelling is interconnected with participatory- and action-based research methodologies. Caxaj (2015) also notes that storytelling and Participatory Action Research (PAR) are both interconnected and compatible through their shared focus on community engagement and empowerment. According to Caxaj (2015, p.1), storytelling serves as a powerful tool for "justice and truth-telling, particularly within Indigenous communities", and can guide PAR methodologies to be both methodologically and ethically robust. Storytelling helps build trust between researchers and participants, ensuring culturally appropriate research data collection methods. Participatory narrative inquiry, which is a form of PAR, exemplifies how storytelling as a data collection tool can democratize the research process, making it more inclusive and respectful of participants' voices and experiences.

Storytelling, as Senehi (2019) notes, provides a means for healing by allowing individuals to share their experiences and receive validation and empathy. This process helps transform trauma into constructive dialogue rather than perpetuating violence. According to Senehi, constructive storytelling is a means to raise awareness of concerns, develop resistance, and generate opportunities for open communication, mutual recognition, and cooperation. It is also inclusive. Such narrative develops voice and increases understanding and awareness.

Senehi further explains that converse to constructive storytelling, destructive storytelling is associated with oppressive power and control, defined by "control over" rather than "collaborative power." Destructive storytelling usually involves discriminatory practices, a lack of respect and understanding, and insincerity. These narratives contribute to ongoing mistrust and denial. Destructive storytelling involves narratives that exacerbate conflict and division by

highlighting victimization, blame, and negative stereotypes of others. Such stories sustain grievances and intensify animosities, hindering groups from engaging in constructive dialogue or fostering understanding. By solidifying entrenched viewpoints, destructive storytelling obstructs reconciliation efforts and perpetuates cycles of hostility, ultimately blocking the pathway to peace.

Constructive storytelling is a constructive approach to peacebuilding because it allows people to come together to recount and share stories of the past and envision the future, they all desire (Senehi, 2002). Constructive storytelling fosters collaboration, inclusion, and mutual recognition (Senehi, 2002). Although constructive storytelling has the potential to contribute to peacebuilding, destructive storytelling has a negative effect on peacebuilding by retraumatizing victims of conflict or war crimes, which may in turn lead to revenge and worsen tensions between the warring factions. Eke and Byrne (2022) document this duality of storytelling in farmer/herder conflicts in Nigeria noting that harmful narratives have fueled the conflicts, but constructive storytelling is being used to challenge enemy images through drama, dance, and music.

Some governments have used constructive storytelling as part of their national reconciliation efforts for victims of war, injustice, and abuse. Storytelling was used in Canada, South Africa, and Ghana in their national reconciliation efforts. Previous studies on farmer/herder conflicts have applied quantitative and qualitative research methodologies (Bukari, et al., 2018; Tonah, 2005; Setrana, 2021). However, these methodologies have sometimes ignored the study population's lived experiences, especially women and the youth, and their stories of trauma, their local peace building efforts, the challenges of peace building, and even their own understanding of what peace should look like in their communities.

Further, storytelling is sometimes used mobilize group members' support for violence by appealing to their emotions and recounting a painful past (Pilecki & Hammack, 2013). In the same way, peacebuilding processes can utilize this powerful mobilizing tool (storytelling) to facilitate group cohesion and cross-cultural understanding. Peaceful cultures can be passed down to generations through storytelling (Boulding et al., 2016). It can also be used to promote personal and social change.

Considering that storytelling can be used as either a unifying tool or in a divisive way to intensify existing animosities or even create new tensions, it is important to manage storytelling processes so that they bring about peace and not violence. Storytelling can be a powerful tool in PACS research and peacebuilding when the narratives are geared toward creating safe spaces for sharing and focusing on shared positive experiences that enhance understanding rather than divisiveness. Skilled peace dialogue facilitators can guide narratives to ensure they remain constructive. Documenting stories can help communities understand the roots of their conflict to address it together. Also, constructive storytelling can promote inclusivity by valuing all voices, especially marginalized ones. By managing the process carefully, storytelling fosters understanding and reconciliation without reigniting conflicts.

It is important to note that constructive storytelling may not always be possible during conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes since some groups or individuals may insist on divisive narratives that entrench existing animosities and incite violence. Being aware of the duality of storytelling, as a researcher I constantly reflected on how to harness the peacebuilding potential of storytelling in my data collection while avoiding destructive narratives. I tried to achieve a constructive storytelling approach by being able to redirect participants to constructive

narratives (redirecting them to my questions) while also respecting their individual thoughts and perspectives. Questions that directly would incite violence and trauma were also avoided.

## Research Participants, Data Collection Tools, and Procedures

### *Community Entry and Participant Recruitment*

My community entry began with meeting the chief farmer of Agogo, whom I had spoken to on the phone before arriving in town. I was introduced to this chief through my contact person (an opinion leader) in Agogo. My contact person also introduced me to a community leader in the Zongo community, who then led me to the Fulani community. Initially, I reached out to the president of the Fulani Youth Association of Ghana, who connected me with some Fulani herdsmen and other Fulani. Some of these herdsmen had unfortunately moved away from the Agogo township due to the conflicts there and were unreachable in-person.

Participants had prior knowledge of the interview and study procedures – I had already completed this information sharing in the community entry process, whereby I met with the leaders of some community groups (farmers association) as well as a prominent Fulani Zongo leader (representing the Fulani group), representatives of the Office of the Municipal Assembly, and the Ghana Police Service Crime Officer in Agogo to brief them and explain the purpose of the study as well as the study procedures. These meetings were held separately with these persons and groups. With their permission, I attended a meeting organized by the chief farmer of Agogo and some farmers in the municipality as part of my pre-study visit and community entry. Letters of invitation to participants were distributed at these meetings.

Letters of invitation and information about the study were also distributed to members of the Fulani community through the leader of the Fulani association. Individual interviews were

scheduled with participants (place, date, and time were arranged based on each participant's schedule and at their convenience) who had agreed to participate in the study. My contact information was given to them (indicated in the invitation letters). Participants who wanted to be a part of the study were to reach out to me personally via phone call or text message to schedule an appropriate time, place, and day for the interview. I also answered questions and addressed any concerns they had about the study and the processes of data collection at these initial community entry meetings.

***Data Generation Methods, Procedures, and Challenges Encountered During the Study.***

My data collection methods involved a semi-structured interview aided by an interview guide created to start the conversation and help guide the direction of the ensuing conversation. Although, I created an interview guide with questions and probes designed to elicit further information, the exact sequence of the questions in the interview guide was not always followed in some of the interviews. To allow the flow of information, I did not interfere with participants' storytelling. I allowed them to narrate their stories freely (while bearing in mind the key questions). There were times when some of the participants digressed. I then allowed them to tell their stories before redirecting them back to my interview questions. Participants chose the meeting location for each interview at their discretion. Each interview usually began with some informal conversation to create a rapport and trust, followed by the ethics consent process which allowed participants ample time to read and ask any questions they might have had about the interview and consent process. Interviews only began after written and verbal consent had been given and consent forms had been properly signed.

Participant observation was another data collection method I used. This is also a tool or method used by phenomenological researchers (and others) to understand participant behaviors and experiences. With their permission, I attended a group meeting of the farming association in Agogo and the Agogomanmma local chapter (Agogo community group) group meeting. I also attended a cultural event organized by a Fulani community association. This concert was held in Accra, although Fulani from all over Ghana (including Agogo) attended the event. Fulani chiefs from various communities in Ghana were in attendance, and they used this program as an opportunity to educate the Fulani youth about peace and the role of the Fulani youth in peacebuilding in Ghana. The Fulani youth showcased musical and drama performances with messages of peace and tolerance. This event was public, and I was invited by a Fulani community leader to attend and witness a Fulani cultural and peace education event.

In this study, the confidentiality of knowledge acquired through the participant observations was clearly communicated to each informant and the broader community involved in the research. Prior to attending the group meetings, I sought permission from the respective community groups through their leaders to attend their meeting events. Their leaders also informed them ahead of the meeting, the reasons why I would like to attend their meeting and my identity as an academic researcher. Information sheets I had provided in both Akan and English were also distributed to the groups ahead of the meeting through their leaders. During these meetings, I also explained the study's purpose and main features to group members, ensuring that they understood the context of my observations. In the case of the Fulani concert, a prior announcement was made to the participants, notifying them of the presence of an academic researcher, the purpose of my study and their collective consent for my attendance and observation of their event. In all cases, the participants were made aware of their freedom to

avoid any interactions with me. I admit that a public announcement by their leaders may or may not have influenced their attendance at the event meetings.

More importantly, throughout the observation processes I reflected on how I could ensure that informed consent had been given by participants. Particularly, I knew that ensuring informed consent at the Fulani concert would be quite difficult considering that it was a public event with a large attendance. However, I strived to follow the highest principles in applying informed consent by making sure that participants were aware of my presence prior to my attendance and that I had their collective permission to be there as a participant observer. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained prior to taking field notes on my observations, with participants being fully informed about the study's objectives and that I will be taking handwritten notes of my general observations without collecting any personal or identifying information.

The primary aim of participant observation was to understand group dynamics and how communal issues were addressed within these settings, and not to collect personal or individual data. To safeguard participant privacy and ensure researcher confidentiality, I collected no personal identifying information during observations. For all group observations I made handwritten notes only, of general group discussions on communal issues such as messages of peace building and the challenges they face together as a group. All identifying details have been omitted from any publications or reports stemming from this study, further reinforcing my commitment to ethical conduct and the protection of participant confidentiality.

In group observations with the farming community meetings, I only observed those who had consented to being observed. Before any observations began, I ensured that each participant had read, understood, and duly consented and completed the consent form before I began any

data generation. For the Fulani community, I obtained collective consent to attend their cultural event, concert. Given that it was a large group and a public event, obtaining individual consent would have been difficult and therefore I ensured that I had their collective consent to attend their event as a researcher. As noted above, my attendance was made known to the group before the event, as well as my purpose for attending. Information sheets/invitation letters about my study, (including my contact information in case an individual had questions or concerns and wanted to reach out) were also distributed to the group ahead of time.

Some of the goals of my study were to explore local peacebuilding strategies from both sides (i.e. the Fulani community and the farming community) and to explore the causes of the conflicts in Agogo. After two weeks of data generation, I realized that certain changes had to be made, considering the data I had generated and the challenges of reaching Fulani herdsmen living in the Agogo Municipality who met my inclusion criteria. I also had challenges finding law enforcement and government officials who met my inclusion criteria. This is because upon arrival in Agogo, I found out that government officials (including law enforcement officers) were constantly transferred from one locality to another. Therefore, it was unlikely that I would find any officials who had lived in Agogo for at least 10 years. Part of my initial inclusion criteria required that a person should have lived in Agogo for at least 10 years before being included in the study.

The aim of this inclusion requirement was to get a sample of participants who had experienced or witnessed at least one episode of clashes between the Fulani herdsmen and the farmers. Bogdan and Biklen (2003), suggest that researchers should be open to adjusting their focus based on the data they obtain in the field. Based on discussions and recommendations from my advisor and my advisory committee, I amended the inclusion criteria to include people who

had lived in Agogo for at least four years. I also amended the criteria to include Fulani who lived elsewhere but were directly or indirectly impacted by the issues in Agogo.

This amendment was adequate to capture the experiences of people who had witnessed the conflicts since there had also been episodes of clashes between the two groups within the last four years. Moreover, it allowed me to connect with other Fulani who had relocated from Agogo due to conflicts but had valuable insights and stories to share about the issues I was studying. There are other Fulani who used to live in Agogo but have moved elsewhere due to the clashes between the Fulani and the farmers in Agogo. There are also other Fulani who do not live in Agogo but have been directly or indirectly impacted by the conflicts.

In my interview guide, I included a question on why the conflict kept recurring in Agogo, unlike in other areas. The goal of this question was to get a comparative analysis of the situation in other areas and gain an in-depth understanding of the unique case of Agogo. After my first twenty-four interviews, the responses to this question had already given me some insights on why the other areas have relative peace compared to Agogo. This made me more curious about the experiences of Fulani herdsmen living in these other areas where they had less or no clashes with farmers. I also found out that some Fulani had relocated from Agogo to other areas because of their ability to settle more peacefully elsewhere. Although these areas also occasionally had clashes between the farmers and herdsmen, at least they were less prevalent than in Agogo.

Therefore, I believed that speaking with the Fulani, who have moved out of Agogo and have successfully settled elsewhere in Ghana, may give me more information about their experiences in the new settlements compared to Agogo (why are they able to live relatively peacefully and coexist with the locals in these other areas and not in Agogo). It was challenging to meet Fulani who practiced nomadism given the sporadic nature of their movements and the

fact that the police would not give me clearance to go into the forest where they were usually located (the police cited safety concerns). Therefore, I had to amend my inclusion criteria to include a wider category of Fulani, for instance Fulani who had ever lived in Agogo and witnessed or experienced conflicts there but may no longer be residing in that municipality and Fulani who do not themselves engage in cattle rearing but have some relationship with the issues in Agogo.

The amendment to my inclusion criteria also allowed me to include Fulani who were not herdsmen themselves but had family and friends who engaged in cattle rearing. I was also able to speak with sedentary, non-nomadic Fulani herdsmen. Including a wider variety (population category) of Fulani allowed me to understand how conflicts have affected the entire Fulani group in Ghana, even those not located directly on the "battleground" or engaged in cattle herding (this strategy also empowered me to achieve my objective of understanding how stakeholder perspectives are influencing the national conception of the Fulani group in Ghana).

Following my amendment and its approval by the University of Manitoba Fort Garry Research Ethics Board 2, I proceeded to interview more Fulani herdsmen with knowledge of the issues but who had moved away from Agogo. I used snowball sampling to recruit the farmers, young people living in Agogo and the Fulani herdsmen. I used the snowball sample to recruit participants from the farmers and Fulani community associations. While I used purposive sampling to recruit the opinion and community leaders, the law enforcement officers, staff of civil society groups working on peace building, the representatives of the Agogo municipal assembly and the journalists, I used purposive sampling for these participants because I wanted persons who had some level of experience in law enforcement in Agogo, are involved in policy making and implementation, and held key positions of authority in the Agogo municipality.

In total, I conducted 30 interviews, with: three Fulani herdsmen; 14 farmers; one law enforcement officer; one representative of the Agogo Municipal Assembly; one staff member of a civil society organization working on peacebuilding in Agogo; three journalists (two were of Fulani descent, one used to be herdsman himself as a teenager); three opinion leaders (two from the farming community and one from the Fulani community); 2 two chiefs (one Fulani chief and one chief from the farming group); one student, and one trader (all from the Fulani community group). There were 18 participants who identified as Akan (the indigenous group of Agogo) and there were nine participants of Fulani descent. One farmer was of both Fulani and Konkonba ancestry. The number of farmers was greater than that of the Fulani herdsmen, which was not surprising given that the farmers are indigenous and from a majority Ghanaian ethnic group (Akan), at least in terms of population size. Participants aged 18-35 years were classified as youth in this study.

**Table 1- Profile of Study Participants**

| **Participant Number** | **Participant** | **Gender** | **Category** | **Ethnicity/Community Group** | **Age Range** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Farmer Kofi | Male | Farmer | Akan | 70-79 |
| 2. | Farmer Akosua | Female | Farmer | Akan | 60-69 |
| 3. | Farmer Yaw | Male | Farmer | Akan | 60-69 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. | Farmer Atta | Male | Farmer | Konkonba and Fulani | 50-59 |
| 5. | Farmer John | Male | Farmer | Akan | 70-79 |
| 6. | Farmer Joseph | Male | farmer | Akan | 70-79 |
| 7. | Farmer Ekow | Male | Farmer | Akan | 40-49 |
| 8. | Amma | Female | Opinion leader | Akan | 70-79 |
| 9. | Opanin Bob | Male | Opinion leader | Akan | 70-79 |
| 10. | Alhaji Mamadu | Male | Opinion leader | Fulani | 50-59 |
| 11. | Alhaji Chief Banga | Male | Chief and opinion leader | Fulani | 70-79 |
| 12. | Alhaji Idrisu | Male | herdsman | Fulani | 50-59 |
| 13. | Abdul | Male | herdsman | Fulani | 40-49 |
| 14. | Baba | Male | Media | Fulani | 25-30 |
| 15. | Ahmed | | herdsman | Fulani | 18-25 |
| 16. | Farmer Obeng | Male | farmer | Akan | 50-59 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. | Chief Nana | Male | Chief | Akan | 60-69 |
| 18. | Farmer Opoku | Male | Farmer | Akan | 80-89 |
| 19. | Farmer Oppong | Male | Farmer | Akan | 70-79 |
| 20. | Farmer Yaa | Female | Farmer | Akan | 50-59 |
| 21. | Farmer Kojo | Male | Farmer | Akan | 60-69 |
| 22. | Farmer Anna | Female | Farmer | Akan | 60-69 |
| 23. | Farmer Ebo | Male | Farmer | Akan | 30-39 |
| 24. | Malik | Male | Media | Fulani | 30-39 |
| 25. | Halima | Female | Trader | Fulani | 20-25 |
| 26. | Amina | Female | Student | Fulani | 18-20 |
| 27. | Kwame | Male | Media | Akan | 30-39 |
| 28. | Adalla | Female | Government Official | Undisclosed | 25-30 |
| 29. | Robert | Male | Police Officer | Ewe | 50-59 |
| 30. | George | Male | Civil Society | undisclosed | 40-49 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Organization Staff | | |

***Research Instruments and Tools for Data Generation***

I used digital recorders to capture audio recordings of field interviews, ensuring that all participants provided their informed consent. Subsequent steps involved in data generation included transcribing, translating, and analyzing the data stored on my personal computer. Additionally, I conducted some participant observations, where I documented the emotional states of participants and the nature of their community gatherings in my field notebook. Using participant observation facilitated active engagement with individuals, enabling the deeper study of their behavior along with an exploration of the underlying motivations for their actions (Musante & DeWalt, 2010). Finally, interview transcripts were sent back to participants who had indicated on their consent forms that they would like to receive copies of them to review. This step was necessary to ensure the credibility and integrity of my study. Trustworthiness in research relates to the credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability of the study (Stahl & King, 2020). According to Leko et al. (2021), member-checking helps to strengthen the trustworthiness and reliability of research findings.

***Data Analysis and Interpretation Methods***

In phenomenological research, data generation aims to uncover participants' stories. Interview guides with open-ended questions may be used to start the conversation and to facilitate the participants to recount their stories and experiences. I read every interview transcript, and my field notes multiple times while reflecting on the data with my research

questions and objectives in mind. I then used NVivo (version 14) to run a word frequency search to identify which words had been used the most by the participants. Based on the list of frequently used words and my reflections on the data, I developed codes for each research question and its related research objectives. The process of manual coding was employed to facilitate the categorization of codes into distinct themes.

The next step was to find patterns by analyzing all participants' interviews to identify recurring themes. I used the themes I identified to categorize the data presented in the research findings. To do this, I grouped all the similar codes together (to create several themes) and defined them considering my research questions and the objectives I aimed to address.

Additionally, the thematic network analysis strategy (Attride-Stirling, 2001) was employed to organize and assist the comprehension of the emergent topics or themes. The thematic codes were systematically arranged and consolidated to construct a comprehensive argument for each empirical chapter. I also conducted an analysis based on the research objectives for every interview transcript. Correspondingly, a pertinent collection of quotes was compiled under each thematic code to provide an accurate grasp of each participant's ideas and experiences. The findings and discussions chapters revolve around the themes that emerged inductively from the data analysis and the assessment of relevant literature. These themes were also closely connected to the objectives and research questions of the study. The synthesis of these narratives and themes is the empirical evidence and scholarly discourse that elucidates the accounts of the lived experiences, anticipated prospects for peacebuilding, and subjective interpretations of the participants.

In addition, I included notes from my field memos, where I meticulously documented the recurring themes that surfaced during the narrative accounts provided by each individual

participant. Participant observations from the group meetings were also duly recorded in my memo/journal. These notes were then copied onto my personal laptop at the conclusion of each day and subsequently uploaded to the University of Manitoba's secure OneDrive platform.

The audio-recorded data were transcribed by a research assistant who had received appropriate training and who signed the Oath of Confidentiality. Some participants chose to share their narratives in English, while the majority expressed a preference for conducting their interviews in the Twi (Akan) language. The interviews conducted in the Twi language were later translated into English through transcription.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that there are some significant Twi phrases and words that were left untranslated because they contribute to the expression of uniqueness, contextual understanding, and emphasis of participants' narratives. The transcribed files and data underwent encryption measures and were securely transmitted to and from the research assistant through the University of Manitoba's OneDrive platform. Participants who expressed a desire to receive their transcripts were provided with copies of said transcripts, which were presented to them in person as a precautionary measure to safeguard their privacy and maintain confidentiality. This process of member-checking transcripts, as previously mentioned, contributed to perceptions of the overall trustworthiness and reliability of the generated data.

Each participant's transcripts were thoroughly examined numerous times to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the various portions of their narratives and the intended messages they sought to communicate. Subsequently, I proceeded to identify the specific sections within each transcript that either directly or indirectly address any of the emergent themes already identified. These sections of the data, comprising the thoughts, stories, and

perspectives of participants, were quoted in the empirical chapters to illustrate the key findings that emerged from the interviews and participant observations.

Finally, input from a stakeholder engagement workshop where opinion leaders from both the Fulani community and the farming community, media personnel in Agogo, and NGOs working on peacebuilding attended, and document analysis of court records, policy documents, and the Fulani evacuation plan (by the government of Ghana) as well as the themes from the fieldwork data served as the foundation for my empirical chapters. It also informed some of the subtitles for my research findings and recommendations sections.

### *Steps Used in Coding and Analyzing the Data*

Saldana (2021) emphasizes that coding in qualitative research is an active, interpretive process where researchers construct meaning through patterns and themes. While Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) tools like NVivo can identify word frequencies, he cautions that frequent terms do not always hold analytical significance, as meaning depends on context. For this reason, I used manual coding alongside NVivo (version 14) to capture the contextual meaning and subtle nuances in participants' expressions, while reflecting on both the transcribed data and my field notes.

After reading through the transcripts several times, I noted recurring words, ideas, expressions, phrases, and concepts (these were the codes I had identified). I also used NVivo to run a word frequency query to identify repeated words. I then created coding frameworks to organize the related concepts and ideas (phrases and expressions were reduced into words to which best captured or described the content). I did this by grouping all related codes into larger groups or themes (thematic network analysis). I further grouped the codes into sets and subsets,

whereby I had individual codes as the basic themes. All the related codes and phrases were grouped together as organizing themes. The organizing themes were then reduced into broad terms or themes as the global themes. I also used the NVivo visualisation tools to create a visual representation to help uncover the relationships between the codes. The global themes became the headings for each chapter of findings and discussions.

**Reflexivity and Positionality**

Growing up in Ghana, I read and heard accounts of conflict in Agogo in the news, on social media, and on the radio. Also, I belong to the same group as the farming community, the Akan ethnic group, which is the indigenous group of Agogo. Therefore, I acknowledge that I entered this study with some understanding and assumptions about the conflict, as well as a personal stake in the issues present in Agogo (since I am Akan). My positionality could have biased my research, as I consider myself to be an insider-outsider (I am not an indigene or resident of Agogo although I belong to the same ethnic group as the farming community of Agogo, which is Akan). This insider-outsider experience influenced my primary data. But at the end of the day, being aware of my insider/outsider status helped me understand and acknowledge how my experience and knowledge could bias this study.

Some researchers have noted that the insider-outsider status of the researcher could impact the interactions between the researcher and the participants (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002; Couture et al., 2012). According to Padilla-Díaz (2015), to objectively analyze participants' narratives, qualitative researchers must set aside their prior notions on the study issue. Also, this study is based on the constructivist paradigm, which acknowledges that knowledge is not value-

free or completely objective (Charmaz, 2014). Thus, my positionality as the researcher meant that my interpretation of the participants' perceptions was not independent of my values.

However, as a researcher employing qualitative methods, it is imperative to acknowledge the intrinsic subjectivity that underlies my judgments. Further, to establish the credibility of my conclusions, I had to rely exclusively on the data, utilizing the narratives provided by the participants to elucidate any discrepancies or agreements within and across the stories.

## Ethical Considerations

### *Confidentiality, Informed Consent and Respect for the Local Cultures and Traditions*

As part of my study, I observed and considered the following ethical issues: informed consent, respect for local and traditional customs, confidentiality, and safely managing the data in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy and standards on ethical conduct for research involving human subjects and that of the University of Manitoba Ethics Review Board (REB 2 Fort Garry Campus). I took measures to ensure informed consent throughout all stages of the study. It was important to ensure that participants comprehended their role in the research and made an informed and voluntary decision regarding their participation. I took measures to ensure the accurate dissemination of information to the participants, striving to facilitate their comprehension of the study and its protocols while also assuring their voluntary participation.

Moreover, to ensure the acquisition of informed consent, I provided participants with pertinent information regarding the research, encompassing the study's description, aims, planned use of the data, potential risks, and benefits, as well as matters pertaining to confidentiality. Additional information was provided with regards to compensation, my contact information, voluntary involvement, and counseling procedures in information sheets, letters of

invitation, and the consent form. Prior to commencing with interviews, participants were presented with consent forms for their perusal. Additionally, each participant was provided with copies of the consent forms for their personal record-keeping purposes.

