

ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE BETWEEN FARMERS AND HERDERS: A STUDY OF THE MIDDLE RIMA VALLEY IRRIGATION SCHEME PROJECT OF GORONYO DAM

¹Ibrahim Yusuf, ²Muhammad Tasiu Dansabo, ¹Shamsudeen Umar and
¹Muhammad Buhari Nuhu

¹Department of Sociology, Sokoto State University, Sokoto

²Department of Sociology, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

Corresponding Author's email: Ibrahim.yusuf@ssu.edu.ng



Abstract

This paper is an outcome of an empirical research on alternative framework of peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders. The research examined the relationship that exists between farmers and herders whose livelihood rely on the Middle Rima Valley Irrigation Scheme Project at Goronyo Dam. The research was purely a survey; a total of 377 questionnaires were administered during the survey using multistage sampling technique, which was conducted in Goronyo and Gada Local Government Areas of Sokoto. A total of 19 village areas were selected from Goronyo LGA and 16 village areas were selected from Gada LGA where Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with farmers and cattle herders. More than three decades ago, scholars described how modern interferences in water resources (e.g. by the development of tube-wells or small dams) can be at the expense of the original farming communities or nomadic groups, sometimes giving rise to the fierce tribal/ethnic dispute, because the number of land users outweighs the available land. Common complaints from both herdsmen and farmers during the survey in Goronyo was that the actual size of their land measured during Land Tenure Survey before the construction of the scheme was not returned to them whereas other farms are nowhere to be found. The herdsmen also expressed similar grievances; their grazing areas, cattle route, and places for animals to drink water were submerged in the irrigation scheme. The study found among other things that, there are deep resentment and grievances on the Land Tenure Survey before the construction of the second phase of the irrigation scheme by Gilmor Construction Company. The study revealed that there is a communication gap between the farmers and the company that carried the Land Tenure Survey because a lot of farmers were not able to locate or identify their farmlands after the construction of the scheme during the sharing and allocation of farms by the Sokoto Rima River Development Authority. A lot of farmers were either omitted in the list of landowners or their farms were not measured during the Land Tenure Survey. Based on the findings from the survey, the paper recommends among others that careful consideration should be given to the relocation of settlements and to the provision of new agricultural and grazing resources for the displaced population like Rimawa who were forced to migrate from the present location of the Goronyo dam. There is also a need for creating awareness to the farmers when it comes to land allocation to avoid unnecessary complaints since as argued above the reduction in the farmland size of some farmers was informed as result using a portion of their land for developmental purposes.

Keywords: Alternative framework, Farmers, Goronyo dam, Herders, Peaceful coexistence,