Furthermore, a comprehensive explanation was provided to participants regarding the different components of the consent form. Those who were unable to communicate in English but were proficient in Twi (Akan) were given consent forms translated into Twi. All participants possessed literacy skills in either English or Twi, and in certain instances, they demonstrated proficiency in both languages. The participants provided their consent by affixing their signature to the consent form (see Appendices D, D1, D2 and D3). Participants who were unable to offer a signature on the informed consent forms instead indicated their consent by providing their initials. I also signed the informed consent form in front of each participant.

Also, participants were aware that they were agreeing to an interview session scheduled for a maximum duration of one-to-two hours. Although participants had provided their agreement, they were duly informed, and I reiterated at the commencement of each interview and group observation that they retained the option to withdraw from the research at any time prior to January 31, 2024. Following this specific date, the option to withdraw was impossible since by then I had already begun my analysis. The participants were aware that they had the option to withdraw their consent by notifying me by email, text message, or calling. I also informed them that withdrawal of consent would result in the complete elimination of all information pertaining to their involvement. Participants were also informed that they would not face any penalty for withdrawing from the study and would be allowed to retain the honorarium even if they chose to withdraw. There were no instances in which any of the participants expressed a desire to withdraw from the study. To uphold participant confidentiality, I provided my contact details to

each prospective participant through the invitation letter distributed during the pre-study information sessions. This approach allowed individuals to communicate their interest in participating directly and confidentially.

Audio data was recorded using a Sony digital recorder and transferred to my computer immediately after each interview. I securely stored the consent forms and honorarium receipts on my person when I was out of the hotel, I was staying in. Using my phone internet as a hot spot (internet connection) for my laptop while in the field, I immediately uploaded the audio files to OneDrive provided by the University of Manitoba to safely protect the interviews. The audio recordings on the digital recorder were deleted immediately after they had been uploaded to the University of Manitoba's One Drive. Consent forms and honorarium receipts are stored securely on my person. They were scanned immediately after I returned to my hotel room at the end of each day of data collection and uploaded to OneDrive, provided by the University of Manitoba. The hard copies of the forms were immediately destroyed once they were scanned and uploaded to OneDrive.

With regard to the group observations, no identifying information was collected; only general observations and notes were made. Group or collective consent was (ahead of time) obtained before attending any group event or meeting for the group observations. Additionally, the research processes followed the cultural protocols of community entry and exit in the Agogo community. This was done in collaboration with a local gatekeeper, who is also an opinion leader in the community. The gate keeper also signed an oath of confidentiality I provided. This gatekeeper and opinion leader guided me through the community entry and exit processes. The gatekeeper also facilitated the pre-study meetings between the various leaders and groups in the municipality. To ensure that I did not inadvertently recruit from only networks connected to the

gatekeeper (and to prevent a bias in participant selection), I had done my own research in my pre-study visit as well as before that visit to Agogo, to collate names of potential community groups I could reach out to for my study. I was able to track down some of these groups such as the Fulani youth association, the municipal assembly staff and some media personnel on my own and to speak with them directly about the study and its purposes, and to invite them to participate.

**Risks and Benefits**

I believed the demands of recounting their experiences could lead to psychological distress for those who had gone through challenging circumstances due to the intergroup clashes. I mitigated this potential risk by employing two distinct solutions. The participants were informed of their right to decline to answer any questions, particularly those that would cause emotional and psychological trauma.

In addition, an information sheet that includes the contact details of a trauma counseling clinic was handed to each participant. The participants did not exhibit any evident signs of emotional discomfort. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that there is a possibility that they may have utilized the service confidentially. Note that the counseling services are provided free of charge by the organizations listed on the resource forms I gave the participants.

**Conclusions**

In sum, Chapter Five provides an overview of the research design as well as an exploration of phenomenology and storytelling methodologies. The methodologies I employed in this study were predicated on my desire to use participants' narratives and personal experiences

to inform the process of research and foster meaningful discussions. The narratives and perspectives shared by the participants proved to be an asset in addressing the research questions and objectives. Consequently, the utilization of open-ended questions facilitated the unrestricted expression of participants' perspectives and narratives. The chapter also provided a comprehensive account of the methods employed for the generation of individuals' narratives and perspectives. This chapter also discussed other issues, including possible risks and benefits, the researcher's positionality, and ethical considerations. I also described how I analyzed and interpreted the data transcripts.

Finally, I explained the procedures that were implemented to guarantee the reliability and trustworthiness of the data and how I protected the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants. The subsequent chapters provide a discussion of the research findings.

# CHAPTER 6: PERSPECTIVES OF THE AGOGO PEOPLE ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE FARMER/HERDER CONFLICTS AND CHALLENGES IN PEACEBUILDING

Chapter Six discusses the empirical data findings relating to the causes of farmer/herder conflicts in Agogo. It also explains the challenges that have hindered peacebuilding efforts in the municipality based on the perspectives of the people of Agogo and other stakeholders, such as law enforcement and peace activists. First, cultural differences with regards to land use and agricultural practices, prejudicial othering and the influence of the media is discussed. Next, I discuss the impacts of generational difference, exclusion and marginalization of the youth and females, followed by the impacts of poor leadership and governance, ineffective policies and political corruption on the conflicts. This chapter also explains how the competition for land, socioeconomic resources, and climate change, gender-based violence and inadequate social and psychosocial support have impacted the inter-group tensions in Agogo. Finally, I discuss the challenges faced by law enforcement in peacebuilding in Agogo.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Differences in Agricultural and Sociocultural Practices**

The findings of the study revealed that there are several factors influencing the farmer/herder conflicts in Agogo including prejudicial "othering", competition for scarce land resources, poor leadership and ineffective policies, and corruption. These elements have created a volatile environment, leading to violence and tension between the two groups. First, cultural differences between the traditional farming practices of the locals and the nomadic culture of the Fulani herdsmen have created a deep divide. The use of agrochemicals in crop farming poison pasture for cattle, while the slash-and-burn practice used by the herdsmen to encourage the growth of new grass for cattle grazing destroys the farmlands of the crop farmers. Further, there appears to be animosity between the Fulani herdsmen and the farmers due to struggle over scarce land resources, which is exacerbated by cultural and historical factors. Alhaji Idrisu, a Fulani herdsman, suggests that some local farmers believe that the Fulani people's behavior is influenced by their upbringing and culture. According to Idrisu, "there is a perception among the farmers that the Fulani people have a predisposition towards conflict and are not interested in peaceful coexistence."

The clash in agricultural practices between the indigenous Agogo and the Fulani has been a significant source of tension. The Fulani's nomadic lifestyle, centered around cattle rearing, has led to conflicts with local farmers. As one female farmer, Anna in Agogo lamented,

> When you go to the stream to fetch water, they will come and ask you to move; the animals are coming to drink water. You will be on your farm; they will come there and ask you to leave so that the animals can eat your crops.

This clash of livelihoods, where the Fulani's cattle pose a threat to local farmers' crops and resources, has fueled tensions and violence. This clash of traditional ways of life and livelihoods

was also identified and reiterated by another participant (journalist from a radio station in Agogo).

According to Kwame, a journalist in Agogo, "They [referring to Fulani herdsmen] value the animals more than the human beings because that is where they get their money from, and so if the human being is going to be an obstacle to their animals, they have to get rid of you." The differences in traditional farming practices and perceived nature of the Fulani (that they prioritize their livestock over the livelihoods and safety of the local farming population), exacerbates tensions and hampers peacebuilding efforts. This is because the farmers feel that the herdsmen's pastoral and nomadic cultures conflict with their crop farming practices. For instance, the Fulani's slash and burn (burning bushes so that new grass can grow for fodder for the cattle) practices negatively affect the soil and their crops. One opinion leader and farmer in Agogo lamented over how his farm was destroyed by the Fulani, saying:

> I had a plantain farm—I had a commercial one— about fifteen acres of plantain burnt by the Fulani. They set fire and the bush fire extended and destroyed the whole place. That is their feeding practices. They set fire to the grassland and the fire just burns. Destroy everything so that after about a week, the grass sprouts. And they feed their animals with this fresh grass.

This slash-and-burn practice, while traditional for the Fulani, has devastating consequences for the local farmers, leading to the destruction of their livelihoods. The Fulani also reported that the use of herbicides by the farmers poisons the fodder for their cattle. They also accused the farmers of intentionally poisoning the grassland to harm their cattle.

Each group has a different perspective on the causes of the conflict with regards to land use and agricultural practices. Although both crop-farming and cattle-rearing are agricultural practices, the farmers are of the view that the nomadic lifestyle of the Fulani conflicts with their

farming practices. Meanwhile the Fulani also believe that farming practices like the use of weedicides and pesticides, endanger their cattle.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Prejudicial "Othering"**

Prejudicial "othering" rooted in contested notions of citizenship and belonging has significantly contributed to the escalation of conflict. The Fulani herdsmen, widely perceived as non-citizens or "outsiders," are often denied legitimate claims to land and socio-economic resources by local farming communities. This exclusion is not merely about competition over scarce land worsened by climate change but is deeply entangled with identity politics, where citizenship becomes a marker of who deserves to belong and who does not. The portrayal of Fulani as "non-Ghanaians" and the use of negative stereotypes, such as being "mean and wicked," have entrenched xenophobic attitudes and discriminatory practices against them.

This process of othering has produced an "us-versus-them" narrative that positions the Fulani as threats to the survival, safety, and livelihood of the local farming group. Citizenship status is weaponized to delegitimize Fulani presence, framing them as illegitimate occupiers rather than cohabitants. Even those born on Ghanaian soil are still perceived as immigrants by the Agogo farmers and others. Community leaders and influential actors have sometimes exploited these sentiments, reinforcing exclusionary ideologies that systematically deny the Fulani access to environmental and socioeconomic resources. Ethnocentric discourses and constructed narratives of collective victimhood further inflame tensions, obscuring the structural and environmental drivers of the conflict like climate-induced resource.

For example, an opinion leader, Opanin Bob, said that the Fulani are not Asante:

> No Fulani was born here. No Fulani was born here. The truth is that—. *[pause]* There is no Fulani born here. They are not part of the Asante people. *[Asante is the tribe of the*

> *Agogo people].* They are separate. Everything they do is separate. Some of them were Nigerians. They cannot even find food to eat. They have walked all the way from there to here.

Bob's statements imply that despite being born on Ghanaian soil, the Fulani are not seen by some of the locals as Ghanaian and therefore possessing equal land rights. This fuels a sense of us versus them. Further, some farmers believe that the Fulani do not belong in Agogo and that their presence have caused problems for their community. For instance, a female farmer Yaa said:

> The Fulani people have really tormented us for as long as twenty-five years. Those Fulani are not Ghanaians, there is no Fulani tribe in Ghana. They should go back to their country and leave us in peace. Those people are mean and they only care about their animals. They are from Nigeria and have walked here to commit crimes and destroy our farms. They are not entitled to any land here.

As another farmer, Obeng, explains, "Here in Agogo, there was peace in the past but ever since the Fulani herdsmen came here with the cattle, the peace was lost, Fulani are wicked people who only care about their animals." This sentiment is further echoed by Ebo, who states that "We do not want the animals here at all, and so the Fulani people should not bring the animals here at all."

These sentiments have exacerbated the tensions and othering of the Fulani. The Fulani described the experience of being seen as outsiders. Baba, a journalist of Fulani descent and youth peace activist, noted that stereotypes are used to describe the Fulani as foreigners and illegal immigrants:

> These are some of the things government—yeah, police security—they are doing their best. However, sometimes you feel the stereotyping. Most people keep telling us Fulani, *Monye Ghanafo*! "You guys are not Ghanaians!" That's like the first mantra, and it's a problem.

For their part, the Fulani lamented how they are considered aliens and not rightfully considered citizens of Ghana by many local farmers and others in the country.

Another Fulani youth, Malik, also noted that the conflict is largely fuelled by prejudicial "othering" and xenophobia. Malik perceived the conflict as the ethnic cleansing of the Fulani.

> The conflict for me is like the thing that happened in Rwanda where there is ethnic cleansing. It happens like that a lot of the times. It's like the Fulani people are targeted, let's wipe them out.
>
> Now, that has never been a solution. You should not target people because of their ethnicity. Because there are Fulani people who have never even seen a cow before. They possibly live in Accra or Kumasi or somewhere. They are in a shop, and they are selling.
>
> And yet when the attack is coming, it goes for all Fulani people. That is not right. The conflict can be dealt with through the same processes we use to mediate conflict.

Further, Malik believes that the prejudicial othering of the Fulani has contributed to the conflicts and must be dealt with as part of any traditional conflict resolution processes. He recognizes that it is unfair to lay the blame for all crimes at the feet of the Fulani:

> Another way of dealing with this conflict is taking the conflict out of the name of the people. Do not give it an ethnicity. If you give the crime ethnic colour, it becomes a problem. Because you are putting a group together and saying that they are the ones who are doing this. You are othering them. When you other people, it becomes a problem. They try to fight back.

There has been a significant shift in the dynamics of inter-tribal relations, particularly between local crop farmers and the Fulani herding community. Alhaji Mamadu, a Fulani opinion leader, states, "we were very peaceful with the other tribes. There was no discrimination and no stereotyping, but this started about a decade ago." This implies that there has been a relatively recent deterioration in the relationships between the Fulani and other tribes, which is cause for concern. Farmer Atta also noted the welcoming nature of Agogo in the past "I came here in 2003. Agogo people were welcoming, and they accepted me, a Konkomba and Fulani man."

One of the key factors contributing to this deterioration has been the emergence of negative stereotypes and perceptions created by some malevolent leaders and the media. Alhaji Mamadu highlights that— "the locals are seeing the Fula as a dangerous people— and the Fula see other tribes—if you are not a Fula you are a dangerous person too." This mutual suspicion

and labeling of entire communities as dangerous are a clear indication of the deep-rooted mistrust that has developed over time.

There also seems to be a perception among some locals that the Fulani herdsmen are not fully integrated into the community, like the sedentary Fulani who do not engage in nomadism. One participant, Adalla, from the Office of the Municipal Assembly, states:

> I am sure there are some Fulani who are now living with indigenes within this municipality, and they are like family. They are like brothers and sisters. They will tell you we have so many Fulani's over here, and we are cool with them. They do not show any signs of bad attitude like the ones in the forest.

This suggests that there may be a distinction between the Fulani herdsmen who have integrated into the community and those who are perceived as outsiders.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: The Influence of the Media**

Moreover, the media have been complicit in exacerbating these tensions. The media as a civil society group have been accused by both groups as skewing public perception. Some media institutions and personnel have been noted by the Agogo people as using divisive narratives to deepen the existing cultural divides. For example, Alhaji Mamadu notes that "the propaganda in the media is also damaging, and that is bridging the gap between the locals and the Fula. If a particular person did anything wrong, which is normal in every human being, why do you tag all the Fula and not an individual."

This suggests that the media's tendency to generalize issues and stereotype an entire group based on the actions of some individuals has added fuel to existing tensions. Another person highlighted the negative influence of the media on the conflict. According to Malik, a radio presenter and journalist, the derogatory and stereotypical language used particularly by Akan-language media, perpetuates negative perceptions and fuels tensions between the Fulani and local communities. He further suggests that media orientation and education are necessary to

promote accurate and unbiased reporting. Malik reveals that the Akan media is using derogatory stereotypes of the Fulani that escalates tensions among the farmers:

> The media has been a huge negative influencer of this conflict. Especially the Akan speaking media. The language they use is very derogatory, is very stereotypical, and is very abusive. When they use that language, they are tagging a whole group as violent, as rapists, as armed robbers, as cattle destroyers, as crop destroyers and all of those things.
>
> It is not healthy. It is not positive. So, the media has to be given a lot of orientation. I am in the English broadcasting space. Sometimes we are careful how we broadcast.
>
> My newsroom, I have given orientation to them, and I have explained to them that these are the things you cause when you report the way you report. So, my media house, they do not report in a very negative, stereotypical way. I have spoken to other colleagues in other media houses. But there is a lot more that has to be done. There has to be orientation for the media. Because we know again the role that the media played in Rwanda for the genocide. If we continue it here, that is where we are going to see it.

Malik further notes the role that other media stakeholders (aside from journalists) can play in educating their staff on the importance of conflict-sensitive journalism. He narrates that the professionalization of the media can instill a set of ethics among journalists that prevents using stereotypes to depict any community:

> I think the media owners themselves. There is a Ghana Journalist Association that wants to ensure professionalism. There is a National Media Commission that wants to ensure professionalism in this space. Even the Fulani people themselves who are opinion leaders could also lead with that education.
>
> Because a lot of the people who do the things, they do may be doing it out of ignorance. Maybe it is not deliberate. They want to be stereotypical. They don't even know. Maybe it is a stereotype that has been handed down to them from grandfathers or great generations. They should be educated.

The media as an important civil society group can use their platform to sensitize people against the use of harmful language and defamatory utterances. Journalists and radio presenters can use their far-reaching media platforms as well as social media to educate the people of Agogo and even beyond the municipality, on the need to avoid stereotypes and prejudicial language which tend to intensify the conflicts and incite violence.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Intergenerational Divisions and Exclusion of Agogo Youth and Women in Communal Processes and Decision-Making**

One of the main challenges to peacebuilding identified by this study is the lack of proper land allocation and consultation among chiefs, the local farming group, and Fulani herders. Most of the participants emphasized that the chiefs should involve the local community, including the youth and women, in the decision-making process regarding land allocation. They further noted that failure to consult the community leads to conflicts and tensions between the farmers and herders. For example, one farmer mentions that the chiefs often allocate land to the herders without informing or seeking the approval of the local people. This lack of consultation creates a sense of resentment and leads to clashes between the two groups.

Chief Banga, a Fulani opinion leader and chief, commented on the role of traditional leaders in exacerbating the conflicts and the lack of consultation of the locals on land allocations. He recounts that the Chief should not invite the Fulani to graze their cattle on his land:

> My second point is that the chiefs should stop allocating the land to them [*Fulani herdsmen*]. If they come, tell them, "No." I don't have any land yet for grazing. If you don't invite them, if you don't give them, they won't come. So, if you are going to give them, then try to manage the thing in such a way that you don't bring problems to your area.
>
> I'm saying this because some years back, you know that the people of Agogo, they stood up, they wanted to destroy the land. I don't know whether you heard of it. This popular musician called Amakyi Dede, and most of them, they spearheaded that action. Why? Because he did not consult them. He did not consult them [*farming community*]. This issue took us to the national security.

More importantly, the exclusion of the youth from negotiation and decision-making processes regarding land allocations has exacerbated tensions. As Alhaji Chief Banga points out, "the youth are the ones who actually clash" during the conflicts. However, they are often left out of the initial consultations, as "the Chief has consulted the people, but the youth will not be part of

those who are being consulted." This lack of youth involvement in the early stages of land and peace negotiations can lead to misunderstandings and further escalate conflicts.

This intergroup conflict has revealed a generational divide in terms of peace building approaches and resources. According to some participants, while those of the older generation emphasize the need for collective action and self-sacrifice, the younger generation often expects compensation for their efforts. As one opinion leader highlights:

> Maybe if we are doing a collective fight and you have been sent to [....], for example, go and buy in the market for those who are undertaking this assignment, and you want to be paid for your effort. Who should pay for it? Number one, someone else has paid for. And then you have brought your strength but the youth, they will be expecting some kind of compensation. So, who should compensate you?

This account suggests a potential tension between the traditional communal values and the changing expectations of the younger generation. Moreover, the conflict disproportionately affects marginalized groups, particularly women and youth. Malik a youth peace activist notes, "The youth and women are one group that have been marginalized in this issue. However, they are the ones who are mostly affected." Malik's comments stresses the need for more inclusive and gender-sensitive strategies to conflict resolution, in Ghana and elsewhere.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Poor Leadership and Governance, Ineffective Policies and Political Corruption**

Another challenge to peacebuilding is poor policy implementation and continuity of government peace intervention strategies. The government's cattle ranching project, while well-intentioned, has been marred by mismanagement. The policy involved a pilot project where people were asked to bring their cattle to the region as a pre-test for the program. However, during this test, the cattle owners were not allowed to manage their own livestock and instead,

the responsibility was handed over to inexperienced managers. This lack of expertise of the caretakers and the lack of control over their own cattle has understandably caused frustration and discontent among the cattle owners, leading to further conflicts. This situation led to a disruption of the cattle ranching project. In addition, the non-implementation and compliance of transhumance protocols such as the ECOWAS protocol was cited as a challenge to peacebuilding.

Chief Banga, a Fulani chief and opinion leader, had this to say about the failure of the government ranching project and lack of implementation of policies by the state:

> The government came up with a ranching policy or committee. And there's also the ECOWAS policy on transhumance that's supposed to demarcate grazing zones, areas. But it seems all these laudable policies are there, but it's not being implemented. You see, this ranching thing, it is in the front page. Okay. But initially, the way they did it, that's what made it a failure.
>
> And why did the ranching plan fail? It failed because if you put a round peg into a square hole. Because they did not involve the cattle herders themselves into managing the ranching scheme. Somebody who doesn't know anything about cows has been brought there to manage them. How can it be? How can it be successful? It won't be successful. You see, people started when they asked the people to bring some cows to use as a, like, I don't know the word, is it? Experiment. It's like testing the grounds, to experiment. Very good ideas, too. And the people needed it; some people even brought their cattle all the way from the north.
>
> They say everybody should bring something like 20, 20, 20, or 20 cattle. You see, but then they brought it, and they are not allowed to manage their own thing. You understand? They just hand it over to the managers. And you see, this is somebody's wealth. They call the cattle, and we're walking back. This is somebody's wealth, and he has handed it over to you, and you cannot manage it properly. You think others who were waiting to see how the policy will work will bring it.
>
> They won't bring it. You are going to try, but you are not successful. How can I go? And our people, too, have that kind of attitude. Then they decide they'd like to meet and see who will try. If that person tries and is successful, then they will all come. They will rush to come. But if the first batch goes and it is not successful, then they will just slide back. Otherwise, it was a very, very good policy. But the management of the place was the problem.

At the same time, however, George, a civil society staffer and peace activist, said that population growth and a lack of proper land planning and management practices could also be blamed for

the conflict. George also claimed that due to the population increasing more than the land resources in Agogo can support, some local farmers have resorted to radical means of surviving, such as poisoning cattle, to reduce the cattle population. George made it known that the farmers and the herders compete over control of the land and water because local government planning is inadequate in addressing their needs.

Further, he highlights how poor planning and lack of proactive governance have contributed to conflicts between farmers and Fulani herders. He explains that population growth has led to farmland expansion, but the government failed to plan for this increase, resulting in encroachment and competition over land and water resources. In addition to poor planning, George points out that drought and climate change have worsened the situation by further limiting available resources. Farmers cultivate near water bodies for irrigation, while Fulani herders rely on the same sources for their cattle, leading to disputes. He also describes how environmental degradation intensifies tensions, particularly the burning of grasslands by Fulani herdsmen to encourage the growth of fresh grass for their cattle. This practice, however, often damages nearby farms, leading to further conflict. In some cases, farmers retaliate by poisoning water sources, harming the cattle and escalating hostilities. While he notes that Agogo has seen some improvements, farm destruction remains a persistent issue.

In addition, the government's role in managing the conflict has been a topic of debate. While Alhaji Idrisu, a herdsman, acknowledges that the government's intervention has been helpful, he also highlights some shortcomings. For instance, he mentions a scenario in which a farmer is compensated for the damage caused by the Fulani herdsmen's cattle, but this compensation is seen as a license for the Fulani herdsmen to continue encroaching on the farmland. As he explains, "The fact that he has paid GHS 2000 to you means they think the farm

now belongs to them. One day you will go to the farm, and they would have eaten all the crops." This suggests that the government's approach to compensating the farmers may not be effective in deterring future conflicts.

Corruption and poor leadership are another exacerbating factor in this issue. According to many of the participants, the response from the authorities, including the police and the local government, has been largely ineffective. A farmer expressed her frustration, stating, "Right now, we have no hope. Our hope is in the police station, the DC (District Assembly) or the [chief's] palace but when we go there, we get no support." This lack of support has further deepened the sense of helplessness and despair among the farmers. This has increased the clashes as each group has taken matters into their own hands instead of seeking redress through law enforcement authorities. A lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms exacerbates the conflicts.

A vast majority of the participants noted that poor leadership within both the Fulani and the farming communities is a problem. For instance, a herdsman said that although their chiefs sometimes engage and assist with conflict resolution, they are sometimes inefficient and corrupt. He highlights the issue of corruption, stating that, for example, some chiefs and elders keep compensations meant for farmers whose farms have been destroyed by stray cows. He said, "the Fulani herdsman will sell cows and give the money to the elder but the elder will not bring the money to the farmer." This suggests a breakdown in the process of compensation and resolution, leading to further grievances and tensions. It also shows a lack of trust and transparency in reporting and resolving such incidents, leading to escalating tensions.

In addition, economic motivations play a role in the conflicts. One herdsman, Abdul, mentions that "there are boys who go around trying to kill the cow to go and sell [it]." This

implies that some individuals, possibly from the farming community, may resort to violence against a Fulani herdsman's cattle for personal gain. This economic dimension adds another layer of complexity to the conflicts as it intertwines with the territorial disputes.

Poor leadership and control have also made indigenous peacebuilding approaches ineffective. Some of the participants argue that local traditional approaches, such as dialogue and mediation, are not effective due to the nature of the conflict and the nomadic lifestyle of the Fulani. Instead, they emphasize the need for government intervention, stronger security measures, and adherence to ECOWAS transhumance laws and regulations. Some farmers noted that identifying the culprit (the cattle owner) for the destruction of a farm and seeking compensation is difficult because of the sporadic movement of the Fulani (it makes it difficult to locate them as they keep moving from place to place). Many farmers also believe that the Fulani are armed and dangerous and difficult to approach. For example, one farmer said that if there is conflict the only recourse open to the farmers is to go and report the incident at the police station:

> It came to a time when the Fulani destroy someone's farm, the farmer will go to the police station and report to the commander. And if they are able to arrest them, we take the compensation for the farmer. That is the only thing we were able to do. But as a family head, farmer, you cannot go. If you go there, they will kill you.

Some of the participants criticized the government's response to the conflict, stating that the use of brute force and confrontational approaches, such as 'Operation Cow Leg' by the police (shoot to kill the cattle), has been ineffective. For instance, Malik expressed dissatisfaction with the response of the government to the conflict. Participants from both groups believe that some politicians and party financiers are sponsored by cattle owners, which hinders effective intervention. Malik said that corruption was a challenge to peacebuilding efforts:

> Most of the politicians are being sponsored by those people. The people the cows belong to. There is no Fulani who owns a cow! It belongs to individuals who are wealthy. They are also party financiers. Some of the politicians' own cattle.

Another participant reiterated the issue of political influence as a hindrance to peacebuilding, stating that "during the crisis, the NDC was in power. Mahama [a former president of Ghana] was in power, and we did all we could. As a matter of fact, it made way for the MCE [Municipal Chief Executive] to be removed, but there was no peace."

According to George, a civil society staff member working on peacebuilding in Agogo, corrupt practices by police and other leaders who are supposed to be spearheading peacebuilding efforts are rather exacerbating the tensions between the groups in Agogo. He said it is alleged that the police have been illegally keeping fines collected as compensation for farmers whose farms have been destroyed by the cattle instead of paying out the monies as agreed to the farmers. George reports on the issue this way:

> You know in some places, there are compensations that people pay. To be in Agogo, they do that. The farmers said the Fulani don't pay. They [farmers] said the money goes to the police and then they don't get the money, the families don't get the money. They don't get the money, and it creates problems for them.

Abdul a Fulani also commented on corruption noted that, "When there is an issue, they investigate, find out whose cow it is, and they discuss it. If they say they will take a hundred million in compensation, the Fulani herdsman will sell cows and give the money to the elder, but the elder will not bring the money to the farmer."

Further, the conflict in Agogo is compounded by a lack of effective governance and regulatory enforcement. Kwame, a journalist in Agogo, highlighted the challenges faced by the media in addressing the issue, stating, "For peace... you see, on the part of the media, if issues crop up, we will talk about them. We will invite stakeholders involved; maybe this is happening here; what do they have to do about it? Oh, maybe we will do this. But when you say it... the government might not do anything about it."

Others from the farming community also noted ineffective regulation of immigration and porous borders in Ghana, which allow the nomads to enter the country unchecked. According to Kwame, this lack of responsiveness from the government, coupled with a perceived weakness in the immigration system, allows the Fulani to continue their activities with impunity.

Moreover, the conflict in Agogo is exacerbated by a failure to adhere to established protocols, such as the ECOWAS protocol on transhumance. While there are guidelines in place to regulate the movement of the Fulani herders, according to some participants from both groups, these are often disregarded. For instance, Kwame, the journalist, noted, "that does not apply here because you will see that they do not adhere to the rules when they come here. The ECOWAS laws and regulations and other stuff do not adhere to them, and that is what causes the problem." The lack of adherence to established protocols further fuels tensions and undermines peacebuilding efforts.

The challenges of peacebuilding in Agogo are multifaceted, stemming from a combination of cultural differences related to land use and agricultural practices, ineffective government responses, and the economic toll on the local community. The government's response to the conflict has been inadequate, exacerbating the challenges of peacebuilding. Despite a high court ruling that the government should evacuate Fulani herdsmen from Agogo, its implementation has been slow and ineffective. As Opoku, an opinion leader in Agogo, further explains that military outposts were supposed to be set up to protect the farmers from Fulani cattle:

> What the 2012 committee for the evacuation of the Fulani cattle came out with a program on how to evacuate them. They recommended that after these animals of the herdsmen have been cleared from our traditional area three military outposts should be established at three specific points. Then the community there should form watchdogs. When you are in your farm and you hear that the animals are there, you inform the nearest military

> camp for the military to get in touch. This has not been done till today and so they go and come. Why couldn't the government do this?

The lack of effective action from the government has also perpetuated the conflict and hindered peacebuilding efforts. Madam Anna, a female farmer, also had this to say about how ineffective the government has been in building peace in Agogo:

> Oh, right now we have no government support. Whatever they say, they do not honour it and so we have no hope in the government. They promised to help but in the middle of the task, we did not see anything. The support they can give us is to ensure the cattle leave this land so that we can have peace. When a woman is going to the farm, she is afraid. If you do not go with the man... If the man also goes with you, they [Fulani] can come and kill the man and rape the woman.

Chief Nana, a male farmer, also said that "The government did not do anything about it because as we are here. If you are not into farming and you are just here (home). At my age, someone has to give me money to buy food. I had ten children but one passed away and so I have children to feed. If I go to the farm, I go at 05:00AM, by 10:00AM, I have to leave the farm and come home. If you do not leave and they see you there, they will kill you. Even today, that is what they do."

Some participants also accused the state police (government) of using excessive force to try and solve the issues, which only heightened the tensions in Agogo. Chief Banga, a Fulani, said that when the police enforce court rulings, they often over-react in their behaviour toward Fulani herdsmen:

> Yes, at Agogo, you know, there was this court ruling. And they went to court, Kumasi High Court, and the court ruled in his favour. And then the court ordered that they (Fulani) should vacate. So, that time, it was the police who were there to enforce the court ruling. That was brought about the time you heard about the police; you know. So, in that respect, I don't blame the police. Okay. Because they were enforcing the law. You understand? Maybe there were some excesses. Like, they started shooting the cattle, that is, they are part of their enforcement, but it wasn't necessary to do that. So, there was excess anyway, but they were enforcing the law. Because that time, I understand, it was as a result of the court order.
>
> Because it was the court who ordered that they should leave the area. Okay. So, when these police people, some of them, they are trigger-happy police people, and they see a bull cow with long, long horns, they are afraid for their life. They want to, you

> know, touch, shoot it before it attacks them. Because there was a perception. They have some perception that the Fulani people have a way of commanding the cattle to attack. And that one is a myth. It's a myth. It's not the truth. But, well, this is how the whole thing happened. But most of the time, in other areas, when there are clashes, the police are informed. They go there to bring about peaceful, you know, settlement or calm the situation.

More importantly, some participants also indicated that the government has been ineffective in their approach because they have used force instead of cooperative peacebuilding processes that would involve the right stakeholders as well as the locals themselves. For example, Malik a Fulani explained this to me in our conversation, saying that adversarial rather than conflict resolution processes are used by the government to displace the Fulani and their animals:

> The government's response has not been very specific. The government has been using brute force. So, deployment of boots on the ground, weapons, and soldiers to drive out people. But how can you drive out a person from his own land? It doesn't make sense. So, operation Cow Leg, that was the first attempt. They went there with guns. They were driving out Fulani people and their cattle and shooting their animals.
>
> That is a confrontational approach. It's a very, very lazy way of dealing with the matter. We have the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture, there are veterinary services who go to immunize or vaccinate cattle across the country. They know how to deal with these people. Cattle farmers are not violent people, to the best of my knowledge.

Interestingly, the data revealed that the conflict has also been exacerbated by internal divisions and sabotage. There have been claims of instances of internal sabotage, with individuals allegedly forging letters and engaging in clandestine dealings with the Fulani herders. As one community member shared, "they know the Fulani's are not educated, and so you see the letter, and they see *Ohemaa* (the queen of Agogo) and show it to them that Ohemaa says you should go. I know it is a forgery. Bring this amount of money to give to the queen. That is the kind of internal sabotage going on."

Others have accused their own group members of conniving with the out-group to sabotage any peace building efforts. For example, one farmer said:

"The Agogoman group held a press conference at the Russia park to discuss how we can help ourselves against the Fulani. While we were there, we heard some noise, when they got there a Zongo boy had used two phones, he had stuck it to the speakers and recording it to go and give it to the Fulani people. This Zongo boy is one of us but had taken bribes from the Fulani to be an informant. Some of the other boys in our group begun to beat him but we said no, we have called for the press conference to discuss non-violent ways to settle the conflicts, if they kill him, we will have to answer for it. We rescued the boy and gave him a place to sit".

These accusations of sabotage within the farming groups have created suspicion of corruption, which have led some people to lose confidence in their community leaders and law enforcement agencies. These accusations not only undermine the community's efforts to build peace but also create mistrust and division among its members.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Competition for Land, Socioeconomic Resources, and Climate Change**

The challenges of ensuring peace between the Fulani and the local farming groups in Agogo are multifaceted and complex. These groups struggle over land and other socioeconomic resources has inevitably led to conflicts. According to both farmers and herdsmen, the vegetation in Agogo is suitable for both farming and pasture for cattle. Alhaji Chief Banga, a Fulani leader and chief, noted that the Agogo area is known for its "very good" and "nutrient-rich" land, making it an ideal location for cattle grazing. This has attracted both the Agogo people and the Fulani herdsmen to the region, as the cattle "grow fast" and "develop well" in this environment. One farmer also stated the same reason for the struggle over land resources. He also noted that the rich pastureland in Agogo was one of the main causes of the recurring conflicts. The area is attractive to the Fulani herders due to its nutrient-rich grass, which allows for the rapid growth and development of their cattle. In the area, the herdsmen also have access to good water sources

for their cattle. The farmer suggests that this attraction to the area leads to a reluctance on the part of the herders to leave, resulting in conflicts with the local farming community.

One of the primary causes of the conflicts is the destruction of crops by the Fulani herders' animals, which creates tensions between the crop farmers and the herders. The ruining of farmlands by cattle has had a devastating impact on farmers, leading to a loss of interest in farming and financial losses. As one female farmer, Yaa, lamented, "you will go for a loan and cultivate a farm and then the Fulani people will let their animal eat your crops." The situation is further exacerbated by the lack of compensation for the damages caused. As the same farmer explained, "If I have cultivated a farm and a Fulani man has allowed his cattle to come and feed on the crops, we should meet peacefully and then he compensates me but that is not always the case."

Another farmer also complained about a similar situation. He recounts instances where the Fulani destroyed his crops, pointed a gun at him, and threatened his life. These experiences highlight the severity of the conflict and the impact it has had on the livelihoods and well-being of the local farming community. He recounted his story, saying that "the most painful thing is that when you have cultivated the plantains and they are ready to harvest, the Fulani people will go around the farm, bending the trees down for their animals to feed on. They would take home the leaves, and when it bends down, the cow will eat it."

Second, the issue of territorial boundaries and land use practices has been a major source of contention. Territorial disputes seem to be a significant cause of the conflicts. According to Alhaji Idrisu, a herdsman, some of the Fulani herdsmen "do not put their cattle in a barn" and "have just left them" in the forest, allowing them to roam freely and graze on farmland. This has led to conflicts, as the cattle often destroy the farmers' crops, causing significant economic

losses. He emphasized the need for his fellow Fulani herdsmen to rear their cattle on their own land and not encroach on the farms of the local community.

Further, the absence of a comprehensive land-use policy adds to the complexity of the conflict. The challenge of getting the people of Agogo and the Fulani herdsmen to agree to land and resource sharing would be a "herculean task" according to some opinion leaders. For example, Adalla, a representative of the Municipal Assembly and key stakeholder in the issue, highlighted that any potential allocation of land for the herders would require careful consideration, as "one thing is, I am not sure the people here are ready to receive them because of their experience." This suggests that the local community's past encounters with the herders have shaped their perception and unwillingness to accommodate them.

The complex dynamics of the conflict, with various actors and factors involved, pose another challenge. Although cultural misunderstandings, corruption, and stereotypes play a significant role in fueling the conflict, economic disparity between the different ethnic groups is contributing to the conflict. When economic resources are unequally distributed, it can lead to tensions and rivalries. The conflict in Agogo is not limited to a single issue but encompasses a range of concerns, including the broader development aspirations of the community. One opinion leader noted that young people advocate for access to resources.

> Even though the focus is on this incursion, the Fulani incursion. But let me say that in our youth, the desire... Every town wanted some kind of development, those things we saw as development, post office, police station, tarred road, schools, yes, community centre. These were the things that we were agitating for.

This opinion leader's account suggests that the conflict is not solely caused by the presence of the Fulani herdsmen and land disputes but also by the Agogo community's aspirations for development. Sadly, the conflicts have also taken a violent turn within the last decade, with reports of rape and shootings. Malik said this about the situation in Agogo that cattle stray into

farmers land looking for vegetation to eat that often escalate into armed conflict between herders and farmers:

> What I know about the conflict in Agogo is that there are herdsmen, mostly of Fulani extraction, who are herding cattle, whose cattle destroy crops of farmers, crop farmers, and instead of using dialogue to solve it, they go on the offensive and attack each other. And often the Fulani people, who are the minority, get slaughtered or butchered, or their animals slaughtered. In Ghana, generally, Fulani people herd cattle. That is their trade. That is what they do. That's what they know how to do best. Now, when they herd cattle, it's a business, right? And it's mostly not even for them. But the person may not know... I mean, cattle is animals (sic).
>
> Animals don't have brains to determine that this is a crop farm and it's different from grass. Animals are programmed by God to feed on vegetation. They don't care which vegetation. So, when they are feeding, when they bow their head and they are eating, they eat and stray into crop farms and destroy the farms.

Lastly, the economic toll on the local community has further complicated the peacebuilding process. The conflict has resulted in significant financial losses for the farmers, with some even losing their collateral for bank loans. As the opinion leader highlights, "Some take bank loans to do the farming, and when the farms are destroyed, sometimes they lose the collateral. Others have developed hypertension from the shock and strokes." Such an economic strain not only affects the livelihoods of the farmers but also has broader implications for the overall stability and well-being of the community.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: Gender-Based Violence and Inadequate Social and Psychosocial Support**

Some participants noted a lack of support, particularly psychosocial intervention, from stakeholders such as the state and grassroots organizations. The local farmers feel that they have not received adequate support from the government, police, or local authorities in addressing the conflict. They have reported instances where they sought help from the police station or the District Chief (DC), but their complaints were not taken seriously or resulted in any meaningful

resolution. This lack of support has further exacerbated the conflict and undermined the trust and confidence of local farmers in the authorities.

The conflicts have also taken a violent turn within the last decade, with reports of rape and shootings. A female farmer, Akosua, highlighted the gendered nature of the violence, stating that "If you are a woman, they will rape you. If you are a man, they will shoot you." This has created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, with many young men losing their lives due to the use of violence by Fulani herders and vice versa. The recurring nature of the conflict in Agogo is attributed to the persistent threat of sexual and physical violence posed by the Fulani group, according to some farmers. Yaa, a female farmer, highlighted the severity of the situation with regards to sexual and physical violence, stating, "and so the Fulani people have really tormented us for as long as twenty-five years."

The continuous use of sexual violence, the destruction of farms, and cattle rustling have created a cycle of conflict that is difficult to break. This is because each group would retaliate whenever violence of some sort was used against their people or whenever their properties were destroyed. As Yaa further explained, "I am a woman; I have taken a loan from the government and made a farm. And then, while you watch, the animals eat all the crops. If I am with my husband, he will be forced to react. You see, and if he reacts, they might kill him." The constant threat to their livelihoods and personal safety has led to a heightened state of tension and the potential for retaliatory violence.

Sexual assault was noted as one of the challenges to peacebuilding between the two groups. The participants indicated women, and young girls are frequently singled out with the intention of instilling fear and disrupting entire communities. Violent acts such as rape and sexual assault cause significant bodily and psychological harm to victims. Madam Akosua, a

farmer, lamented the use of sexual violence and other types of violence by some Fulani as weapons of war. She accused them, saying there is no real peace in Agogo:

> Here in Agogo we do not have peace. First, the Fulani people they have really frustrated us. After you have cultivated the farm, they bring their animals to eat the crops and when you complain, they tell you that an animal must eat. When women go to the farm. They rape them. And when men are found in the forest, they shoot them. Over sixty men have died.

According to Adalla, a representative of the Agogo Municipal Assembly, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been reported as part of the conflicts in Agogo. Adalla claimed that the Fulani force farmers to leave their farms at gunpoint and they rape their women:

> You know these people when they come to your farm... I have not had a one-on-one encounter with them. But these farmers when [they] inform us of what goes on in their farms, they are armed. They deal with guns and if you do not leave your farm for their cattle to graze, they will harm you. There have been instances where they have raped and killed people. A whole lot of issues.
>
> Normally when the farmers come, they brief us on what they go through when these people come to their farms. They rape them, kill them, take over their farmlands, a whole lot. Like I said some time ago, we visited a community at Abrewapong (a suburb of Agogo) and these women were giving us what they went through in the hands of these Fulani herdsmen.

Sexual violence has not been used by only Fulani against the farmers; according to the Fulani, they have also been victims of rape and other forms of sexual and physical violence. For example, Malik reported that, "it's not just one-sided where it's just maybe the female farmers being violated. But female children of the herdsmen have also been sexually abused."

Some of the victims lack access to free healthcare due to their status as non-Ghanaian (Ghanaians and foreigners who are legal residents are entitled to some free healthcare services through the national health insurance scheme). I also observed that there are very few trauma healing and counselling services in Agogo. People may have to travel to nearby cities, such as Accra and Kumasi to access these resources. For example, Halima, a Fulani young lady, said that her lack of Ghanaian identification limits her access to free social and economic welfare services

such as health care, counseling and therapy as a young person in Ghana. Halima lamented that "the government hasn't helped us at all, they don't respect the Fulani. Sometimes the herders are wrong, but the cattle don't always belong to the Fulani. I was even refused a Ghana card because they felt I was not Ghanaian. But I was born here; my parents were born here too." This concern was echoed by some other Fulani as a challenge to their community (this was also mentioned during the Fulani group program I attended as an observer).

Without counselling, these victims of sexual violence may continue to feel stress and trauma distress, which will hinder them from recovering and reintegrating back into Agogo society. The effects of unresolved trauma can lead to social breakdowns and a cycle of violence, as some victims may resort to the use of violence to retaliate. Families of the victims may also seek revenge using violence, leading to renewed clashes in their community. Survivors of sexual violence may also face stigma, fear, and shame, which will worsen their stress and hinder their desire or ability to seek psychological healing support, healthcare, etc. Some female participants expressed that they refrain from reporting incidents of sexual abuse they have encountered because they fear social exclusion. Yaw, a male farmer, stated that if his wife or daughter were sexually assaulted, he would expect them to keep silent about it. Furthermore, he stated that he would even divorce his wife if it became known that she had been sexually assaulted by a Fulani herdsman. In situations like this, the victims may be scared to report incidents of abuse and may feel isolated, which may exacerbate the psychological effects of the assault.

Moreover, sexual violence can lead to physical harm and the transmission of sexually transmitted illnesses. The absence of healthcare facilities for victims can result in devastating and lifelong health complications for the victims of sexual assault. Access to mental health and psychosocial support services in Agogo is greatly restricted. A significant number of individuals

who have experienced sexual violence lack the opportunity to get counseling and treatment, resulting in their trauma going unattended. Halima, a young female Fulani, stated that despite being born in Ghana and having Ghanaian parents, she lacks access to public funding and healthcare because she is not officially recognized as a Ghanaian. She further expressed that her lack of power to get her Ghanaian identification limits her access to social and economic welfare services such as counseling and therapy as a young person in Ghana. This concern was echoed by some other Fulani as a challenge to their community.

Another issue that came up with regards to inadequate support from the state was the lack of effective government intervention for females and other marginalized populations in Agogo. Yaa, a female farmer, expressed her disillusionment stating "Oh right now we have no government support. Whatever they say, they do not honour it and so we have no hope in the government." The government's failure to address the issue has left the community feeling abandoned and without recourse. This sentiment is further echoed in her statement, "They promised to help but in the middle of the task, we did not see anything." The lack of tangible action from the government has eroded trust and deepened the sense of helplessness among the Agogo people.

**Root Causes of the Conflict and Challenges in Peace building: The Challenges Faced by Law Enforcement in Peacebuilding in Agogo.**

The police play a crucial role as a government stakeholder in building peace between the farmers and herders in Agogo. However, they face numerous challenges in their peacebuilding efforts. First, the police are burdened by financial constraints, which hinder their ability to effectively maintain peace. The police cited staffing shortages and staff attrition due to financial

constraints. As one police officer highlighted, “accommodation here is very expensive.” This financial burden extends to the recruitment process, where new officers are required to pay a significant amount for accommodation. This financial strain not only affects the recruitment of new officers but also impacts the morale of the existing ones. As the officer stated there are few officers in the barracks to protect the local people:

> Let me tell you something. Agogo has no police barracks. Okay, so if you are brought here, you must rent your own house and now the accommodation here is too expensive. So, supposing you are brought from the training centre, a recruit, you come and then your accommodation, you have to pay over GHS3000 for accommodation alone. It is not small money so when we request because of accommodation they do not bring the men. The few of us who are here, it is only sacrifice.

This financial challenge is a significant obstacle to the police’s peacebuilding efforts, as it limits their capacity to deploy adequate personnel to conflict areas.

Second, the police face the challenge of navigating the complex situation between the farmers and herders. While the officer noted that there have been no reported cases of attacks between the two groups during his four-year tenure, he acknowledged that conflicts do arise within the herder community itself. This suggests that the police must not only address conflicts between the farmers and herders but also manage internal disputes within the herder community. Moreover, the officer emphasized the importance of local chiefs in maintaining peace, stating that “no Fulani man can come from anywhere and enter the land of Agogo without the consent of any chief.” This highlights the need for the police to work in tandem with the local chiefs to prevent conflicts and ensure the peaceful coexistence of both groups.

Third, the police face challenges in terms of resources and coordination with other security agencies. The officer mentioned that they often must rely on the army for support, but the absence of an army barracks in Agogo means that they must request assistance from the army in Kumasi (Kumasi is the Ashanti regional capital, Ashanti region is the province/region where

Agogo is located). This reliance on external support can be a logistical challenge, especially during times of heightened tension. Additionally, the officer highlighted the need for better infrastructure, such as police barracks, to enhance their operational capabilities in terms of conflict prevention. This further underscores the resource constraints faced by the police in their peacebuilding efforts.

Addressing the challenges faced by the police in Agogo will require a multi-faceted approach, including increased financial support, enhanced coordination mechanisms, and improved infrastructure. Through such comprehensive measures the police can effectively fulfill their role as a government stakeholder in building and maintaining peace in Agogo.

**Key Findings**

Several key findings emerged inductively from the empirical data on the root causes of farmer/herder conflicts in Agogo. First, the tension between farmers and Fulani herders is deeply rooted in how both groups view each other's practices and how these practices impact their livelihoods. The clash between nomadic herding and farming practices, particularly in terms of land use, water access, and the consequences of breeding practices, is a major source of friction. Additionally, the role of prejudicial othering of the Fulani by the locals and narratives of harmful stereotypes by the media further deepens the divide, perpetuating a cycle of mistrust and conflict. The media plays a powerful role in shaping public perception, with biased reporting contributing to a negative portrayal of the Fulani community and xenophobia. This deepening divide creates significant obstacles to peacebuilding efforts, as the two groups are unable to understand or empathize with each other's practices.

Second, intergenerational divisions, exclusion, and marginalization are key factors exacerbating the conflict. The failure to consult local communities, particularly farmers, youth, and women, in decision-making processes regarding land allocation has fueled resentment and conflict. Chiefs, who control land allocation, are often criticized for not involving the local people in these discussions, leading to a sense of exclusion. Youth exclusion from decision-making is particularly notable, as youth are often the most active participants in clashes but are sidelined in initial consultations about land use. Generational divides within the communities also contribute to tensions, as older generations emphasize collective action while younger generations demand individual compensation for their efforts. This generational divide further escalates the conflict and complicates resolution efforts.

Third, gender-based violence, especially sexual violence, plays a significant role in the conflict. Female farmers have reported sexual assault and rape by Fulani herders, contributing to an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. The lack of protection and support services for these women, particularly for those who do not have Ghanaian identification, makes it difficult for victims to receive the care they need. The continuous cycle of violence, coupled with the trauma it causes, prevents many victims from healing and exacerbates the overall conflict. The issue of gender-based violence must be addressed in peacebuilding efforts, as it is a significant barrier to achieving lasting peace in the region. This study also found that the intersection of gender and citizenship are important in examining the experiences of Fulani women and indigenous Agogo women. This is significant because Fulani females seem to experience another layer of exclusion and lack access to social supports due to their lack of Ghanaian citizenship or other legal status in Ghana.

Fourth, the police face significant challenges in their peacebuilding efforts. Financial constraints, including the high cost of accommodation, hinder the police from effectively deploying personnel to conflict areas. The lack of sufficient officers, combined with the high turnover of staff, limits their ability to maintain peace. Moreover, the police are burdened by the complex dynamics between farmers and herders, as they must address not only the conflicts between the two groups but also internal disputes within the herder community. The police often rely on the army for support due to the absence of army barracks in Agogo, which complicates coordination and response efforts. These challenges highlight the need for greater resources, improved infrastructure, and better coordination among security agencies in the region.

Fifth, competition for land, resources, and climate change continue to fuel the conflict. The land in Agogo is highly fertile, attracting both farmers and herders. However, this competition often leads to destructive encounters, with herders' cattle destroying crops, which significantly impacts farmers' livelihoods. The absence of a clear land-use policy and the lack of legal frameworks to address these disputes make it difficult to resolve tensions. Farmers also face economic strain, as they suffer financial losses due to crop destruction and damage to livestock. The economic hardships faced by both groups create a volatile situation that complicates efforts to build trust and cooperation.

Sixth, inadequate law enforcement and the failure to build trust in government institutions further undermine peacebuilding efforts. The police, who play a critical role in maintaining peace, face significant resource constraints, including a lack of infrastructure such as police barracks and insufficient personnel. Additionally, the failure of the state to address local concerns, such as the lack of support for the farmers, has led to a breakdown of trust between the community and the government. Without improved coordination between the police, military,

and local authorities, and without addressing the needs of local communities, peacebuilding efforts will continue to struggle.

Seventh, a comprehensive and inclusive approach is needed for peacebuilding to succeed. The involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including farmers, youth, women, local chiefs, the police, and other community leaders, is crucial to resolving the conflict. Chiefs must take on a more active role in land allocation decisions, involving the community in discussions to ensure that their voices are heard. Additionally, there is a need for more inclusive decision-making processes, particularly for young people, who are often excluded from initial consultations and are most involved in violent clashes. Addressing these issues in a holistic and inclusive manner will help build trust and foster cooperation between the two groups. In summary, the conflicts in Agogo are complex involving multiple root causes which require a multi-faceted approach involving all stakeholders to achieve lasting peace in the region.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion, the challenges of peacebuilding in Agogo are deeply rooted in the economic, political, social, and generational dynamics of the community. Moreover, these challenges are deeply rooted in the cultural clash between the indigenous Agogo people and the Fulani group, exacerbated by the government's lack of effective intervention and the persistent threat of violence. To address these challenges, a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy is needed, one that includes cultural sensitivity, proactive government action, and efforts to foster dialogue and understanding between the conflicting parties. To promote sustainable and lasting peace, peacebuilding strategies must tackle the immediate conflict but also address the underlying challenges of development, resource management, and intergenerational dynamics

# CHAPTER 7: EMANCIPATORY PEACE BUILDING: HOW TO BUILD PEACE ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE OF AGOGO.

Chapter seven explores the concept of peace from the perspective of the people of Agogo, highlighting their goals and aspirations for grassroots peacebuilding. First, it examines the opportunities and challenges faced by youth and women in contributing to peace, focusing on their roles in dialogue and reconciliation, while addressing barriers to inclusion and empowerment. Next, the chapter discusses the contributions of civil society groups and community leaders in peacebuilding from the ground-up, emphasizing the importance of local leadership in conflict resolution. It then explores the significance of advocacy, peace education, and cross-cultural contact in fostering mutual respect between farmers and herders. Finally, the chapter examines the connection between peace and socioeconomic development, showing how economic and human development efforts can address conflict's root causes and contribute to lasting peace in Agogo.

## Opportunities and Challenges in Peacebuilding: The Roles of Agogo Women and Youth

The role of youth and women in peacebuilding is multifaceted, encompassing both proactive and reactive measures. In this volatile situation in Agogo, the role of youth and women in peacebuilding becomes crucial. Youths, being the future of the community, have the potential

to shape the trajectory of peace in Agogo. They contribute by actively engaging in dialogue, fostering understanding, and promoting peaceful coexistence.

Similarly, women play a significant role in peacebuilding, as they are often the most affected by violent conflicts. They bear the brunt of the destruction, loss of lives, and displacement. Their involvement in peacebuilding efforts can bring a unique perspective and contribute to the healing and reconciliation process. Women can act as mediators, bridge builders, and advocates for peace, leveraging their social networks and community influence. In Agogo, women play a crucial role in voicing their concerns and grievances, acting as a catalyst for change. As one female opinion leader, Amma, highlighted, "When you are doing something and they (women) do not like it, they voice it out." This active participation in the communal processes ensures that the concerns of the community are addressed, fostering a sense of inclusivity and harmony.

Moreover, Agogo's women are instrumental in maintaining peace within their families and recognizing the significance of respect and understanding in interpersonal relationships. For some participants peacebuilding must start from the household level and transcend to the community-level. For example, Madam Amma emphasized the importance of mutual respect within families for peaceful co-existence. "If you do not respect your sister -in- law, there will be no peace."

The youth are vital actors of change, actively engaging in grassroots efforts to promote peace. In Agogo, some of the youths are known for their non-confrontational approach, preferring to address conflicts through open dialogue rather than resorting to violence. As Amma explained, if you offend someone, "they will just tell you, this thing you did, I did not like it. And then the issue is over. Not conflicts where there are fights that the police are involved, no.

We are siblings; we do not do that." Madam Amma also explained that women play the roles of mediators and peace advocates, whereby they mediate conflicts and educate their children about tolerance and non-violent ways to resolve conflicts. She further noted that as women, they also provide emotional and economic supports for community members impacted by the conflicts, stating that:

> "As women we have been educating our children about tolerance, and we have been mediating this conflict. When someone is affected by the conflict we try to assist them, we visit them, speak to them, we even donate items to help them rebuild their livelihoods. That is love. We tell our youth that if someone offends you let them know but don't use violence. When a foreigner comes to join us, we notice them, and we are very hospitable. Our chief who gave out the lands for the school, hospitals and many amenities, his belief was that foreigners help develop towns. That was what he said when he was chief. For example, the women selling the plantains had grievances and they told the leaders."

This peaceful coexistence is further reinforced by the community's welcoming attitude towards foreigners, recognizing their potential to contribute to the development of the town. For instance, the population census of Ghana indicates the presence of persons from various ethnic groups who are non-indigenous in Agogo.

Youth can be empowered as catalysts for peaceful transformation in Agogo. The participation of young people is crucial in the process of peacebuilding, given their frequent positioning at the forefront of conflicts. Therefore, engaging them in peace processes as well as land negotiations would contribute to sustainable peace in Agogo. For instance, Alhaji Mamadu noted that "if the youth are included in the land negotiations from the very beginning, they may not resort to violence to settle any land disputes, as they feel included in community discussions." Mamadu's account highlights the need to include young people and recognize their capacity to initiate beneficial transformations.

Further, the youth and women are integral members of the Agogo community. According to Farmer Joseph, the women in Agogo play a significant role in maintaining peace. He

highlights that “every household had people supporting us because they knew that if they did not support us and left everything to the Agogomanmma group [Agogo community association], it would not be the best. Even old women came out.” This demonstrates women’s active participation in the community, as they rallied together during demonstrations to address the problem at hand.

The role of youth and women in peacebuilding is crucial, as they are often at the forefront of community engagement and activism. In the face of adversity, the role of youth and women in peacebuilding becomes even more critical. However, their efforts have been met with limited success. As one female farmer, Akosua, laments, “All we can do is meet together and hold demonstrations. But when we do it, no results come out of it.”

In the face of such challenges, the people of Agogo have taken a firm stance. They have engaged in peaceful demonstrations including demonstrations by women and youths wearing red turbans to symbolize “danger” (according to the farmers), to express their grievances, and to demand action. Farmer Yaw emphasizes the importance of such demonstrations, stating, “If you do not demonstrate, you will not be able to show the gravity of the issue.” These demonstrations in the farmers’ opinions serve as a powerful tool to raise awareness and garner support for their cause.

In addition, conflicts are resolved traditionally through the traditional leaders and clan heads, who are sometimes women. For example, the queen of Agogo takes an active role in peace dialogues. The Agogo community has a long-standing tradition of peaceful coexistence and peaceful conflict resolution. Farmer Joseph states, “Here in Agogo, all my life, I have seen that we live peacefully. We love each other; there is no discrimination amongst the families here. When there is a family feud, clan heads and traditional leaders resolve it through peace talks and

dialogues." This highlights the deep-rooted culture of peace within the community, where every family or clan has a leader to whom they can appeal for conflict resolution. According to the participants from both groups, if the traditional leader is unable to resolve the issue, it is escalated to the traditional council.

Although these traditional and household peace approaches exist, it is important to note that the peacebuilding efforts in Agogo encounter problems when it comes to engaging with the Fulani community. Farmer Joseph asserts that the Fulani are not Ghanaians and that "there is nothing you can do to make them happy." This suggests a deep-seated animosity and a lack of willingness to engage in peace talks with the Fulani.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the youth are not a homogeneous group, and their perspectives on peacebuilding may vary. Some may be more inclined towards peaceful resolutions, while others may resort to more aggressive approaches. Youths, as the future leaders of their communities, have a unique role to play in peacebuilding. Their energy, idealism, and willingness to question the status quo can be harnessed to foster intergroup understanding and reconciliation. However, it is essential to recognize that youth can also be vulnerable to manipulation and radicalization, making their engagement in peacebuilding a delicate process.

Both the Fulani community and the farming community agree that the involvement of youth in peacebuilding is crucial, as they represent the future generation and can contribute fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the peacebuilding process. For instance, Alhaji Chief Banga, a Fulani chief, and opinion leader, notes the need for "involving youth and women in peacebuilding activities, emphasizing the need for continuous education and awareness to promote peaceful coexistence." Malik, a young journalist, also mentions the establishment of youth-led peace clubs in schools, where young people are educated about the importance of

peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. These clubs provide a platform for the youth to engage in dialogue, develop leadership skills, and actively contribute to peacebuilding efforts. Similarly, Baba, a youth, highlights the role of women in peacebuilding, emphasizing their ability to foster dialogue and reconciliation within their families and communities. He suggests that "empowering women through education and economic opportunities can contribute to long-term peace and stability."

The youth and women in Agogo play active roles in peacebuilding, as demonstrated by their participation in demonstrations and their responsiveness to law enforcement. The views of young participants also echoed their desire as youth to be included in peacebuilding and the need for using education to inculcate peers among there peers. For example, Malik a youth peace activist and journalist, noted that "the youth and women are one group that have been marginalized in this issue. However, they are the ones who are mostly affected." He also mentions that youth-led peace clubs can foster a peaceful coexistence and a commitment to non-violence among his peers.

In Agogo, both women and youth play pivotal roles in peacebuilding, acting as agents of change through dialogue, advocacy, and grassroots engagement. Women contribute significantly by mediating conflicts and raising awareness, also the youth are essential in fostering peace through activism, education, and community involvement. Despite their efforts, challenges such as marginalization, exclusion from decision-making, and limited resources hinder their full potential in promoting sustainable peace.

**The Role of Civil Society Groups and Community Leaders in Peacebuilding from Below**

The role of traditional leaders, the government, and other community opinion leaders was one of the peacebuilding strategies noted by both groups. They also recognized that it is important to ensure that policies are implemented and continued. As Adalla, a staff of the Municipal Assembly, explains, "first and foremost, umm one thing I know is that the local leaders will have to liaise with the security, various security within the municipality." She also suggests that targeting the leaders of the Fulani community could be an effective approach, stating, "every community has a leader, so I am sure these Fulanis definitely have a leader, right. So, they have to target them. Go to them, speak to them. I think that is the only way that will help because you cannot go to them personally."

This implies that engaging with the leaders of the Fulani community could potentially lead to a better understanding of and resolution to the conflict. Adalla also noted that the use of "force is unsustainable, and therefore peaceful dialogue may be the best approach."

To mitigate these conflicts, it is crucial to promote dialogue, education, and a nuanced understanding of different communities. Opinion leaders, who wield considerable influence within their communities, can serve as catalysts for peacebuilding. They have the capacity to influence public sentiment and rally community members towards nonviolent remedies.

According to a prominent figure in Agogo's agricultural community, opinion leaders sometimes serve as mediators during conflict resolutions. When there is a family dispute, for example, the offended family may lodge a formal complaint either with the chief or at the chief's palace. The process involves summoning the individuals, who then communicate with the opposite side. Subsequently, elders and sub-chiefs are appointed to discuss the matter and deliver their decision to the chief. In Akan, the local peace building approach does not have a specific

word to describe it, each type of dispute has its own name and process. A family dispute settlement or peace building approach is referred to as '*abusua asemdie'* which translates to family dispute settlement or resolution. While a communal dispute settlement process is called '*oman asemdie'* meaning village or town dispute settlement. Both indigenous peace building approaches involve mediation of the local traditional leaders, opinion leaders or clan heads, showcasing the crucial influence these community leaders have in settling disagreements.

Peacebuilding is an intricate procedure that necessitates the participation of many stakeholders and influential figures at various societal levels. Amidst the confrontation between farmers and Fulani herders, the significance of these people's involvement becomes even more pivotal. Alhaji Chief Banga, a prominent figure in the Fulani community, offers useful perspectives on the intricacies of this dispute and the probable roles of various individuals or groups. He asserts that traditional rulers have a crucial role in fostering peacebuilding endeavours. He underscores that "the attainment of peace would be derived from them." This claim is based on the observation that Fulani herders frequently request the consent of chiefs to gain access to land for grazing. According to Alhaji Chief Banga, individuals consistently visit the chiefs, who then assign them a piece of land. This emphasizes the distinctive role of traditional rulers as middlemen connecting farmers and herders.

Community leaders such as Alhaji Chief Banga play a crucial role in fostering peace. They serve as intermediaries, actively interacting with both parties to reduce tensions and facilitate meaningful conversation. Alhaji Chief Banga asserts that "our purpose is to enter and engage in conversation with our community. Occasionally, when they [Fulani] are subjected to an attack, they desire to respond in kind. And we approach them to communicate the idea that two opposing viewpoints cannot both be correct." Chief Banga's statement exemplifies the

endeavours of community leaders like himself to avert retaliatory measures and cultivate a culture of harmonious cohabitation.

Other civil society stakeholders, like NGOs, the municipal assembly, and community groups (Agogomanma) are working on the ground through advocacy, education, negotiations, and capacity building in Agogo as part of the peacebuilding process. For example, one NGO staff member, George, noted that his NGO has been organizing capacity building and peace education in Agogo and other areas of Ghana. However, he noted that their efforts have not always yielded positive results due to a lack of political will. He reported this, saying his NGO also does policy advocacy among key stakeholders and decision-makers:

> We normally do capacity building. So, capacity building in terms of, we identify the problem, then we develop capacity building interventions to address those problems. So, for this, for example, we will look at conflict resolution and look at different ways of resolving some of these issues. We've done that. If you go to our office in Tamale, they've done a couple of that in the past. So, through capacity building, through policy advocacy and policy influence.
>
> We train the local people. We bring, we identify the key actors. We bring them together, then we give them that training. So, if it's about conflict resolution, we provide that. If it's two days, three days, we provide that. But it doesn't end there. We also do policy advocacy, where we advocate among the decision makers as to what needs to be done to address the situation. See, we know what to do. The issue is always about how to implement those things. Because this issue has been there for years. We've recommended so many things, but there is no political will, and the investment is huge.

Cooperative decision-making is an essential part of emancipatory peacebuilding. Some participants explained that without this, sustainable peace is impossible. For example, Alhaji Chief Banga highlights the need for participatory decision-making procedures. He proposes that leaders should extend invitations to representatives from diverse groups, such as youth and women, to participate in the consultation process. He affirms that "the chief needs to extend invitations to the populace, encompassing the younger generation, and the females." According

to Chief Banga, this method guarantees that a "wide range of viewpoints are considered and promotes a feeling of ownership and accountability across many sectors of society."

Ultimately, stakeholders and opinion leaders play a complex and varied role in the peacebuilding processes. Traditional rulers serve as third party intermediaries, while community leaders facilitate conflict resolution, youth play a pivotal role in driving change, and inclusive decision-making procedures are of utmost importance to promote sustainable peace in conflict-affected communities and acknowledge and use each group's distinctive contributions. Peacebuilding is an intricate procedure that necessitates the active participation of many stakeholders and influential figures. These individuals have a vital role in defining the narrative, addressing the underlying causes of disputes, and promoting long-lasting peace within communities. An important revelation from the interview with Malik, a Fulani journalist, is the necessity to shift away from hierarchical methods in the process of establishing peace. He said that government officials must engage with local grassroots communities:

> Most of the approaches have been a top-down. Where governments will go and sit somewhere, select a few stakeholders. And then they will create policy and dump it on the people, which has not been sustainable. How do you think indigenous, or grassroots peace building can be used? If you don't go to speak to the people, how do you know their problem? You can sit in parliament and create a law. But you don't really know what's on the ground.
>
> There is a parliamentary select committee on agriculture. There is a parliamentary select committee on food and all of those things. They have gone around West Africa some time ago to do a study. They said they were going to do a study to see how the cattle farmer, crop farmer conflict has been dealt with. I don't know what that committee has come up with. But before they go abroad, they should deal with locals. They should come down to the local area. They should go to Agogo. They should go to Bawku.

Malik emphasizes the constraints of policies established by governments without enough involvement from the local population. He underscores the significance of comprehending the regional circumstances and engaging indigenous or grassroots participants in the process of peacebuilding. According to Malik, stakeholders should ensure that their approaches to conflict

resolution are context- and socio-culturally appropriate for each locality. He also said that instead of having universal laws and policies, government must engage with each distinct locality separately:

> They should see how things are being done in the Volta region. Why is there no problem in the Volta region, but there is a problem in [the] Ashanti region? Why is there a problem in the Eastern region, but there is no problem in the Northern region? They are all cattle. They are all Fulani people herding them. So, what is right here, that is failing to be right over there. Look at this and then find a community that will be a model.
>
> And use that to create a law or a policy that will solve the problem. Otherwise, you can sit up here and create laws that will not reflect down there. Again, maybe you may not even have a model. But you could determine that each area should be dealt with on its own merit. Issues could be separate from one community to another. So, let's deal with them separately. That would be better, so that we can have a policy that deals with specific localities. And that cannot be generalized.

Malik's ideas align with the emancipatory peacebuilding precept that peacebuilding should focus on local 'targeted localities' rather than being 'broadly generalised'. Further, stakeholders, especially those from marginalised groups, may offer vital insights and views in this area. Malik explicitly highlights youth and women as groups who have been marginalized in this matter, although they are the ones who bear the brunt of the impact to a significant extent. Malik disclosed that, "with regards to the grassroots, the youth and women are one group that have been marginalized in this issue. However, they are the ones who are mostly affected. Because I understand that when the conflict starts, sometimes they use sexual violence against one another."

Malik's viewpoint highlights the importance of women and youth as active participants in peacemaking processes, since they may provide distinctive perspectives and experiences. Malik brings attention to the problem of sexual assault in times of conflict, emphasising that it is not just directed at female farmers but also towards the female children of the herdsmen and

farmers. His account highlights the significance of tackling gender-based violence and guaranteeing the participation of women in peacebuilding endeavours.

Moreover, those who hold influential opinions, such as Malik himself (a journalist and youth peace activist), can have a crucial impact on defining the storyline and fostering harmonious cohabitation. Malik underscores the importance of "moulding the storyline" and emphasizes the involvement of academics and media in presenting "the precise information." He also said that "academia is important. When we have the books reporting the accurate thing, we have newspapers or news media reporting the accurate thing. It will go a long way to changing a lot of the narratives." Adalla, a representative of the Agogo Municipal Assembly, also mentioned the opportunities that exist through the media for peacebuilding. She said, "this Fulani issue is a serious thing. We can only preach about peace, especially with these social media platforms that we have."

Opinion leaders play a crucial role in combating negative narratives and fostering a more comprehensive comprehension of conflicts by spreading factual facts and challenging stereotypes. Further, influential figures can promote inclusive and unbiased methods for establishing peace. Malik emphasizes the importance of "avoiding singling out individuals based on their ethnicity", as well as the dangers associated with ethnic cleansing.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that peacebuilding is an intricate and diverse undertaking. The successful resolution of disputes necessitates the active participation of stakeholders and influential individuals, as well as a thorough strategy that tackles the root causes of the conflicts. Malik emphasises the necessity of a "shift in mindset" among the Fulani community, specifically regarding the matter of ranching. This implies that peacebuilding

endeavours should not just concentrate on promptly resolving conflicts but also on implementing sustainable tactics that tackle underlying problems, such as land use, and foster lasting peace.

Ultimately, stakeholders and opinion leaders have a pivotal role in the process of fostering peace. Their participation guarantees that attempts to construct peace are tailored to the individual circumstances, encompassing all parties, and capable of being maintained over time. Through active involvement with local communities, confronting detrimental myths, and promoting inclusive strategies, these individuals may actively contribute to the establishment of a society characterized by peace and harmony.

**Zoning and Ranching as a Conflict Prevention and Resolution Strategy**

An important theme emerges from the interviews as a tool for peacebuilding, namely the need for zoning and demarcation of areas for farming and grazing. For instance, Alhaji Banga suggests that the community should come together to zone the available space, allocating specific areas for crop farming and others for cattle grazing. Some of the residents who suggested zoning said it would reduce land disputes. Since zoning would create clear boundaries and prevent encroachment, it would reduce conflicts between the two groups. Alhaji Banga further suggested that "if there is a clear line separating the farming and grazing areas, it would significantly reduce the conflicts by about 95 percent." Some of the farmers also suggested that zoning could be beneficial, whereby plots of land are zoned for specific activities, such as crop farming and cattle grazing. They suggested that by clearly demarcating these zones and implementing penalties for straying into prohibited areas, the conflict can be mitigated.

The only challenge with zoning, as noted by some participants, is non-compliance and a lack of confidence in the initiative by some people. Malik, a Fulani journalist and a former

herdsman, also mentioned the "potential for ranching, which has been successful in other countries but unsuccessful in Ghana due to non-compliance and ineffective policies." Alhaji Chief Banga also noted the same challenge with zoning and non-compliance by some herdsmen and the impacts of such behaviour on the conflicts.

However, some participants believed that zoning can be effective if there are some policy changes and effective monitoring, as well as people's acceptance of the policies. Malik acknowledged the need for a mindset change among Fulani herders regarding the benefits of ranching and the importance of proper cattle orientation. He said that "without such mindset changes, there will be non-compliance among some cattle herders as they believe that nomadism and ranching or zoning cannot go together, traditional herdsmen believe that their cattle must be allowed to wander around and graze freely without restrictions to particular zones."

The discussions highlight zoning as a key peacebuilding strategy to reduce land disputes between farmers and herdsmen by designating zones for farming and grazing. However, challenges like non-compliance, ineffective policies, and resistance from traditional herders, who view unrestricted grazing as essential, must be addressed through policy changes, enforcement, and mindset shifts.

**Advocacy, Peace Education, and Cross-Cultural Contact as Peace building Strategies**

In terms of potential solutions to this intercommunal conflict, Alhaji Idrisu suggests that there needs to be better understanding and communication between the Fulani people and the farmers. He mentions that "the Fulani people live in the forest, and you live at home. You do not understand their language." This highlights the need for cultural and linguistic bridges to be built so that both parties can engage in meaningful dialogue and find common ground. There is a need

for cultural contact to bridge the gap and to embrace cultural pluralism as a tool for peacebuilding. For instance, Baba emphasizes the need for increased engagement and education, particularly at the grassroots level. He suggests that "peace education will let them know each other, let them know that they are each other's keeper."

Cross-cultural contact and the building of cordial relationships between the Fulani and farmers were evident as helping to build peace in certain situations. For instance, Madam Amma, a female opinion leader, commented about her friendship with a Fulani woman who she relates to cordially and does not believe would harm her, "even the Fulani people in Agogo, I have a friend among them. A lady is my friend. We do many things together; I am not afraid of her."

All the respondents acknowledged the importance of peaceful coexistence. Peace education was mentioned several times as an important peacebuilding tool. This underscores the need for more advocacy, sensitization, and peace education strategies in Agogo. They also acknowledged the relationship between peace, education, and development. Halima, a young Fulani female, for example, emphasized the importance of peace for education and youth peace activism through peace, stating that "without peace there will be no education" and "without peace you can't live and this can start with the young people" This suggests that the absence of peace has severe consequences, affecting not only the social fabric but also the overall development of communities. It also highlights the importance of fostering a sense of shared responsibility and understanding among different communities. Madam Amma also noted how she is using peace education at home to sensitize her children about building and maintaining a peaceful society in Agogo. Amma narrated how she socializes her children into seeing the Fulani as good neighbours:

> When we are at home with them, we can have discussions. When your children come back from school, you can ask them, what did you learn in school? and so that is the same way that we can have discussions with them.
>
> This is how the Fulani came; this is what they did and now this is what we are doing to ensure that we can have peace. We are just telling them what has happened. If they see that peace does not prevail, they have killed my mother, they have killed my father and now they want to kill me. What can I do to survive and then they will do that. But if there is peace and everything is all right, there is no conflict, we will be okay.

Baba, a young journalist of Fulani descent whose parents were cattle herders, also encouraged the use of peace education to build sustainable peace in Agogo. He also noted the importance of peacebuilding from the ground up, he said, "you know, peace is built from the ground up. First of all is understanding, which is of course education not just in the classroom but understanding how the world keeps evolving. The world has evolved so much that we can actually learn to accept others who are different from us." He also recognized how peace education can be included at cultural events and at any opportunity where groups are gathered as part of continuous peace education and advocacy training. One of the group observation events that I attended as part of my data generation methods was the wedding of a young Fulani couple. The groom used the opportunity to spread messages of peaceful coexistence and love. Baba, in his interview, referred to that as an example of an opportunity for peace education within the community. Baba expressed this "what they are doing is just basically this is a wedding ceremony However, we've inculcated the peace messages, Concentration on peace, you get a continuous education. The drama that was displayed is based on education and peace."

Adalla, a young female participant, and a representative of the Agogo Municipal Assembly also echoed the importance of ground-up approaches, youth involvement, and peace education to peacebuilding. Adalla explained that peacebuilding is a slow and continuous process of educating key stakeholders in the community:

> So, the youth should also try to help with peacebuilding .... I think there should be sensitization and education as well. There should be peace talks, and those kinds of things, yes. Then later as an assembly, we can collaborate with key stakeholders concerning peace. Then come down to the various municipalities and engage them. But this will take like a long time. Like a period because of the experience. I think it is a gradual process, but we can start from the bottom.

Malik, a young journalist in the Fulani community, also highlights the importance of peace education in dispelling stereotypes, stating, "a lot of the people who do the things they do may be doing it out of ignorance. Maybe it is not deliberate. They don't want to be stereotypical. They don't even know." Malik's comments suggest that conflicts may arise from a lack of understanding and misinterpretation of cultural practices. He believes that peace education can teach people, including the youth about other cultures and improve diversity and inclusion in the community. Malik further emphasizes the need for interdependence and cooperation, stating, "The Fulani lady knows that if she wants to buy fish, she has to go to the other woman who is not a Fulani person. The other woman also knows that if she wants cheese on her food, she must go to the Fulani person." Such interdependence, when acknowledged and respected, can foster a sense of unity and shared superordinate goals.

In terms of practical solutions with regards to peace education, Malik proposes a multi-faceted approach that includes economic integration, cultural exchange, and education. He suggests, "Put them [youth] together to engage in vocations. Train them together. Organize their programs. Allow them to marry. Let them intermingle." This approach aims to break down barriers and promote social cohesion especially among the younger generations. Additionally, Malik emphasizes the importance of effective communication and education, stating, "They should be educated and explained to." This highlights the need for targeted initiatives that address the specific needs and challenges faced by different ethnic groups.

With regards to removing negative stereotypes about the Fulani group, Malik emphasizes the need for a platform for the Fulani people to voice their concerns, stating, “Because Fulani people don’t have a mouthpiece. When anything is said against them, they can’t come and defend themselves.” He claims that the lack of representation and voice exacerbates the tensions and prevents effective dialogue and resolution. Further, he suggested that strategies such as teaching the youth about non-violence in schools as a tool to address gender-based violence can be applied in the context of Agogo.

In addition to peace education, some participants noted that other types of education, for instance, ranching, zoning, and modern techniques of farming and cattle rearing, can help overcome the challenges associated with climate change and the struggle over limited land resources between farmers and herdsmen. Baba mentioned that the use of technology can boost grass growth to feed the Fulani’s cattle deescalating intergroup conflict:

> For the overgrazing, you know lack of education is a problem. The majority of them are not really vested in modern-day technology things, you know I mean just one piece of land can grow as much as you know, what do you call it, food products that would be like a hundred people, but we are still lacking.
>
> So, the education here, to be in full and what do you think that your leadership and other stakeholders can do to ensure that this education (sic). We should devise new ways if you’d have to even pay someone to go somewhere to go cut these grass bring them you hoard them so, then numerous technologies that you can use to feed the cattle because for a Fulani man, the cattle is like they are gold. You know, so it’s very very necessary.

This section highlights the importance of peace education in addressing the land disputes and intercommunal conflict between farmers and Fulani herders in Agogo. The people acknowledge that peace education and cross-cultural contact are essential in fostering understanding, cooperation, and reducing stereotypes, with both youth and women playing key roles in peacebuilding efforts.

**The Meanings of Peace According to the People of Agogo: Socioeconomic and Human Development as Peace in Agogo**

In trying to understand the peacebuilding processes that exist in Agogo, I wanted to first understand what peace even means to the people of Agogo. I was surprised by some of the responses I received by simply asking the question, "what does peace mean to you?" I was interested in understanding what peace even meant to the people and what approaches could be used to address their quest for a peaceful society and sustainable peace in Agogo. This is because the evidence from literature and news reports on clashes between farmers and herdsmen suggests that previous peacebuilding and conflict resolution strategies have been ineffective. I strongly believe that part of the reason was that the idea of peace in the minds of the government, NGOs working on peacebuilding, and the local populations themselves were not aligned. Therefore, I decided to investigate what peace means to an individual in Agogo, whether the person is Fulani or Akan (from the farming group in Agogo) or even of a different ethnicity.

According to some participants, this is what peace means: For example, farmer Yaa articulated that, "peace is when you can live without any problems and feel free in all things, you have no stress." In addition, farmer Kofi, disclosed that peace means that his community can live peacefully and not be harmed by Fulani herders:

> That no one is frustrating you. You have sound mind to work as a farmer. That is your peace. My father never went to school. He was a farmer. My mother never went to school. She was a farmer. That is what they used to train me until I grew up. And farming was what we were doing until the Fulani people pounced on us and now all our things are destroyed. They killed and wounded so many people in this town.

Both farmers averred that peace means to live in freedom and without fear, stress, or frustration. Other responses indicated that peace meant respect; for example, Amma stated that respect is at the cornerstone of peaceful relations between both the farmer and herder communities:

> You are here, no one accuses you of anything. You also do not accuse anyone or deal wickedly with anyone. If you live in a home and you all do not agree on anything, there is no peace. And so, peace depends on many factors. Maybe between your child and yourself. A man once said, a pastor he said children must respect their mothers. Those of you married to sons, respect their mother. If you do not respect your mother-in-law, there will be no peace. If you do not respect your sister-in-law, there will be no peace.

The role of religion in peace also arose as some of the responses discussed what peace meant to individuals and their communities, and how they believed peace could be achieved in Agogo. Some participants indicated that peace meant being blessed by their God and that prayer was a means of achieving peace in their community. As Anna said praying to her God brought some solace in processing the intercommunal violence in her town:

> As women, what can we do? We went to church to pray that God should remove the crisis from here. It was as if you are in your home and someone from outside would come every day to beat you. That was painful. We cannot go to the farm. But we have lands. We have enough lands to grow so much food. So much food to feed ourselves and other. But we cannot go to the farm and that was a problem.
>
> The politicians did their part and as a citizen in this town, what I needed the most was that God would save us as he saved the Israelites from the Egyptians. As a woman, you cannot do anything and so all I did was pray. You cannot just talk to them to stop and so all we did was pray. The local council would organise a group, the church, my church dedicated a whole week to prayer so that we could cancel that issue.

Another farmer also shared similar sentiments, saying, "women are not as bold as men. We also prayed for the Agogoman group so that we can win the case so that peace will prevail in Agogo." Others believed that peace meant socioeconomic development and the availability of social amenities. Opanin Bob, an opinion leader, believed that peace simply means community development:

> Peace means a lot because without peace, there can be no community. There is no way anyone can develop outside peace and that is what we used to have when we were kids. The limited development and I am calling it limited because at that time we were not expecting much from the government. Everything was self, this communal labour, people doing it and the desire to have your town developed.
>
> We formed Agogo students' union and along the line we realised that those who were unable to attend secondary schools were part of the youth and so we had to expand it. That was when we got the AYA (Agogo Youth Association). The youth association

> which I happen to be the founding president and from there we used that as a forum to mobilise the youth. At that time, we were doing work on the streets and the community centre. At that time, we took a cue from our parents, Agogo improvement society. They built the courthouse.

Abdul, a young Fulani herdsman, said that "Peace is to live well." For some others, like Farmer Ekow and Farmer Atta, peace meant freedom or autonomy. "Peace is when no one is ruling over you. You rule over yourself; that is peace," says Ekow. Atta indicated that, "Peace is when you are not oppressed. You are able to work without any form of oppression." Baba contended that to the Fulani, peace means tolerance and must be built from the grassroot level, "you know, peace is built from the ground up. First is understanding, which is of course education not just in the classroom but understanding how the world keeps evolving. The world has evolved so much that we can learn to accept others who are different from us."

Other meanings of peace I generated during my participant observations were peace as education, peace as inclusion, peace as wellbeing, good health, the availability of government support and assistance with maintaining a safe environment, and peace as having a safe space to be whatever one wants to be. These interpretations and responses concerning what peace means to the people of Agogo contrast sharply with the approaches that successive governments have used to resolve the conflicts in Agogo. It is not surprising that there is still no sustainable peace in Agogo. The government of Ghana has been accused of using force to remove the Fulani and the arrest of perpetrators of acts of violence (both Fulani herdsmen and farmers) as a means of ensuring peace in Agogo. For example, Malik said that "The government's response has not been very specific. The government has been using brute force. The deployment of boots on the ground, weapons, and soldiers to drive out people. But how can you drive out a person from his own land?" Based on the data and findings, it seems that the government used force as a means

of ensuring peace in Agogo without understanding the local people's aspirations and understanding of what peace in Agogo should look like.

The local people are in desperate need of government assistance to maintain peace, yet the government has used peacekeeping and peace enforcement that have been counter-productive and have only worsened their plight. The use of force by the Ghanaian police and military has led to retaliations from the Fulani, who refuse to leave Agogo lands. In the end, local farmers, vulnerable women, and young people are victims of the actions of these government agencies. It was also noted that the lack of development and continuity of government projects have stalled peace processes.

Also, public-private partnerships for sustainable solutions like creating ranching zones have failed due to politics. A ranching committee was set up by the government to establish ranches and grazing corridors for the Fulani to reduce and prevent cattle from grazing on farmlands (as part of the government's peacebuilding strategies). However, this project proved ineffective for many reasons, such as lack of Fulani acceptance and political complications arising from changes in government. George, a staff member of a civil society organization and a member of the Ghana ranching committee, mentioned the issue of lack of continuity in government projects and policies due to political changes in our conversation:

> When one government started projects and they're out of power, the other governments abandoned it. So, they didn't want to start something. And then if, assuming this government is [in] power and NDC comes, they leave it abandoned. And already they're already stressed with their economy and all that (sic). So, I made some proposals for them in terms of how to manage. Part of it was to decentralize it, to make sure that the district assemblies take charge of it and manage it at that level.
> Instead of being managed at the national level, which would bring a lot of stress on them.
> The other option was to do private-public partnership. How do you get private sector into these areas? Because there are opportunities for meat processing if you have the reserves. We import a lot of meat from Nigeria, from all those places. If they're able

> to make a business case for maybe establishing one processing plant here, it will provide employment for the people. It will also help in terms of livestock production.
> It will generate revenue. It also supports the maintenance of the farm. It also supports the maintenance of those reserves. But you know, private sector people, they are profit-oriented, so they won't go to places where the profit will come over a long period of time. And especially when there are a lot of political uncertainties as well. If there's a change of government and they discontinue the contracts, what happens?

The discussions emphasize peace education, cultural exchange, and economic integration as key strategies for fostering understanding and reducing intercommunal conflicts between farmers and Fulani herders. Participants highlight the need for cross-cultural dialogue, advocacy, and education on modern farming and cattle-rearing techniques to address resource struggles and climate change challenges.

**Key Findings**

Several important insights were derived inductively from the empirical data regarding the opportunities and challenges associated with critical and emancipatory peacebuilding approaches in Agogo. First, the roles of women and youth in peacebuilding in Agogo were highlighted as both significant and challenging. Women were seen as key figures in fostering peace due to their central role in family and community life, often acting as peacebuilders within households and local networks. They were particularly active in organizing peace education programs and facilitating dialogue between conflicting groups. However, cultural norms and traditional gender roles posed challenges to their full participation in leadership positions and decision-making processes. Youth, on the other hand, were seen as proactive agents of peace, open to new ideas and solutions. Yet they face significant challenges such as limited power, lack of education, and insufficient engagement in peacebuilding initiatives, which hinders their potential impact.

Second, local civil society groups and community leaders played a crucial role in peacebuilding from below. These groups, deeply embedded in the local context, were better equipped to foster trust and facilitate dialogue between conflicting groups. Community leaders, including traditional and religious leaders, were instrumental in mediating disputes and promoting reconciliation. They helped bridge the gap between different groups, ensuring that peacebuilding efforts resonated with the community. However, these efforts were often limited by a lack of resources, political interference, and insufficient support from external actors, highlighting the need for stronger institutional support to maximize the impact of these grassroots initiatives.

Third, advocacy, peace education, and cross-cultural contact emerged as essential tools for fostering peace in Agogo. Peace education was noted as an important tool for raising awareness about coexistence, respect, and cultural understanding, especially at the grassroots level. Cross-cultural contact, particularly through cultural exchanges and dialogue, can help to bridge the divides between farmers and herders by promoting mutual respect and understanding. Advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the need for peaceful coexistence and to address the root causes of conflict were noted as essential for creating a peaceful environment in Agogo.

Finally, socioeconomic and human development were closely tied to the concept of peace in Agogo. For many, peace was defined not only as the absence of violence but as the ability to engage in daily activities, such as farming, without fear of disruption. Socioeconomic development, including infrastructure development, provision of basic services, and the creation of economic opportunities, was seen as key to fostering long-term peace. Development initiatives were considered important for addressing the primary causes of conflict, such as poverty and socioeconomic marginalization. However, challenges such as inconsistent government support,

lack of acceptance and understanding of government policies on ranching and zoning, political interference and the failure grassroot interventions efforts were also identified as major obstacles to achieving lasting peace.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion, peace is development, be it social, economic, or human development (well-being) at least according to the qualitative data. Without peace, none of these forms of development can exist in any society. The people of Agogo have indicated through their responses what peace means to them; they not only desire the absence of violence but also to be free to work for a livelihood (i.e. economic development). People want the government to provide social amenities and supports in Agogo (i.e. social development). And they want to be free from oppression and stress, have good health, and be included in their society, for example in peacebuilding processes or other community decisions (i.e. wellbeing/ human development that is positive peace). This desire for wellbeing was especially pronounced amongst youth and females

Positive peace requires not only the absence of violence, but it also means facilitating a situation in which people feel respected, valued, free, and have equal access to socioeconomic opportunities. Development can in this sense be understood as enabling other forms of freedom. The situation in Agogo today, according to residents, is one of neither positive nor negative peace. Physical violence is commonplace, and a lack of equitable access to the social amenities that people want, and need persists. There is unequal access to social and economic resources. All of this signifies the presence of social injustice, a hallmark of conflict and not a harbinger of peace.

The people of Agogo acknowledge the vital contributions of youth and women in peacebuilding, facilitating conversation and tackling community issues. Notwithstanding their efforts, such as demonstrations and active involvement, progress has been obstructed by challenges in engaging the Fulani community. The restoration of Agogo's history of peaceful coexistence between the farmers and Fulani is possible; however, the current issue lies in facilitating peaceful engagement between these two groups. Women and youth must be empowered, included in decision-making, and encouraged to participate in peacebuilding discourse to bring about lasting peace. Despite ongoing challenges, the community's dedication to peace and resilience provides optimism for peacebuilding and development.

# CHAPTER 8: OVERALL KEY FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Chapter eight concludes the study by discussing the overall key findings, my future research goals for this project, and the implications of these findings for peace building and conflict resolution theories and practice, and policy recommendations derived from the perspectives of the people.

## Overall Key Findings

Agogo farmer/herder disputes are catalyzed by clashes in agricultural and land use practices, prejudicial othering of the Fulani by the faming group, and corruption. This unstable and hostile atmosphere has encouraged violence and conflict between the two groups. Cultural and historical grievances tend to fuel conflicts (Avruch, 2013). This study found that cultural differences (related to traditional crop farming practices and nomadism) between the indigenous

Agogo and Fulani groups have stoked conflict. Local farmers and Fulani herders differ in their agricultural and herding cultural practices, causing wide rifts. The Fulani's livestock threaten local farmers' crops and resources, causing rising levels of hostility and bloodshed. Farmers believe that Fulani herders prioritise the needs of their animals over those of their neighbours, exacerbating tensions and hindering collaborative peacebuilding. Although crop growing and livestock husbandry are agricultural practices, Fulani nomadic lifestyle and land use practices conflict with Agogo farming practices.

Peacebuilding from below, which employs critical and emancipatory approaches, underscores the importance of leveraging cultural cohesion. Many societies, including those with deep divisions, have turned to cultural pluralism as a peacebuilding strategy (Skarlato et al., 2013). For instance, Amali and Jekayinfa (2013) argue that cultural acceptance and education grounded in pluralism could foster peace in multi-ethnic states. Concepts such as multiculturalism and cultural pluralism recognize the value of diverse socio-cultural groups coexisting. For ethnic pluralism to effectively promote peace, it is essential that all groups respect each other's rights and freedoms. By honoring gender, ethnic, and religious diversity, pluralism aims to address the socioeconomic differences that often fuel ethnic conflicts (Hing, 2014). However, while cultural pluralism and multiculturalism are valuable for peacebuilding, they come with their own challenges. Steinberg (2013) noted that the creation of peaceful societies based on cultural pluralism remains illusive. One major challenge is that achieving true respect and understanding among diverse groups can be difficult, particularly if historical grievances and power imbalances are not adequately addressed (Ross, 2013). In deeply polarized societies, merely promoting the coexistence of different cultures without tackling underlying issues can sometimes exacerbate tensions.

Additionally, a culture-centered approach to peacebuilding, which emphasizes respecting and integrating cultural identities, may face obstacles such as persistent stereotypes and ethnocentrism. In Ghana, for example, where cultural factors like religion and nomadism significantly contribute to farmer/herder conflicts, overcoming these deeply rooted biases through a culture-centered approach is crucial but challenging.

The Fulani herdsmen struggle to get citizenship rights because of the perception that they are non-indigenous to the country, only those who can prove that they were born in Ghana may be considered for citizenship, even in such cases, their claims are contested especially for those born outside a public hospital or birth center. Fulani herdsmen are nomadic people who usually settle in the forest. Due to their constant and sporadic movements, they often have their babies outside of the public hospital or birth centers, which makes it difficult for some babies to be recognized as indeed being born in Ghana (Setrana, 2021). Also, since the claims of Fulani ancestry are contested, they cannot claim citizenship through ancestry. The Fulani themselves also accept that they are non-indigenous to Ghana but are Ghanaians because their grandparents were born in Ghana (ancestry claims). These contentions about the Fulani's legitimacy and citizenship are important in the conflict because it is the basis upon which each group is claiming their rights to land and socioeconomic opportunities. The empirical findings of this study corroborate what Bukari and Schareika (2015) noted about farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana. These authors indicated that beneath this natural resource conflict is the issue of citizenship rights and how it impacts access to land, prejudice and xenophobia.

My study has found that the lack of proper land allocation and consultation between chiefs, the local farming group, and Fulani herders is a major peacebuilding challenge. Most participants stressed that the chiefs should involve the local community, including youth and

women, in land allocation decisions. The exclusion of youth from land allocation negotiations and decision-making has also exacerbated tensions. According to Bukari and Kuusaana (2018), the commercialization of land for large-scale agriculture has changed historical land agreements between the Fulani and the local chiefs. Land conflicts in Ghana exist even within families. The national land policy of Ghana has identified several causes of land disputes, including the poor demarcation of land boundaries, the sale of the same plot of land to multiple buyers, and conflicts of interest between landowners and the state (Government of Ghana, 1999). The traditional authority owns lands in Agogo, where farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana are most rampant and dangerous. The traditional state owns and leases the land for agricultural activities.

Also, this study found that some current traditional leaders have refuted land agreements between previous traditional leaders and the Fulani which was also noted by Bukari and Kuusaana (2018) as contributing to land disputes in the region. Additionally, local farmers struggle to find fertile land due to the sale of the available fertile lands by their chiefs to large agricultural companies for use in commercial farming. This issue of the commercialization of agricultural land in Agogo was also noted by Acheampong and Campion (2014) as a cause of land disputes in the region. The scarcity of farmland and the issue of land commercialization have created animosities between the local farmers and the Fulani pastoralists. The youth from the farming community have also argued that they are not consulted in land sales and are claiming that the Fulani do not have legitimate rights to the land due to their ethnicity.

The findings of this study indicated that the Fulani, on the other hand, are also using violence to reclaim lands their ancestors purchased from the local rulers in the past as also noted by (Paalo, 2021). Some local farmers who cannot afford to buy or lease land have also accused local leaders of selling land to the Fulani who can afford to buy it. These farmers have argued

that they must be given priority over the Fulani since they are the indigenes. This finding aligns with the claim the people with more political power within the traditional government have greater access to land security (Berry, 2017). The Fulani herdsmen suffer land tenure insecurity and have poor access to land resources because often times they do not have land titles/deeds as most of their land purchase agreements were undocumented (no paper trails) and were done through verbal contracts between their fore fathers and previous chiefs who may have died (Bayala et al., 2023).

Poor policy implementation and a lack of continuity of government peace intervention strategies are another challenge to peacebuilding in Agogo. The government's cattle ranching project, while well-intentioned, has been marred by mismanagement. For example, in a pilot project, people were encouraged to bring their cattle to the region to pretest the program. However, during this test people were not allowed to manage their own livestock. This created difficulties for the program because staff were not adequately trained to care for the cattle.

Also, corruption and poor leadership are another exacerbating factor in this issue. Further, a lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms exacerbates the conflicts. Some participants noted that poor leadership within both the Fulani and the farming communities is a problem. Poor leadership and control have also made indigenous peacebuilding approaches ineffective. Some of the participants argue that traditional approaches, such as dialogue and mediation, are not effective due to the nature of the conflict and the nomadic lifestyle of the Fulani. Instead, they emphasize the need for government intervention, stronger security measures, and adherence to ECOWAS transhumance laws and regulations.

The ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance was a laudable effort by states to promote peace, though some gaps existed in its implementation. Timpong-Jones et al. (2023) argue that

land-locked countries are more receptive to the protocol, unlike coastal countries (such as Ghana), due to the abundance of pasture and arable land in coastal regions. As a result, these coastal states do not implement the protocol in their national laws. Some states have included provisions in their national laws for the grazing routes, rights of entry to their territories, rights, and obligations of other land users (for example farmers, for the avoidance of conflicts), as well as the rights of pastoralists to access land resources freely (UNOWAS, 2019). However, some countries (including Ghana) have not clearly demarcated grazing paths and zones, which has led to clashes between herders and farmers over land use (UNOWAS, 2019). ECOWAS, as a prominent state actor, has a role to play in resolving farmer/herder conflicts in the West African sub-region.

Nevertheless, the slow pace of member states like Ghana in implementing these policies prevents progress. States are acting in their own interest rather than for the group interests of all members of ECOWAS. Politics and the lack of economic resources in poorer states such as Chad, where these Fulani pastoralists originate, give this minority group lower bargaining powers (WANEP, 2018). All ECOWAS states need to recognize that threats such as food insecurity, violent extremism, poverty, and human insecurity are cross-border issues that will affect all member states. Although the effects may be worse in poorer states, one state's economic and political instability inevitably affects the entire region. Therefore, ECOWAS must come to understand that immediate action is required to resolve farmer/herder conflicts and implement strategies for climate change alleviation in the region.

Further, some farmers noted that finding the culprit (i.e. the cattle owner) responsible for the destruction of a farm and seeking compensation is difficult because of the sporadic movement of the Fulani (which makes it difficult to locate them as they keep moving from place

to place). Many farmers also believe that the Fulani are armed, dangerous, and difficult to approach. Some of my study's participants criticized the government's response to the conflict, stating that the application of brute force and confrontational approaches, such as Operation Cow Leg (ordering law enforcement to shoot and kill cattle found on crop farms) and Fulani deportation, have been ineffective. The study found that some political and traditional leaders have sometimes used xenophobic narratives and policies to incite more violence. For their political agenda, successive governments in Ghana have exaggerated cultural differences to stoke ethnic animosities (Bukari, 2023). To please the local farmers, political leaders belonging to the majority ethnic group have sought to remove the Fulani from Ghana, which has exacerbated the conflict since both groups fight for their rights to the limited land resources (Ahmed & Kuusaana, 2021).

The study also found that gender-based violence contributes to fear and insecurity in Agogo. Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war which has led to retaliatory actions from aggrieved parties. The unfortunate result is a cycle of sexual violence whereby whenever a female from one group is sexually assaulted, the other group would retaliate with sexual violence against female of the other group. The bodies of women have become the "battlegrounds" (Seifert, 2018). Furthermore, Fulani females suffer another layer of injustice as their status as non-Ghanaian does not give them access to social and mental health supports like the indigenous Agogo females. The intersection of gender and citizenship is seldom considered in peace building efforts in Agogo according to accounts of some Fulani participants and has been less highlighted in literature on farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana.

The media's tendency to generalize because of the actions of a few individuals when they indict or tag an entire community has also exacerbated tensions. Media framing of the

farmer/herder conflict in Nigeria has exacerbated the tensions between the groups while also influencing the national conception of the parties at war (Nwankwo et al., 2020). Maiangwa (2017) also highlights how the framing of indigeneity of the Fulani intensifies violence in farmer/herder relations. Likewise in Ghana, media reports on the population explosion of the Fulani group and its possible impacts on land resources have been used by some traditional leaders in Agogo to attack the cattle herders. They have used such propaganda to create prejudice against the herdsmen (Bukari & Schareika, 2015), which has exacerbated the tensions in Agogo.

The empirical data points to the role of the media in both peace building and in exacerbating tensions in Agogo. Unfortunately, the latter is more prevalent according to many of my study participants, they claimed that some media organizations employ sensationalism, blame, rhetoric, and provocation, often framing the Fulani identity as inherently violent. This portrayal of the Fulani incites fear and panic, further exacerbating tensions and conflicts. Although some media have adopted a blend of investigative journalism, reconciliation efforts, and peace-oriented reporting in their coverage (Kolawole & Ojebuyi, 2024). Even those media outlets that adopt a more investigative approach still often focus on inflammatory narratives rather than fostering reconciliation (Kolawole & Ojebuyi, 2024). These actions of the media demonstrate the urgent need for media education on their powerful role in influencing public views and conflict dynamics. Instead of perpetuating stereotypes and escalating tensions, media and political leaders should be guided to use their influence constructively, promoting dialogue, understanding, and peacebuilding to help resolve conflicts and reduce violence.

More importantly, the study found that grassroot peace activism is essential and is ongoing in Agogo. The youth and women in Agogo have contributed to peacebuilding in diverse ways. Grassroot peace building however faces some challenges such as non-compliance by

certain individuals to peace agreements. The conflict has also shown a generational divide in approaches and resources to peace building efforts from below. The older generation emphasises collective action and self-sacrifice, while the younger generation expects compensation. This intergenerational divide makes it hard for the youth and the older people to agree on peacebuilding approaches especially grassroot activism.

Additionally, there are barriers to in finding a common ground to bridge cultures which make ground-up peace building in Agogo challenging. These sociocultural barriers prevent opportunities for peaceful dialogues. Peacebuilding can begin based on shared identities, culture, or mutual economic benefits. The Fulani and the farmers have admitted that they desire peace and economic security for their families which was also noted by (Bukari et al., 2018). Since they both desire to live in peace as they once did, they can reconcile their broken relationship by reminding themselves of the mutual economic benefits and peace they used to share.

The Fulani youth feel disenfranchised (Bukari, 2022) and so many of them have resorted to the use of violence to express their displeasure, especially in the case of Agogo's farmer/herder conflicts. More importantly, I found that the use of violence, particularly gender-based violence and sexual violence was across both groups and not just the Fulani as some authors and the media have portrayed in the past. Peace education may help to recondition the mindsets of the disputants, especially the young people, so that they develop non-violent attitudes and strategies to address their problems. Peace education and advocacy should particularly target the youth of both parties in farmer/herder conflicts, since news reports (Ghana Web News, 2018) and my findings indicate that they have been the main perpetrators of violence in Agogo. Peace education and advocacy should also focus on issues of gender equality, respect

for human rights, building cultures of peace, and ways to protect and prevent women from gender-based violence.

This study found that the people of Agogo have varying views on what peace means, even within the same households. For them, peace is not only the absence of violence but also includes aspects like well-being and access to essential social services such as good roads, clean water, and healthcare. Essentially, what the people of Agogo envision as peace aligns with Galtung's concept of positive peace. Ebhodaghe et al. (2024) emphasize that peacebuilding is most effective when it reflects local understandings of peace and human security. Understanding how different communities define peace is crucial before implementing peacebuilding interventions.

This insight led me to realize that if the people of Agogo could articulate their vision of peace in clear terms—perhaps through a concept like Galtung's positive peace (Galtung & Fischer, 2013)—they might have been able to communicate their desires more effectively to the Ghanaian government and other stakeholders, including NGOs working on peace building in Agogo. These organizations have struggled to build peace in Agogo because they have not fully understood what the people want. Instead of focusing solely on preventing violent clashes using force by law enforcement agencies, which is important but insufficient, a full appreciation of the local vision of peace could guide more meaningful peacebuilding efforts. In short, while the people of Agogo seek positive peace, they are often being given negative peace by the government and other stakeholders.

Given the lack of a local term or concept like Galtung's "positive peace," I believe that the Africanization of peacebuilding concepts and terminology could be beneficial in situations like this. By developing or adapting terms that resonate with local communities, peacebuilding

efforts could be better aligned with the needs and aspirations of those it aims to help. This approach would promote a more inclusive and culturally sensitive form of peacebuilding that recognizes and respects local perspectives.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the Agogo farmer/herder conflict, fueled by cultural clashes, prejudicial othering of the Fulani, and historical grievances, highlights the complexities of peacebuilding in deeply divided societies. The study reveals that while both the indigenous Agogo farmers and Fulani herders share a common desire for peace, their cultural differences, historical grievances, and struggles over land and resources have created a volatile environment that hampers collaborative peacebuilding efforts. Though there have been some peace building strategies including grassroot activism, these have not been adequate.

There are still some considerable challenges, including the lack of effective governance, the persistence of stereotypes, the commercial pressures on land use, and the deep-rooted ethnic tensions. The slow implementation of peacebuilding initiatives, both at the local and national levels, exacerbates these issues. Additionally, the media and political leaders' portrayal of the conflict has contributed to the escalation of tensions rather than the promotion of reconciliation. To achieve sustainable peace, it is imperative for all stakeholders—local communities, government authorities, traditional leaders, and international organizations—to engage in a more collaborative and culturally aware peacebuilding process. By addressing the root causes of the conflict, respecting cultural identities, and fostering dialogue and mutual understanding, there is hope for a more peaceful coexistence in Agogo.

**Policy Recommendations**

1. **Implement Existing Policies and Regulations on Transhumance.**

There already exist policies and programs to guide pastoralism and cattle rearing in Ghana and the entire West African sub-region. The goal of these policies and programs was originally to create a system whereby cattle rearing, and crop farming could co-exist without conflicts. The policies specified the provision of grazing corridors and separate areas for farming. These policies, such as the ECOWAS policy on transhumance and the Ghana ranching program, were lauded by some participants. However, they were not implemented well. ECOWAS policy lacks political support from all member states due to concerns about overgrazing, and therefore some countries are reluctant to fully enforce it. It is important for the ECOWAS member states to cooperate to ensure the full implementation and enforcement of the protocol on transhumance.

2. **Collaborate with and include the end-users on projects during program design and implementation.**

The Ghana ranching program seemed to have failed due to poor implementation strategies, whereby the state did not involve end-users (the herdsmen) in the project design. Some of these herdsmen felt that their cattle were not well cared for by the ranch caretakers and preferred to roam looking for grazing land instead of remaining confined to a ranch. Another issue concerns poor education on how a ranch works, leading to miscommunication between cattle owners (herdsmen) and government ranch staff, and eventually to mistrust and failure of the pilot program. It is important that projects such as the ranching project are designed and planned with the end-users in view and participating to ensure that they accept the program, understand it, and

feel that their voices and needs are valued. This will seem likely to ensure the cooperativeness, participation levels, and sustainability of the project.

3. **Inclusive and Participatory Decision-making and Peacebuilding Processes (Bottom - Up Approaches)**

Peacebuilding processes must be inclusive and ensure that the needs and goals of all groups are considered. The needs of population sub-groups may differ, and their ideas of what peace should look like and their aspirations for the future of their societies may also diverge. It is therefore important for all peacebuilding processes to be as inclusive as possible to ensure that decisions and resolutions on the way forward are widely accepted in the community. It may be a longer process to have all voices at the negotiation table; however, the decisions that will be made in such an inclusive context are more likely to be accepted by most stakeholders and will therefore offer a more sustainable path to peace.

## The Theoretical and Conceptual Implications of the Study for Peace and Conflict Studies Scholarship and Praxis

### *The Need for the Africanization of Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Terminologies, Theories, Philosophies and Concepts*

Based on my study's findings and my reflections on the Agogo people's perspectives of the causes of the conflict, as well as their ideas and visions for peace building in their community, I propose the following terms which would allow local populations, including the people of Agogo, to easily express their vision and desires for peace in their own language and based on their indigenous beliefs. I believe that having local terminologies for peace building

and conflict resolution is crucial because peace-building efforts that are disconnected from local beliefs, languages, and cultural practices are less likely to be embraced or sustained. By enabling people to express peace-building concepts and terminology in their own languages, external actors can ensure that their initiatives resonate with the community's values and norms, aligning with local practices of communal living and societal expectations. This approach fosters greater ownership, relevance, and long-term success in peace-building initiatives. As noted earlier, the people of Agogo described their vision for as one that exemplifies Galtung's concept of positive peace. However, the lack of an indigenous or local term to express this desire have sometimes led policy makers and peace builders from the government to civil society organizations working on peace building in the community to propose strategies and policies that are disconnected from what they people need or desire. Consequently, these peace building approaches have been unsustainable and less appreciated or acceptable to the local community.

I argue that as part of critical and emancipatory peacebuilding, the theoretical framework of peace processes and how conflict resolutions are defined or termed in themselves must be indigenous. In the case of farmer- herder conflicts in West Africa, definitions, terminologies, and theories must be Africanized. The terms, concepts, approaches, and theories must be expressed in ways that reflect the context of the people, their beliefs, languages and culture.

Africanizing peacebuilding concepts by using local terms and philosophies in people's own languages helps make peacebuilding efforts more relatable and impactful. When terms are aligned with the community's language and worldview, people are more likely to connect with the ideas, fostering a deeper sense of ownership and understanding. The Africanization of peacebuilding concepts, particularly in the context of farmer/herder conflicts, could provide a crucial pathway for developing solutions that are both relevant and effective in promoting lasting

peace. In Agogo, for instance, incorporating local philosophies and terms into peacebuilding activities can inspire community members to rally behind initiatives, as they resonate with their everyday experiences and cultural practices. With organizations like the Agogo Worldwide Association, Agogo Youth Association, and Fulani Youth Association already strengthening community ties through labor and remittances, integrating local concepts can further enhance cooperation, peace, and development by reinforcing shared values and fostering unity around a common vision. Based on the above, I propose the following terminologies:

- "*Tsayawa*" or "*matatu-kulle*" in Hausa which translate as deadlock or standstill
- "*Biakoye*" in Akan which literally means oneness (philosophically meaning togetherness and consensus building).
- *Pulaaku* which relates to unwritten norms and codes that guide the behaviors viewed as appropriate in the Fulani society.

These terminologies evoke the context of the conflict and peacebuilding processes from an African perspective (Agogo peoples' views and language). Tilley (2010) in her analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict defines "deadlock" as a state where both parties are unable to progress towards a resolution due to entrenched positions and mutual distrust, leading to a stagnation of dialogue and negotiation efforts. Tilley emphasizes that the deadlock is not merely a temporary impasse, but a systemic issue rooted in historical grievances, power imbalances, and the lack of political will on either side to engage in meaningful negotiations. Other PACS scholars such as (Caspersen, 2017) and (King, 2007) explain deadlock in a similar way, noting that it is a situation where by negotiations are unable to progress due to an impasse and each side unwilling to compromise their stance.

These definitions of deadlock explain exactly what is happening in Agogo, where neither the Fulani nor the farmers are willing to accept the demands of the other. Farmers want Fulani to be evacuated from Agogo. On the other hand, the Fulani feel that they are legitimate citizens and landowners in Agogo and therefore must not be forced from their lands. They were born on Ghanaian soil, their grandparents and parents were born in Ghana, and therefore by the principle of birthright citizenship they are to be considered legally Ghanaian.

The concept of a deadlock is not new to PACS. Many conflicts around the world persist in a state of deadlock, leading to the idea of "frozen" conflicts (Byrne, 2006). This type of situation has necessitated the creation of different forms of resolution by peace brokers such as the United Nations. In fact, according to the United States Institute of Peace (2023), the UN Security Council was created to solve deadlocks in peacebuilding. When a deadlock occurs in both Akan culture and Fulbe culture, the elders and traditional leaders are invited to broker peace. Peace talks and negotiations take place between the warring factions until an amicable compromise occurs. In the case of the Akan tribe of Agogo, the queen is called to intervene. This process shows the importance of women in brokering peace as part of the Akan indigenous peace processes, unlike some of the westernized strategies that may sometimes ignore females in contexts such as peace negotiations.

The Africanization of theoretical concepts and terminology refers to adapting and integrating existing theories, frameworks, and methodologies within the field of peacebuilding to better suit the African context. This involves incorporating indigenous knowledge systems, cultural values, historical experiences, and local views into the planning and implementation of peacebuilding strategies. Essentially, it means tailoring theoretical concepts and peacebuilding intervention and prevention strategies to fit the specific realities, needs, and challenges of

African societies, thereby making them more relevant, effective, and sustainable in promoting peace and reconciliation on the continent.

Further, the Africanization of peacebuilding theories is crucial for fostering sustainable peace on the continent. Africa's distinct social, cultural, and political contexts demand peacebuilding practices and methods that resonate with its diverse populations and challenges. By incorporating indigenous knowledge systems, grassroots participation, and contextualized strategies, Africanization ensures that peacebuilding efforts are not only effective but also culturally relevant and empowering. Africanization of peacebuilding theories and methods requires examining the role and/or possible contribution of African perspectives, cultures, and practices in addressing the root causes of conflict. It also implies enhancing local ownership and promoting inclusive and sustainable peace processes in line with African values of collective action and solidarity, such as the *ubuntu* philosophy.

The *ubuntu* philosophy, originating from Southern Africa, particularly among the Bantu peoples, is a worldview emphasizing humanity's interconnectedness and the importance of community and relationships (Akinola & Uzodike, 2017). At its core, *ubuntu* can be summarized by the phrase "I am because we are," highlighting the belief that a person's humanity is intrinsically connected to the humanity of others. This philosophy promotes compassion, empathy, and mutual respect, encouraging individuals to recognize the dignity and worth of every person. In contemporary discourse, *ubuntu* philosophy has been recognized as a valuable resource for peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and social justice efforts, both within Africa and globally (Ngoenha, 2006). South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation strategy employed the ideas within the ubuntu philosophy which value empathy and humanizing the victims, repentance and seeking forgiveness (Arthur et al., 2015). "The chairman of the South African Truth and

Reconciliation Commission Archbishop Desmond Tutu used Christian teaching of forgiveness together with the traditional Ubuntu principle to promote peace and helped resolved post-apartheid hatreds" (Arthur et al., pg. 75). The principles of ubuntu resonate with the idea of human interconnectedness and offer insights into fostering empathy, understanding, and solidarity among diverse communities. Indigenous peacebuilding processes leverage local cultural norms, community leadership, and consensus-building to strengthen mediation and reconciliation efforts (Murithi, 2008). It is worth noting that indigenous peace building practices and philosophies like ubuntu present challenges such as gender exclusion and may promote revenge and trauma, however, these indigenous approaches offer valuable principles that should be further researched, documented, and integrated into national and international peace and justice frameworks (Murithi, 2008).

Similar to the *Ubuntu* philosophy is the *Biakoye* philosophy of the Akan, the majority ethnic group in Agogo and Ghana in general. The *Biakoye* philosophy emphasizes communal values such as sharing, cooperation, and collective responsibility. It encourages individuals to prioritize the well-being of the community over their personal interests and to strive for harmony and peace within society. It also underscores the importance of dialogue, consensus-building, and reconciliation in conflict resolution and restoring relationships. The Fulani group also have *Pulaaku* which is a code of conduct and values to guide the behaviours of Fulanis urging them to be respectful, to have integrity and emphasizes their responsibility to their communities. Overall, the *Ubuntu* and the *Biakoye* philosophies, and the *Pulaaku* norms serve as testaments to our shared humanity and the importance of nurturing relationships and building inclusive societies.

The reason why I chose Akan, Fulfulde and Hausa terminologies is because in Ghana, though the Fulani generally speak *Fulfulde*, the majority also speak *Hausa*. They generally

communicate with the local farmers in *Hausa* or *Akan* (an observation I made while in the field). In most parts of West Africa, including Ghana, *Hausa* has become a sort of *lingua franca*, or common language, that is spoken by many cattle herdsmen and traders who travel across the West African sub-region. *Akan* is the most widely spoken language in Ghana. Therefore, I believe that using these three languages would allow the Agogo people (and perhaps others within West Africa) to easily relate to the terms I seek to express.

**Contributions of the Study to Discourse on Farmer/herder Conflicts**

The study found that there are various causes of conflicts in Agogo which include prejudicial othering, poor implementation of policies on ranching, corruption, cultural differences and struggles over limited land resources, among others. Other studies on farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana and elsewhere have found similar causes of farmer/herder conflicts (as discussed in the chapters on the context and literature review). However, what is significant about my study is the inclusion of the perspectives of the Agogo people on what they believe are the causes of the conflicts, and how they envision sustainable peace building in Agogo.

Furthermore, my study includes the perspectives of population sub-groups, that is women and the youth, who have hitherto not been given enough attention in other studies on the conflict in Agogo. This study also reveals that there are generational differences in the views and ideas on peacebuilding strategies between the youth versus older people in Agogo. These generational divides highlight the need for more inclusive peace building approaches that value and include population sub-groups like the youth who feel marginalized in communal decision-making on

land allocation and peace building in Agogo. Although some studies on farmer/herder conflicts and other intercommunal conflicts have highlighted the need for the inclusion of grassroots and local groups in peace processes (as noted in the literature review and context chapters), my study emphasizes that there is a need to further investigate the different perspectives and experiences of sub-populations within grassroot groups and not to treat these groups as homogenous.

Additionally, this study considered issues of gender, particularly the role of women in peace building, impacts of the conflict on women, and issues of intersectionality by emphasizing the varied experiences of population sub-groups. For instance, as noted above, I show that even within female populations, the experiences of the conflict and aspirations for peace vary for Fulani women versus women from the faming group in Agogo. Understanding these nuances with regards to the experiences and needs of people affected by conflicts are critical for sustainable peace building not only for famer-herder conflicts but for other types of intercommunal conflicts.

More importantly, this study contributes to existing literature on farmer/herder conflicts by demonstrating how localized intergroup tensions can have far-reaching implications for national cohesion and regional stability. Focusing on the conflict in Agogo, Ghana, the research investigates how a seemingly isolated dispute between farming communities and Fulani herders has influenced broader national narratives surrounding the Fulani ethnic group. It explores the ways in which this conflict has contributed to the socioeconomic exclusion of Fulani communities and examines how both herding and non-herding Fulani populations in Ghana perceive and respond to such marginalization.

By incorporating the voices of non-herding Fulani individuals, who are not directly involved in the Agogo conflict, this study broadens the analytical scope of existing research. It

reveals how the impacts of localized violence can extend beyond immediate participants to shape the experiences of wider ethnic communities. In doing so, the study offers a more nuanced understanding of the social and political dynamics of farmer/herder conflicts.

Moreover, this research underscores the potential for localized conflicts to escalate into broader national and even regional crises if left unaddressed. Drawing parallels with the Ivorian civil wars, the study highlights the urgent need for proactive policy responses aimed at conflict prevention, community engagement, and inclusive governance. In this way, the study offers both theoretical insights and practical implications for policymakers concerned with conflict resolution, minority rights, and national security in Ghana and across West Africa.

Additionally, this study explored the role of the media in this conflict and how their narratives on farmer/herder conflicts are shaping the national conception of the Fulani group in Ghana including those who do not engage in pastoralism or cattle rearing and how this impacts peace building. Also, this study adds to literature on the inadequacy of conflict resolution and mitigation policies, and the challenges faced by law enforcement in their peace building and conflict resolution efforts, particularly issues of corruption even within the same groups. It also shows how some of these policies, such as ranching, if strengthened can have some potential contributions to lasting peace.

Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of recognizing local perspectives on what peace building should look like. It explored the existing local peace building efforts in Agogo and the meaning of peace to the people of Agogo. Based of these findings, my study emphasizes on why understanding the needs of the locals and what they consider as peace must be an essential component of any peace building process, particularly in Agogo. The findings revealed the community's vision of "positive peace," which stresses their desire for non-

violence but also access to basic social amenities and opportunities for their well-being. Although there maybe less violent clashes in recent years in Agogo due to the deployment of state security officials in the area, according to the narratives of the locals, they want more than the absence of violence.

This study therefore draws the attention of policymakers and peace builders to the need to understand what local communities like Agogo who are experiencing conflicts desire for peace. My study also presents the importance of africanising peace and conflict resolution terminology as part of critical and emancipatory peace building approaches, noting that africanising these terminologies promote culturally grounded and inclusive peace building and conflict resolution strategies, as well as the respect for local and indigenous worldviews.

Finally, the study stresses the potential for peace education, advocacy and peer-mentorship as important peace building strategies, particularly through the youth. Both groups in conflict saw the need for peace education and the use of non-violent approaches, especially for the youth who they see as the future leaders of their communities. Based on this important finding, I am proposing starting youth-led peace clubs in Agogo as part of local and grassroot peace building (which is a core part of my future research goals).

**My Future Research Goals**

My interest in farmer/herder conflicts and peacebuilding developed during my work as an intern at the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), an NGO in Ghana. This internship experience exposed me to some issues that precipitate many violent conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa, such as ethnocentrism and xenophobia. I also realized the need for research in conflict-prone areas on prevention and resolution strategies emanating from the conflict parties

themselves, (addressing this need is a major goal for my research). Peace building interventions in Agogo have been unsustainable because they sometimes ignored the perspectives of the affected parties. My desire to support world peace and social justice influenced my research topic, and career goals. Working as a Policy and Program Analyst, I am always looking for practical solutions to social problems backed by empirical evidence.

The long-term goal of this research is for it to hopefully become the basis for starting peace education clubs and peer-to-peer mentorship programs among the youth in Agogo as a way to inculcate "cultures of peace" (Boulding et al., 2016). This goal of building a culture of peace through peace education and youth engagement in cross-cultural peace programs between the two groups was also shared and expressed by some of the local people who participated in my study. As part of this long-term goal, I plan to conduct a survey designed in collaboration with the youth and women of Agogo concerning specific projects and programs they believe they can start within their community to bridge cultural differences and create awareness about the potential of using nonviolence to resolve conflicts. The aim of the survey is to make the process of establishing these peace education clubs as participatory and emancipatory as possible. This would particularly empower these population subgroups in Agogo who have historically been left out of peace-making decisions and processes.

**Conclusions**

All the evidence suggests that peace initiatives operate most successfully when localized, and that Agogo should go back to using indigenous peace practices. The police, despite being important government actors with the ability to bring farmers and herders together in Agogo, face several challenges. In addition to having been charged with corruption, the police also

struggle with coordination and resource problems. The Agogo community has lost faith in the police as a viable means of resolving conflicts due to their reliance on the use of force.

Using local methods of resolving conflicts and promoting peace may work well to begin the process of sustainable peacebuilding in Agogo. The success of the peacebuilding efforts will depend on the involvement of the local population, especially women and young people. Within the practice and academic discipline of peace and conflict studies, emancipatory peace and a return to indigenous practices are nothing new.

In this thesis, I contend that part of this return to the local requires the use of vocabulary and ideas that align with the sociocultural norms and worldviews of the various local communities struggling with conflict. Farmer/herder disputes in Africa have been framed in the terms of several externally derived theories and concepts, but none of the theories I have looked at has embraced indigenous worldviews or local terminology. If people are invested in speaking their native language, they may be more inclined to relate to and grasp a peacebuilding-related notion or a word with roots in that language. This relatability proves to be a crucial component of peace education since it allows activists to focus more on advocacy and capacity development rather than on having to translate ideas, ideologies, or techniques from English or another foreign language. Therefore, the terms *Biakoye*, *Pulaaku* and *Ubuntu* capture the idea of peace through consensus. They also evoke the understanding that we are one people and must therefore learn to tolerate and respect one another.

## REFERENCES


Abdulai, A. S. J., & Smucker, T. A. (2024). Towards a livelihood-interdependence approach to framing adaptation in research and practice: evidence from farmers' and herders' relations in Northern Ghana. *Climate and Development*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2024.2399041

Abu-Nimer, M. (2013). Religion and peacebuilding. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (1 ed., pp. 84-95). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068175-15

Acheampong, E., & Campion, B. B. (2014). The effects of biofuel feedstock production on farmers' livelihoods in Ghana: The case of Jatropha curcas. *Sustainability*, *6*(7), 4587-4607.

Adebanwi, W. (2016). *Nation as Grand Narrative: The Nigerian Press and the Politics of Meaning*. University of Rochester Press.

Adebayo, A. G., Benjamin, J. J., Lundy, B. D., Adjei, J. K., Bingol, H. B., Córdova, F., Currie, V., Danso, K., Dickson, J., & Gohar, A. (2014). *Indigenous Conflict Management Strategies: Global Perspectives*. Lexington Books/Fortress Academic.

Adelakun, O. (2023). Gender Mainstreaming in Post-Conflict Reconstruction in North-East Nigeria. In A. Onuora-Oguno (Ed.), *Promoting Efficiency in Jurisprudence and Constitutional Development in Africa* (pp. 95-117). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13814-0_6

Adeogun, T. J., & Muthuki, J. M. (2018). Feminist perspectives on peacebuilding: The case of women's organisations in South Sudan. *Agenda*, *32*(2), 83-92.

Adjei, M. (2019). Women's participation in peace processes: a review of literature. *Journal of Peace Education*, *16*(2), 133-154.

Adjei, O.-W., Agyemang, S., & Afriyie, K. (2012). Non-Governmental Organizations and Rural Poverty Reduction in Northern Ghana: Perspectives of Beneficiaries on Strategies, Impact and Challenges. *Journal of Poverty Alleviation & International Development*, *3*(2).

Aganah, G. (2023). The Role of Local Agency in Peacebuilding: The Case of the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *30*(1), 1.

Agbedahin, A. V. (2019). Sustainable development, Education for Sustainable Development, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Emergence, efficacy, eminence, and future. *Sustainable Development*, *27*(4), 669-680.

Ahmed, A., & Kuusaana, E. D. (2021). Cattle ranching and farmer/herder conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the conditions for successes and failures in Northern Ghana. *African Security*, *14*(2), 132-155.

Akinola, A. O., & Uzodike, U. O. (2017). Ubuntu and the Quest for Conflict Resolution in Africa. *Journal of Black Studies*, *49*(2), 91-113. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934717736186

Akinyetun, T., Erubami, H. P., Salau, A. J., Bakare, T. O., & Ahoton, A. S. (2021). The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Promoting Social Inclusion among Rural Dwellers in Nigeria. *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Relationes Internationales*, *14*(2).

Annan, N., Beseng, M., Crawford, G., & Kewir, J. K. (2021). Civil society, peacebuilding from below and shrinking civic space: the case of Cameroon's 'Anglophone' conflict. *Conflict, Security & Development*, *21*(6), 697-725. https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2021.1997454

Appleby, R. S. O., A.; Little, David. (2015). *The Oxford handbook of religion, conflict, and peacebuilding*. Oxford University Press.

Arjun, S. (2017). On the Theory and Practice of the Right to Development. In K. Mennot (Ed.), *Challenges in International Human Rights Law* (1 ed., pp. 667-720). Routledge. (2014)

Arthur, D. D., Issifu, A. K., & Marfo, S. (2015). An analysis of the influence of Ubuntu principle on the South Africa peace building process. *Journal of Global Peace and Conflict*, *3*(2), 63-77.

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, *1*(3), 385-405.

Avruch, K. (2013). Culture Theory, Culture Clash, and the Practice of Conflict Resolution. In R. D. John Stone, Polly Rizova, Xiaoshuo Hou (Ed.), *Routledge Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution* (1 ed., pp. 81-95). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315635446-8

Avruch, K. (2020). *Three Frameworks for Understanding Intractable Social Conflict*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119430452.ch31

Ayantunde, A. A., Asse, R., Said, M. Y., & 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), 1097-1117. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-014-9515-z

Ayuba, C., & Ismaila, A. D. (2018). Identity conflicts as challenge to political stability in West Africa. *African journal of political science and international relations*, *12*(4), 42-53. https://doi.org/10.5897/AJPSIR2018.1076

Ba, O. B., & LeFrancois, B. A. (2011). Ethnic genocide, trauma, healing and recovery: The case of identity ruptures and restoration among Bosnian refugees. In T. Mayok, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies. Lanham: Lexington Books* (pp. 81-96).

Bah, A. B. (2010). Democracy and civil war: Citizenship and peacemaking in Côte d'Ivoire. *African Affairs*, 109(437), 597-615

Babale, A. M., & Nasidi, Q. Y. (2019). Role of mass media towards ending Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Benue state. *Kampala International University Journal of Humanities*, *4*(1), 15-22.

Badurdeen, F. A., Aroussi, S., & Jakala, M. (2023). Lived realities and local meaning-making in defining violent extremism in Kenya: implications for preventing and countering violent extremism in policy and practice. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *16*(1), 1-22.

Ballentine, K., & Nitzschke, H. (2013). Beyond Greed and Grievance: Policy Lessons from Studies in the political Economy of Armed Confilct. In *Security and Development* (pp. 159-186). Routledge.

Balta, E., & Altan-Olcay, Ö. (2016). Strategic citizens of America: transnational inequalities and transformation of citizenship. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *39*(6), 939-957. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1103882

Barnhardt, R., & Oscar Kawagley, A. (2005). Indigenous knowledge systems and Alaska Native ways of knowing. *Anthropology & education quarterly*, *36*(1), 8-23.

Bar-Tal, D., & Teichman, Y. (2009). *Stereotypes and prejudice in conflict: Representations of Arabs in Israeli Jewish society*. Cambridge University Press.

Bauer, G., Darkwah, A., & Patterson, D. (2017). Women and post-independence African politics. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*.

Bayala, E. R. C., Ros-Tonen, M., Sunderland, T., Djoudi, H., & Reed, J. (2023). Farmer-Fulani pastoralist conflicts in Northern Ghana: are integrated landscape approaches the way forward? *Forests, Trees and Livelihoods*, *32*(2), 63-89.

Behr, H. (2020). Peace-in-difference: A phenomenological approach to peace through difference. In *The Politics of Peacebuilding in a Diverse World* (pp. 53-69). Routledge.
Bekerman, Z. (2018). Interfaith education in Muslim, Jewish, Christian schools in Israel. *Journal of Religious Education*, *66*(2), 99-110.
Berry, S. (2017). Struggles over land and authority in Africa. *African Studies Review*, *60*(3), 105-125.
Bläsi, B. (2009). Implementing peace journalism: The role of conflict stages. *Conflict & Communication*, *8*(2).
Blay-Tofey, M., & Lee, B. X. (2015). Preventing gender-based violence engendered by conflict: The case of Côte d'Ivoire. *Social Science & Medicine*, *146*, 341-347. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.10.009
Bloemraad, I. (2015). Theorizing and analyzing citizenship in multicultural societies. *The Sociological Quarterly*, *56*(4), 591-606.
Bøås, M., Dunn, K. (2013). *Autochthony, melancholy and uncertainty in contemporary african politics*. Zed books. https://doi.org/ http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350221802.ch-002
Boege, V. (2006). Traditional Approaches to Conflict Transformation — Potentials and Limits.
Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education : an introduction to theory and methods* (4th ed.). Montreal.
Bonner, A., & Tolhurst, G. (2002). Insider-outsider perspectives of participant observation. *Nurse Researcher (through 2013)*, *9*(4), 7.
Bose, S. (2007). *Contested lands: Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Boulding, J. R., Clements, K. P., Morrison, M. L., & Strimling Yodsampa, A. (2016). Elise Boulding's Legacy to the Twenty-First Century: Reflections on Her Contributions to Understanding Conflict and Peace. *Negotiation and conflict management research*, *9*(4), 274-291. https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12078
Bourdieu, P., & Biggart, N. W. (2002). The Forms of Capital. In *Readings in Economic Sociology* (pp. 280-291). Blackwell Publishers Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470755679.ch15
Brantmeier, E. J. (2013). Toward a critical peace education for sustainability. *Journal of Peace Education*, *10*(3), 242-258. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2013.862920
Bräuchler, B. (2015). The Emerging Cultural Turn in Peace Research. In *The Cultural Dimension of Peace* (pp. 1-37). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137504357_1
Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). *Thematic analysis*. American Psychological Association.
Brewer, J. (2013). Sociology and peacebuilding. In (pp. 172-183). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068175-23
Brown, R. (2020). The social identity approach: Appraising the Tajfellian legacy. *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 59(1), 5-25.
Brown, M. A. (2020). Hybridity and dialogue–approaches to the hybrid turn. In *Hybridity in Peacebuilding and Development* (pp. 40-57). Routledge.
Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "Identity". *Theory and Society*, *29*(1), 1-47. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3108478
Bukari, K. N. (2023). Violent farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana: constellation of actors, citizenship contestations, land access and politics. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, *57*(1), 115-137. https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2022.2031235
Bukari, K. N., Bukari, S., Sow, P., & Scheffran, J. (2020). Diversity and Multiple Drivers of Pastoral Fulani Migration to Ghana. *Nomadic peoples*, *24*(1), 4-31. https://doi.org/10.3197/np.2020.240102
Bukari, K. N., & Osei-Kufuor, P. (2021). Drivers of "labour" migration of Fulani herders to Ghana. *Transborder Pastoral Nomadism and Human Security in Africa: Focus on West Africa*, 14.

Bukari, K. N., & Schareika, N. (2015). Stereotypes, prejudices and exclusion of Fulani pastoralists in Ghana. *Pastoralism : research, policy and practice*, *5*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-015-0043-8

Bukari, K. N., Sow, P., & Scheffran, J. (2018). Cooperation and Co-Existence Between Farmers and Herders in the Midst of Violent Farmer/herder Conflicts in Ghana. *African Studies Review*, *61*(2), 78-102. https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.124

Burke, P. (2020). Identity. In P. Kivisto (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Theory* (pp. 63-78). Cambridge University Press doi:10.1017/9781316677452.005

Burton, J. (1990). *Conflict: Basic Human Needs*. St. Martins Press.

Byrne, S. (2023). *Civil Society, Peacebuilding, and Economic Assistance in Northern Ireland: Local Knowledge, Wisdom, and Practices*. Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003387190

Byrne, S., & Carter, N. (2002). Social cubism: six social forces of ethnopolitical conflict in Northern Ireland and Quebec. *ILSA journal of international & comparative law*, *8*(3), 741.

Byrne, S., Clarke, M. A., & Rahman, A. (2018). Colonialism and peace and conflict studies. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *25*(1), 1.

Byrne, S., Keashly, L., Woodhouse, T., & Ramsbotham, O. (2000). Working with Ethno-political Conflict: A Multi-modal Approach. In *Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution* (1 ed., pp. 97-120). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315038285-7

Byrne, S., & Nadan, A. (2012). The social cube analytical model and protracted ethnoterritorial conflicts. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 61-80). Lexington.

Byrne, S., Thiessen, C., Senehi, J., Scott, I. M., & Matyók, T. (2020). Foreign peacebuilding intervention and emancipatory local agency for social justice. In *Routledge Companion to Peace and Confl. Studies* (1 ed., pp. 131-141). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315182070-11

Byrne, S. J. (2006). The roles of external ethnoguarantors and primary mediators in Cyprus and Northern Ireland. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *24*(2), 149-172.

Cabot, C., & Cabot, C. (2017). Causal linkages between environmental change and conflict. *Climate Change, Security Risks and Conflict Reduction in Africa: A Case Study of Farmer/herder Conflicts over Natural Resources in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Burkina Faso 1960–2000*, 45-62.

Cabot, C., & Cabot, C. (2017). *Climate change and farmer–herder conflicts in West Africa. Climate Change, Security Risks and Conflict Reduction in Africa: A Case Study of Farmer-Herder Conflicts over Natural Resources in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Burkina Faso* 1960–2000, 11-44.

Calléja, L. (2022). Building inclusive peace from the bottom-up: the case of Liberia. *International Journal of Non-Profit Sector Empowerment*, *1*(1).

Cárdenas, M. L. (2019). Women-to-Women Diplomacy in Georgia: A Peacebuilding Strategy in Frozen Conflict. *Civil Wars*, *21*(3), 385-409. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2019.1667713

Cárdenas, M. (2023). Decolonizing perspectives in peace research. *Handbuch Friedenspsychologie, 05*, . https://doi.org/10.17192/es2022.0022

Caspersen, N. (2017). Moving Beyond Deadlock in the Peace Talks. In S. E. Cornell (Ed.), *The International Politics of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict: The Original "Frozen Conflict" and European Security* (pp. 173-194). Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60006-6_9

Cavin-Hambrick, M. (2019). *Elise Boulding: A Pioneer in Peace Research, Peacemaking, Feminism, Future Studies and the Family*. Wiley Inc. https://doi.org/10.1111/pech.12340

Caxaj, C. S. (2015). Indigenous Storytelling and Participatory Action Research:Allies Toward Decolonization? Reflections From the Peoples' International Health Tribunal. *Global Qualitative Nursing Research*, *2*, 2333393615580764. https://doi.org/10.1177/2333393615580764

Chandler, D. (2017). *Peacebuilding The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1997-2017* (1st 2017. ed.). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-50322-6

Chandler, D., & Richmond, O. (2015). Contesting postliberalism: governmentality or emancipation?. *Journal of International Relations and Development*, *18*, 1-24.
Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage.
Christie, D. J., & Morrison, D. M. (2021). Empathy and Peace. In K. Standish, H. Devere, A. Suazo, & R. Rafferty (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Positive Peace* (pp. 1-23). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3877-3_50-1
Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. Sage.
Cook-Huffman, C. (2010). The role of identity in conflict. In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution* (pp. 272-285). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203893166-13
Couture, A. L., Zaidi, A. U., & Maticka-Tyndale, E. (2012). Reflexive Accounts: An Intersectional Approach to Exploring the Fluidity of Insider/Outsider Status and the Researcher's Impact on Culturally Sensitive Post-Positivist Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8077.8.1.05
Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
Darnell, R. (2022). Anthropological Approaches to Human Nature, Cultural Relativism, and Ethnocentrism: Human Nature, Human Identity. *Anthropologica (Ottawa)*, *51*(1), 187–194.
De Bruijn, M., & van Dijk, R. (2001). Cultures of travel:Fulbe pastoralists in central Mali and pentecostalism in Ghana. In M. De Bruijn, R. van Dijk, &, & D. Foeken (Eds.), *Mobile Africa: changing patterns of movement in Africa and beyond* (Vol. 1, pp. 63-88). Brill.
De Haan, C., Dubern, E., Garancher, B., & Quintero, C. (2016). *Pastoralism development in the Sahel: a road to stability?* World Bank Washington, DC, USA.
Del Sarto, R. A. (2019). Stuck in the Logic of Oslo: Europe and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. *The Middle East journal*, *73*(3), 376-396. https://doi.org/10.3751/73.3.12
Dossa, N. I., Hatem, M., Zunzunegui, M. V., & Fraser, W. (2014). Social consequences of conflict-related rape: The case of survivors in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, *20*(3), 241.
Dunton, A. D. C. (2023). *The U.N. Security Council Was Designed for Deadlock — Can it Change? Absent structural reform, elected members of the council have been able to change how it functions even without the P5's veto power.* https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/03/un-security-council-was-designed-deadlock-can-it-change
Ebhodaghe, A., Kamal, B., & Bayo, A. (2024). Evaluation of the Components in Pre-Conflict and Post-Conflict Phases of Peace-Building. *International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences*, *6*(10), 2564-2573. https://doi.org/10.51594/ijarss.v6i10.1678
ECOWAS. (1998). *Protocol on cross border transhumance in West Africa: Proposal for action plan*. ECOWAS ABUJA: Published by UNFAO in collaboration with the ECOWAS. Retrieved from https://ecpf.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CrossBorder-Transhumance-WA-Final-Report-1.pdf
ECOWAS. (2003). Forty-ninth Session of the Council of Ministers Regulation C/REG.3/01/03 Relating to the implementation of the regulations on Transhumance between the ECOWAS Member States *ECOWAS Official Journal*, *42*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/https://ecpf.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Regulation-2003-English.pdf
Ejdus, F. (2021). *Revisiting the Local Turn in Peacebuilding*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56477-3_3
Eke, S., & Byrne, S. (2022). Bringing the Indigenous into mainstream peacemaking and peacebuilding in farmer/herder conflicts: Some critical reflections. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding and Ethnic Conflict*. Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003000686
Ekwealor, C. T. (2017). The Art of Conflict Transformation in Africa. *Peace review (Palo Alto, Calif.)*, *29*(3), 341-349. https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1344534

Eti, C. I. (2009). Objectivity and balance in conflict reporting: Imperatives for the Niger Delta press. *The Journal of African Studies*, *3*, 91-104.
Faxon, H., Furlong, R., & Sabe Phyu, M. (2015). Reinvigorating resilience: violence against women, land rights, and the women's peace movement in Myanmar. *Gender & Development*, *23*(3), 463-479.
Fenton, S. (2018). *The Good Friday Agreement*. Biteback Publishing. https://books.google.ca/books?id=uJV-tAEACAAJ
Fiala, A. (2018). The Pacifist Tradition and Pacifism as Transformative and Critical Theory. *Acorn*, *18*(1), 5-28. https://doi.org/10.5840/acorn20192229
Fisher, R. J., & Kelman, H. C. (2011). Perceptions in conflict. Intergroup conflicts and their resolution In Bar-Tal, D. (Ed.).*Intergroup Conflicts and Their Resolution: A Social Psychological Perspective* (pp. 61-81). Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203834091
Flaherty, M. P., Matyók, T. G., Byrne, S., Tuso, H., Cheung, M., Cook-Huffman, C., Creary, P., Golan, G., Graham, S., & Hansen, N. (2015). *Gender, Violence, and Dehumanization*. Lexington Books/Fortress Academic.
Fox, J., & Akbaba, Y. (2014). Restrictions on the Religious Practices of Religious Minorities: A Global Survey. *Political Studies*, *63*(5), 1070-1086. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12141
Fuchs, C. (2021). *Foundations of Critical Theory: Media, Communication and Society* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003199182
Funk, N., & Woolner. C. J. (2011). Religion and Peace and Conflict Studies. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical issues in peace and conflict studies : theory, practice, and pedagogy* (pp. 349-370). Lexington Books.
Galtung, J. (2015). Peace Journalism and Reporting on the United States Essays and Interviews. *Brown J. World Aff.*, *22*, 321.
Galtung, J., & Fischer, D. (2013). Positive and Negative Peace. In *Johan Galtung: Pioneer of Peace Research* (pp. 173-178). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-32481-9_17
Georgakopoulos, A., Goesel, C., & Redfering, K. J. (2019). Peace education and youth: A scholarship of engagement study infusing mentorship and the arts. In *Routledge companion to peace and conflict studies* (pp. 93-109). Routledge.
George, J., Adelaja, A., Awokuse, T., & Vaughan, O. (2021). Terrorist attacks, land resource competition and violent farmer/herder conflicts. *Land Use Policy*, *102*, 105-241. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.105241
George, N., & Shepherd, L. J. (2016). Women, Peace and Security: Exploring the implementation and integration of UNSCR 1325. *International Political Science Review*, *37*(3), 297-306.
GhanaDistricts. (2023). *Asante Akim North Municipal Assembly*. Retrieved August 8, 2023 from https://www.ghanadistricts.com/Home/District/9
GhanaStatisticalService. (2014). *2010 Population and Housing Census District Analytical Report-Asante-Akim North District*. https://www2.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010_District_Report/Ashanti/ASANTE%20AKIM%20NORTH.pdf
GhanaWebNews. (2019). Woman 50, raped by Fulani men in Sissala East. *Ghana Web News*. https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Woman-50-raped-by-Fulani-men-in-Sissala-East-719339
Goetz, A. M., & Jenkins, R. (2016). Agency and accountability: promoting women's participation in peacebuilding. *Feminist Economics*, *22*(1), 211-236.
Gopin, M., Appleby, R. S., Omer, A., & Little, D. (2015). Negotiating Secular and Religious Contributions to Social Change and Peacebuilding. In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding* (pp. 355-391). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199731640.013.0014

Gouse, V., Valentin-Llopis, M., Perry, S., & Nyamwange, B. (2019). An investigation of the conceptualization of peace and war in peace journalism studies of media coverage of national and international conflicts. *Media, War & Conflict*, *12*(4), 435-449.
Goyol, Y. I. (2019). The role of women in peace-building: Liberia in perspective. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, *14*(1), 123-135.
Green, E. (2011). Indirect Rule and Colonial Intervention: Chiefs and Agrarian Change in Nyasaland, ca. 1933 to the Early 1950s. The International Journal of African Historical Studies, 44(2), 249-274
Gurr, T.R. (2011). *Why Men Rebel* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315631073
Hagen, J., J. (2016). Queering women, peace and security. *International Affairs*, *92*(2), 313-332. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12551
Hanitzsch, T. (2004). Journalists as peacekeeping force? Peace journalism and mass communication theory. *Journalism Studies*, *5*(4), 483-495. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700412331296419
Haynes, J. (2011). Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace Building: The role of religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia. In *Religion, Politics and International Relations* (1 ed., pp. 107-126). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203818633-8
Hill, M., & Hansen, N. (2011). Disability, conflict and untold stories in Northern Ireland. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 97-114). Rowman & Littlefield
Hills, C., & MacKenzie, M. (2017). *Women in Non-State Armed Groups after War: The (Non) Evolution of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*. Palgrave Macmillan.
Hing, B. O. (2014). *Beyond the Rhetoric of Assimilation and Cultural Pluralism: Addressing the Tension of Separatism and Conflict in an Immigration-Driven Multiracial Society*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203820490-13
Hirsch, M. (2008). The generation of postmemory. *Poetics today*, *29*(1), 103-128. https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-2007-019
Hitlin, S. (2011). *Values, personal identity, and the moral self*. Springer.
Hogg, M. A. (2016). Social Identity Theory. In *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory* (pp. 3-17). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6_1
Homer-Dixon, T. F. (2015). Environmental changes as causes of acute conflict. In *Conflict After the Cold War* (pp. 624-638). Routledge.
Hudson, H. (2009). Peacebuilding through a gender lens and the challenges of implementation in Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire. *Security Studies*, *18*(2), 287-318.
Hutchison, E., & Bleiker, R. (2024). Emotions, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (1 ed.,pp. 201-211). Routledge.
Idowu, O. O. (2024). Women-Focused Legislation, Economic Empowerment and Sustainable Development in Africa. In A. O. Akinola & E. A. Liaga (Eds.), *Development and Regional Stability in Africa: Unlocking Potential* (pp. 107-130). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-56695-0_7
IOM. (2023). *West and Central Africa Transhumance Crisis Response Plan 2023*.
Issifu, A. K., Darko, F. D., & Paalo, S. A. (2022). Climate change, migration and farmer–herder conflict in Ghana. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *39*(4), 421-439.
Iyorza, D., & Andrew, A. (2022). The Politics of Media Reportage in the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria.
Jarman, N. (2016). The Challenge of Peace Building and Conflict Transformation: A Case Study of Northern Ireland. *Kyiv-Mohyla Law and Politics Journal*, *2*(2), 129-146. https://doi.org/10.18523/kmlpj88597.2016-2.129-146
Jeong, H. W. (2019). Conflict transformation. In *Routledge companion to peace and conflict studies* (pp. 25-34). Routledge.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., Hoy, A. W., Paul, P. V., & Stroot, S. A. (2013). *Peace education*. Taylor and Francis.
Justino, P., & Santos, R. (2013). Employment and household welfare. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Handbook of peacebuilding.* (pp. 263-275). Routledge.
Kaushal, N. (2019). *Blaming Immigrants: Nationalism and the Economics of Global Movement*. Columbia University Press. https://doi.org/10.7312/kaus18144
Kerr, P., Durrheim, K., & Dixon, J. (2019). Xenophobic Violence and Struggle Discourse in South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African studies (Leiden)*, *54*(7), 995-1011. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909619851827
King, A., & Owen, M. (2020). The Promise and Challenge of Multireligious Peacebuilding in the 21st Century: A Myanmar Case Study. *Religions*, *11*(3), 121. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11030121
King, C. (2007). *Grasping the nettle: analyzing cases of intractable conflict* (Vol. 28). US Institute of Peace Press. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00555.x
Kolawole, R. A., & Ojebuyi, B. R. (2024). Mediatized Conflict: A Case of Nigerian Media Reportage of Farmer/herder Conflict. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Violence in Africa* (pp. 1133-1149). Springer.
Korostelina, K. V. (2009). *Identity conflicts: models of dynamics and early warning*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203893166-19
Korostelina, K. V. (2014). *Political insults: How offenses escalate conflict*. Oxford University Press, USA.
Korostelina, K. V. (2020). National resilience to protracted violence in Ukraine. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *27*(2), 4.
Krätli, S., & Toulmin, C. (2020). *Farmer-herder conflict in sub-Saharan Africa?* International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) London, UK.
Kriesberg, L., & Dayton, B. W. (2016). *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated.
Kroeker, W. (2022). Emancipatory peacebuilding and conflict transformation: Mindanao as a case study. In *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding and Ethnic Conflict* (pp. 280-291). Routledge.
Kugbega, S. K., & Aboagye, P. Y. (2021). Farmer/herder conflicts, tenure insecurity and farmer's investment decisions in Agogo, Ghana. *Agricultural and Food Economics*, *9*(1), 19. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40100-021-00186-4
Küpper, B., Wolf, C., & Zick, A. (2010). Social status and anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe: An examination from the perspective of social dominance theory. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence (IJCV)*, 4(2), 205-219. https://doi.org/10.4119/ijcv-2826
Kuusaana, E. D., & Bukari, K. N. (2015). Land conflicts between smallholders and Fulani pastoralists in Ghana: Evidence from the Asante Akim North District (AAND). *Journal of Rural Studies*, *42*, 52-62.
Lanrewaju, A. F. (2012). Urbanization, housing quality and environmental degeneration in Nigeria. *Journal of Geography and Regional planning*, 5(16), 422-429.
Lee, V. (2018). A culture of positive peace: Counseling for structural and cultural transformation. In C. C. Lee (Ed.), *Counseling for social justice*, (pp.23-42). ACAF, Alexandria, VA.
Lederach, J. (2015). *Little book of conflict transformation: Clear articulation of the guiding principles by a pioneer in the field*. Simon and Schuster.
Lederach, J. P. (1998). *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. United States Institute of Peace press.
Lederach, J. P. (2010). Strategic peacebuilding: An overview. In J. P. Lederach & R. S. Appleby (Eds.), *Strategies of peace: Transforming conflict in a violent world* (pp. 19-44). London.
Lederach, J. P., & Peace, W. U. S. I. o. (1997). *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. United States Institute of Peace Press Washington, DC.
Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'local turn'in peacebuilding: A literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third world quarterly*, *36*(5), 825-839.

Lewis, D., Kanji, N., & Themudo, N. S. (2020). *Non-governmental organizations and development*. Routledge.
Lloret-Blackburn, R. (2011). *Cultural Relativism in the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council* (International Catalan Institute for Peace Working Paper, Issue.
Longman, T. P. (2010). *Christianity and genocide in Rwanda*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511761070
Lopes, C., Mieke T. A., & Hoeks, C. C. M. Q. (2015). Losing ground: a critical analysis of teachers' agency for peacebuilding education in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Peace Education*, *12*(1), 56-73. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2014.940516
Luedke, A. E., & Logan, H. F. (2018). 'That thing of human rights': discourse, emergency assistance, and sexual violence in South Sudan's current civil war. *Disasters*, *42*(S1), S99-S118. https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12273
Luke, T. J. (2013). Reflections on Peace and Conflict: An Outsider Inside Peace Psychology. *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, *19*(4), 432-440. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035045
Luna, L., & Byrne, S. (2021). Civil Society Leaders' Experiences of Peacebuilding in Londonderry/Derry City, Northern Ireland: Transforming Cultural and Psychological Barriers. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *28*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.46743/1082-7307/2021.1745
Lynch, J., & McGoldrick, A. (2013). Responses to peace journalism. *Journalism*, *14*(8), 1041-1058. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884912464175
Mac Ginty, R. (2013). *Routledge handbook of peacebuilding* (1 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068175
Mac Ginty, R. (2015). Where Is the Local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, *36*(5), 840-856. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1045482
Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. (2016). The fallacy of constructing hybrid political orders: a reappraisal of the hybrid turn in peacebuilding. *International peacekeeping (London, England)*, *23*(2), 219-239. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2015.1099440
Mac Ginty, R., & Williams, A. (2016). Conflict and development. In *The Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (pp.181-191). Routledge.
Macionis, J. J., & Gerber, L. M. (2011). *Sociology*. Pearson Prentice Hall.
Magnarella, P. J. (2005). The background and causes of the genocide in Rwanda. Journal of International Criminal Justice, 3(4), 801-822.
Maiangwa, B. (2017). "Conflicting Indigeneity" and Farmer/herder Conflicts in Postcolonial Africa. *Peace review (Palo Alto, Calif.)*, *29*(3), 282-288. https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1344527
Mamdani, M. (2018). *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton University Press.
Mamdani, M. (2020). *When victims become killers: Colonialism, nativism, and the genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton University Press.
Manojlovic, B. (2018). Representations of Contentious History Through Art: The Collective Trauma of Guernica. *Journal of Cultural and Religious Studies*, *6*(11), 2328-2177.
Masuku, S. (2022). The AU's Constitutive Act: Contextual Threats and Its Implementation in Modern-Day Africa. In *Peace Studies for Sustainable Development in Africa: Conflicts and Peace Oriented Conflict Resolution* (pp. 751-761). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
Matyók, T., Flaherty, M., Tuso, H., Senehi, J., & Byrne, S. (2014). *Peace on earth: the role of religion in peace and conflict studies* (1 ed.). The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.
Maulden, P. A. (2013). Education and learning. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Handbook on Peacebuilding* (pp. 287-296). Routledge.
Maweu, J. M. (2019). Community media: Building trust and resilience in Kenyan post-election conflicts. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, *9*(2), 9-32.
McEvoy-Levy, S. (2013). Children, youth and peacebuilding. In T. Mayok, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 159-176). Lexington.

McEvoy, S. (2009). Loyalist Women Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland: Beginning a Feminist Conversation about Conflict Resolution. *Security studies*, *18*(2), 262-286. https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410902900095
McKeown, S., Haji, R., & Ferguson, N. (2016). *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory Contemporary Global Perspectives* (1st 2016. ed.). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6
McKeown, S., & Taylor, L. K. (2017). Intergroup contact and peacebuilding: Promoting youth civic engagement in northern Ireland. *Journal of social and political psychology*, *5*(2), 415-434. https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v5i2.769
McLeod, L. (2015). A Feminist Approach to Hybridity: Understanding Local and International Interactions in Producing Post-Conflict Gender Security. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *9*(1), 48-69. https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2014.980112
Michels, A. M. B., Management, U. L. R. U. P. M. P. G. a., Bestuurkunde, L. S., & Matters, U. L. R. U. P. (2011). Innovations in democratic governance-How does citizen participation contribute to a better democracy? *International review of administrative sciences*, *77*(2), 275-293. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311399851
Misra, B. S. (2023). Ethnic Conflict and the Vulnerability of Women. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, *5*(5). https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2023.v05i05.8193
Mitchell, C. (2006). *Religion, Identity and Politics in Northern Ireland: Boundaries of Belonging and Belief*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315244709
Mlambo, V. H., Zubane, S. P., & Mlambo, D. N. (2020). Promoting good governance in Africa: The role of the civil society as a watchdog. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *20*(1), 1-8.
Moerane, G. K. (2024). The United Nations Charter and the African Union Constitutive Act: The search for compatibility in addressing African peace and security. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 1-12.
Mohammed, S., Dalib, S., & Adisa, R. M. (2018). News framing and conflict management by the Nigerian press: A discourse analysis of farmers/herdsmen clashes. *Babcock Journal of Mass Communication*, *3*(1), 1-15.
Moritz, M. (2006). Changing contexts and dynamics of farmer/herder conflicts across West Africa. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, *40*(1), 1-40.
Moritz, M. (2010). Understanding herder-farmer conflicts in West Africa: Outline of a processual approach. *Human organization*, 69(2), 138-148
Mtukwa, T. (2015). Informal peacebuilding initiatives in Africa: Removing the table. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, *15*(1), 85-106.
Müller-Crepon, C. (2020). Continuity or Change? (In)direct Rule in British and French Colonial Africa. *International Organization*, 74(4), 707-741. doi:10.1017/S0020818320000211
Murithi, T. (2008). African indigenous and endogenous approaches to peace and conflict resolution. In D. J. Francis (Ed.), *Peace & conflict in Africa* (pp. 16-30). Zed Books.
Musante, K., & DeWalt, B. R. (2010). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers*. Rowman Altamira.
Mwambari, D. (2017). Women-led non-governmental organizations and peacebuilding in Rwanda. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, *7*(1), 66-79.
Mwikali, W., & Wafula, D. (2019). Effects of farmer-herder conflicts on socio-economic development of the local communities in Mutitu Sub County of Kitui County, Kenya *International Journal of Sciences:Basic and Applied Research*,1963–2013. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/249336825.pdf
Nagle, J. D., Pearson, F. S., & Suprun, M. (2000). Overcoming Wilsonianism: American Conflict Resolution and Ethnic Nationalism in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. In Byrne, S., Irvin, C., Dixon, P., Polkinghorn, B., & Senehi, J. (Eds.). *Reconcilable differences: turning points in ethnopolitical conflic*t (pp. 23-40). West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.

Nartey, M., & Ladegaard, H. J. (2021). Constructing undesirables: A critical discourse analysis of othering of Fulani nomads in the Ghanaian news media. *Discourse & communication*, *15*(2), 184-199. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481320982095
Nelson, L. L., & Milburn, T. W. (1999). Relationships Between Problem-Solving Competencies and Militaristic Attitudes: Implications for Peace Education. *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, *5*(2), 149-168. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327949pac0502_4
Ngoenha, S. E. (2006). Ubuntu : new model of global justice? *Indilinga African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, *5*(2), 125-134. https://doi.org/doi:10.10520/EJC61513
Nicolas-Gavilan, M. T. (2018). *Peace Journalism in Iberoamerica: Mexican and Spanish Newspaper Coverage of Conflict.* Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
O'Reilly, M., Súilleabháin, A. Ó., & Paffenholz, T. (2015). *Reimagining peacemaking: Women's roles in peace processes*. International Peace Institute.
Obiekwe, K. (2009). In search of appropriate peacemaking/peacebuilding paradigm in dealing with Africa's intrastate violent conflicts: Considering lederach's faith-based conflict transformation and peacebuilding approach. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, *1*(13), 1-27. https://doi.org/www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk
Odak, S. (2021). *Religion, conflict, and peacebuilding : the role of religious leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (1 ed.). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55111-7
Ogunmola, D., & Badmus, I. A. (2009). Côte D'ivoire (Ivory Coast). *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, *13*(1), 94-128.
Okoli, A. C., & Atelhe, G. A. (2014). Nomads against natives: A political ecology of herder/farmer conflicts in Nasarawa state, Nigeria. *American international journal of contemporary research*, *4*(2), 76-88.
Olaniyan, A., Francis, M., & Okeke-Uzodike, U. (2015). The cattle are "ghanaians" but the herders are strangers: Farmer/herder conflicts, expulsion policy, and pastoralist question in agogo, Ghana. *African studies quarterly*, *15*(2), 53-67.
Oppong, Y. P. A. (2002). *Moving Through and Passing On: Fulani Mobility, Survival and Identity in Ghana* (1 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315124858
Orakzai, S. B. (2015). Indigenous Cultural Resources for Peacebuilding
Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Philosophy and Conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. *International Journal of Conflict Engagement and Resolution*, *3*(2), 180-199. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26928693
Otu, B. O., & Impraim, K. (2021). Aberration of Farmer - Pastoralist Conflicts in Ghana. *Peace review (Palo Alto, Calif.)*, *33*(3), 412-419. https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2021.1953813
Owen, M., & King, A. (2019). Enhancing the Efficacy of Religious Peacebuilding Practice: An Exploratory Evidence-Based Framework for Assessing Dominant Risks in Religious Peacebuilding. *Religions*, *10*(12), 641. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10120641
Paalo, S. A. (2021). The politics of addressing farmer/herder conflicts in Ghana. *Peacebuilding*, *9*(1), 79-99.
Paalo, S. A. (2022). Title: Intergenerational Gaps in Women's Grassroots Peacebuilding in Ghana: A Critique of "Inclusive Peacebuilding". *Journal of Aggression Conflict and Peace Research*, *14*(4), 287-303. https://doi.org/10.1108/jacpr-01-2022-0663
Padilla-Díaz, M. (2015). Phenomenology in educational qualitative research: Philosophy as science or philosophical science. *International journal of educational excellence*, *1*(2), 101-110.
Paffenholz, T. (2015). Civil society and peacebuilding. *Development Dialogue*, *63*(3), 108-118.
Palmiano Federer, J. (2021). Toward a normative turn in track two diplomacy? A review of the literature. *Negotiation Journal*, *37*(4), 427-450.
Pate, U. A., & Dauda, S. (2015). The media, responsibility and conflict-sensitive reporting in Nigeria. In O. F. Ike & S. E. Udeze (Eds.), *Emerging trends in gender, health and political communication in Africa: A book in honour of Prof. Ikechukwu Ndolo* (pp. 214-229). Rhyce Kerex Publishers.

Pely, D. (2016). *Muslim/Arab mediation and conflict resolution: Understanding sulha* (Vol. 1st). Routledge. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315644554
Penu, D. A. K., & Paalo, S. A. (2021). Institutions and Pastoralist Conflicts in Africa: A Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, *16*(2), 224-241. https://doi.org/10.1177/1542316621995733
Peterson, A., Hattam, R., Zembylas, M., & Arthur, J. (2016). Key Issues in Critical Peace Education Theory and Pedagogical Praxis: Implications for Social Justice and Citizenship Education. In (pp. 265-284). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51507-0_13
Peterson, M. A., Smandych, R., Oriola, T., & Kabir Yusuf, M. (2023). Media Reform and Prospects for Peace and Conflict-Sensitive Journalism in Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal of International and African Research on Media and Peacebuilding. *African Security*, *16*(2-3), 123-150.
Pham, S. (2021). The Distinctions of Heideggerian Phenomenological Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *22*(2), 261-273. https://doi.org/10.1108/qrj-09-2021-0093
Pierre, B., & Richardson, J. G. (1986). The forms of capital. In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241-258). Greenwood Press New York.
Pierson, C. (2019). Gendering peace in Northern Ireland: The role of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. *Capital & Class*, *43*(1), 57-71.
Pilecki, A., & Hammack, P. L. (2013). "Victims" Versus "Righteous Victims": The Rhetorical Construction of Social Categories in Historical Dialogue Among Israeli and Palestinian Youth. *Political Psychology*, *35*(6), 813-830. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12063
Prügl, E., Kunz, R., Achakpa, M., Myrttinen, H., Onyesoh, J., Rahmawati, A., Rigual, C., & Udasmoro, W. (2021). *Introduction: Local Peacebuilding Through a Gender Lens* (International Development Policy Series, Issue.
Pruitt, L. J. (2019). Youth, peace, and security: Global trends and a Colombian case study. In *Routledge Companion to Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 326-336). Routledge.
Pugh, M. (2005). The political economy of peacebuilding: A critical theory perspective. *International journal of peace studies*, *10*(2), 23-42.
Qutoshi, S. B. (2018). Phenomenology: A philosophy and method of inquiry. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, *5*(1).
Reardon, B.(2021). *Decolonising Conflicts, Security, Peace, Gender, Environment and Development in the Anthropocene.* Springer
Rasid, R., Djafar, H., & Santoso, B. (2021). Alfred Schutz's Perspective in Phenomenology Approach: Concepts, Characteristics, Methods and Examples. *International Journal of Educational Research and Social Sciences (IJERSC)*, *2*(1), 190-201.
Ratnavale, D. (2015). Sri Lanka's "Ethnic" Conflict. In J. Carter, G. Irani, & V. D. Volkan (Eds.), *Regional and Ethnic Conflicts: Perspectives from the Front Lines, CourseSmart eTextbook* (pp. 159-178). Routledge.
Ray, A. (2017). Everyday Violence During Armed Conflict: Narratives From Afghanistan. *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, *23*(4), 363-371. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000281
Reimer, L. E., Schmitz, C. L., Janke, E. M., Askerov, A., Strahl, B. T., & Matyók, T. G. (2015). *Transformative change: An introduction to peace and conflict studies*. Lexington Books.
Rich, S., Graham, M., Taket, A., & Shelley, J. (2013). Navigating the Terrain of Lived Experience: The Value of Lifeworld Existentials for Reflective Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *12*(1), 498-510. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691301200125
Richmond, O. P., & Mitchell, A. (2011). *Hybrid Forms of Peace: From Everyday Agency to Post-Liberalism* (1 ed.). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230354234
Richmond, O.P. (2022). Emancipatory Peace. In: Richmond, O.P., Visoka, G. (eds) The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77954-2_188

Roberts, D. D. (2024). The Role of Black Christian Beliefs in the Civil Rights Movement: A Paradigm for a Better Understanding of Religious Freedom. *Religions*, *15*(5), 527. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15050527
Ross, M. H. (2013). The politics of memory and peacebuilding. In *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (pp. 106-116). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068175-17
Rubenstein, R. E. (2001). Basic human needs: The next steps in theory development. *International Journal of peace studies*, *6*(1), 51-58.
Saldana, J. (2021). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. SAGE Publications.
Schilling, J., Locham, R., Weinzierl, T., Vivekananda, J., & Scheffran, J. (2015). The nexus of oil, conflict, and climate change vulnerability of pastoral communities in northwest Kenya. *Earth system dynamics*, *6*(2), 703-717. https://doi.org/10.5194/esd-6-703-2015
Schirch, L. (2015). Ritual, Religion, and Peacebuilding. In A. Omer, R. S. Appleby, & D. Little (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199731640.013.0020
Seiferle-Valencia, A. (2017). *An Analysis of Franz Boas's Race, Language and Culture* (1st ed.). Macat Library. https://doi.org/ https://doi.org/10.4324/9781912128266
Seifert, R. (2018). Sexual violence and the cultural construction of war. In T. Inal, Merril, D (Ed.), *The production of rape as a weapon in the making of "just" wars. rape cultures and survivors: An international perspective* (pp. 1-22). Praeger. https://doi.org/ http://publisher.abc-clio.com/9781440853074
Sen, A. (2001). Development as Freedom Oxford Paperbacks. In: Clarendon Press: Oxford, UK.
Senehi, J. (2002). Constructive Storytelling: A Peace Process. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *9*(2), 41-63. https://doi.org/10.46743/1082-7307/2002.1026
Senehi, J. (2015). The role of constructive, transcultural storytelling in ethnopolitical conflict transformation in Northern Ireland. In J. Carter, Irani, G & Volkan, V. (Ed.), *Regional and ethnic conflicts: Perspectives from the front lines* (pp. 227-238). Routledge.
Senehi, J. (2019). Theory building in peace and conflict studies: The storytelling methodology. In T. M. Sean Byrne, Imani Michelle Scott, Jessica Senehi (Ed.), *Routledge Companion to Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 45-56). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315182070-4
Setrana, M. B. (2021). Citizenship, Indigeneity, and the Experiences of 1.5- and Second-Generation Fulani Herders in Ghana. *Africa Spectrum*, *56*(1), 81-99. https://doi.org/10.1177/00020397211002940
Setrana, M. B. (2022). Promoting Peace and Managing Farmer/herder Conflict: The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Agogo, Ghana. *African Studies Review*, *65*(2), 430-454. https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2021.92
Setrana, M. B., & Kyei, J. R. K. O. (2021). Migration, Farmer/herder Conflict and the Challenges of Peacebuilding in the Agogo Traditional Area, Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Geography*, *13*(2).
Setrana, M. B., Kyei, J. R. K. O., & Nyarko, D. (2022). Beyond the binary debates in migration: Experiences of Fulani nomads, sedentary Fulani, and autochthone farmers in Agogo, Ghana. *Migration Studies*, *10*(2), 152-171. https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnac012
Shapiro, D., & Fisher, R. (2005). *Beyond Reason:Using Emotions as You Negotiate*. Penguin.
Shehu, A., & Alhassan, M. (2018). A Paradigm Shift from War to Peace Journalism: Towards a New Orientation in Journalism. *Uniuyo Journal of Communication Studies*, *2*(1), 137-144.
Skarlato, O., Byrne, S., Ahmed, K., Hyde, J. M., & Karari, P. (2013). Grassroots peacebuilding in Northern Ireland and the border counties: Elements of an effective model. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *20*(1), 4-26.
Snyder, A.C. (2003). Setting the Agenda for Global Peace: Conflict and Consensus Building (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315243436
Staszak, J.-F. (2009). Other/otherness. In R. T. Kitchin, N (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* (pp. 43-47). Elsevier.

Steinberg, G. M. (2013). The limits of peacebuilding theory. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Routledge handbook of peacebuilding* (pp. 36-53). Routledge.
Stets, J. E., & Serpe, R. T. (2013). Identity Theory. In *Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 31-60). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6772-0_2
Stimec, A., Poitras, J., & Campbell, J. J. (2011). Ripeness, Readiness, and Grief in Conflict Analysis1 Arnaud Stimec, Jean Poitras, and Jason J. Campbell. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies: Theory, Practice, and Pedagogy* (pp. 143-158).
Strauss, A. C., J. (Ed.). (1994). *Grounded theory methodology: An overview*. Sage Publications, Inc.
Tanabe, J. (2017). Beyond Liberal Peacebuilding: A Critique of Liberal Peacebuilding and Exploring a Postmodern Post-Liberal Hybrid Model of Peacebuilding. *International Relations and Diplomacy*, *5*(8), 447-459.
Taras, R., & Ganguly, R. (2015). *Understanding ethnic conflict*. Routledge.
Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K., Hanitzsch, T., & Nagar, R. (2016). Beyond peace journalism: Reclassifying conflict narratives in the Israeli news media. *Journal of Peace Research*, *53*(2), 151-165.
Thiessen, C. (2011). Emancipatory Peacebuilding: Critical Responses to (Neo)liberal Trends. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical issues in peace and conflict studies : theory, practice, and pedagogy.* (pp. 115-142).
Thiessen, C. (2013). *Local ownership of peacebuilding in Afghanistan: Shouldering responsibility for sustainable peace and development*. Lexington Books.
Tilley, V. (2010). *The one-state solution: a breakthrough for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian deadlock* (1 ed.). University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.94535
Timpong-Jones, E. C., Samuels, I., Sarkwa, F. O., Oppong-Anane, K., & Majekodumni, A. O. (2023). Transhumance pastoralism in West Africa – its importance, policies and challenges. *African Journal of Range & Forage Science*, *40*(1), 114-128. https://doi.org/10.2989/10220119.2022.2160012
Tinsley, J. H., & Gwiriri, L. C. (2022). Understanding the Representation of Pastoralism in Livestock-Related Climate Adaptation Policies in Ghana and Nigeria: A Review of Key Policy Documents. *Nomadic peoples*, *26*(1), 83-105.
Tonah, S. (2005). The unholy alliance between chiefs and Fulani herdsmen in the middle Volta basin of Ghana. *Ghana Social Science Journal*, *3*(1-2), 91-112.
Tonah, S. (2008). Migration, resource use conflicts stakeholders in the Middle Volta Basin. In *New developments of health, agricultural resources and socio-economic activities in the Volta Basin, Ghana VBRP* (pp. 136-154).
Toohey, D. E. (2013). Introduction: The Effect of Inclusion and Exclusion on Positive Peace. *International journal of peace studies*, *18*(2), 1-4.
Treszkai, Á. (2018). *General Overview of the Consequences of African Water Conflicts*. UKH Journal of Social Sciences, 2(2), 11-18.
Tropp, L. R., Hawi, D. R., O'Brien, T. C., Gheorghiu, M., Zetes, A., & Butz, D. A. (2017). Intergroup contact and the potential for post-conflict reconciliation: Studies in Northern Ireland and South Africa. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, *23*(3), 239.
Turner, M. D. (2022). *Fulani Pastoralism in West Africa.* Oxford University Press.
Tuso, H. (2012). Indigenous processes of conflict resolution: Neglected methods of peacemaking by the new field of conflict resolution. In T. Matyók, J. Senehi, & S. Byrne (Eds.), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 245-270). Lexington.
UNCCD.(2024). *Global Land Outlook Thematic Report on Rangelands and Pastoralism*. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Bonn. GLO-rangelands-full.pdf
Ukwandu, D. C. (2017). Reflections on xenophobic violence in South Africa–what happens to a dream deferred? *African Journal of Public Affairs*, *9*(9), 43-62.
Ujomu, P. O., & Bature, A. I. (2018). Conflicting Values, Ubuntu Philosophy and Peace Building: An African Experience. *Culture and Dialogue*, *6*(2), 174-190.

Umutoni, C. A., A. A. . (2018). Perceived effects of transhumant practices on natural resource management in southern Mali. *Pastoralism Research, Policy and Practice*, *8*(1), 1-14.
UN. (2023). *Young People's Potential, the Key to Africa's Sustainable Development*. Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. https://www.un.org/ohrlls/news/young-people%E2%80%99s-potential-key-africa%E2%80%99s-sustainable-development
University, C. Definition of Deadlock. In https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/deadlock#google_vignette
UNOWAS. (2019). *Pastoralism and security in West Africa and the Sahel: Towards a peaceful co-existence*. https://unowas.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/rapport_pastoralisme_eng-april_2019_-_online.pdf
UNWomen. (2019). *The power of women peace builders*. UN Women Retrieved from https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/10/compilation-the-power-of- women-peacebuilders
van Santen, J. C. M., Smith, G. G., & Grodz, S. (2014). Religion, Ethnicity and Transnational Migration between West Africa and Europe. In *Fulani Identity, Citizenship and Islam in an International Context of Migration* (pp. 191-218). Brill. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004271562_010

Vélez, G., & Gerstein, L. H. (2021). Supporting Peaceful Individuals, Groups, and Societies: Peace Psychology and Peace Education. *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, *27*(2), 103-108. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000541

Volkan, V. D. (1998). *Bloodlines : from ethnic pride to ethnic terrorism*. Westview Press.
Vujačić, V. (2014). *The Development of Nationalism and Citizenship*. Brill.
WANEP. (2018). *Farmer- herder conflicts a renewedthreat to human security in Ghana and Nigeria* https://www.wanep.org/wanep/files/2018/Oct/Final_Thematic_Report_Farmer_Herder_Conflict.pdf
Wanis-St. John, A. (2013). Indigenous peacebuilding. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (pp. 368-382). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068175-42
Werz, M., & Conley, L. (2012). Climate change, migration, and conflict: Addressing complex crisis scenarios in the 21st century. *Center for American Progress*, *46*.
Wilmer, F. (2020). Conflict transformation and peace processes: Peace without justice is just a ceasefire. In A. Lautensach, & Lautensach, S. (Ed.), *Human Security in the Context of International Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Law, Human Security in World Affairs: Problems and Opportunities* (pp. 19-40).
Wilson, S. (2001). What Is an Indigenous Research Methodology? *Canadian journal of native education*, *25*(2), 175.
Wolff, S. (2006). *Ethnic conflict: a global perspective*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192805874.001.0001
World Bank (2023). *What Works to Narrow Gender Gaps and Empower Women in Sub-Saharan Africa?* World Bank. https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/publication/what-works-to-narrow-gender-gaps-and-empower-women-in-sub-saharan-africa
Wylie, G. (2017). The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict *International Review of the Red Cross*, *99*(906), 1181-1185. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383119000092
Zagar, M. (2000). Yugoslavia, What Went Wrong? Constitutional Development and Collapse of a Multiethnic State. In Byrne, S., Irvin, C., Dixon, P., Polkinghorn, B., & Senehi, J. (Eds.). *Reconcilable differences: turning points in ethnopolitical conflic*t (pp. 127-53). West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.