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What are the prospects for the evolution of mobile livestock systems in relation to the ongoing political, technological and social mutations in West Africa and the Sahel?

Thematic Reflection Note 3

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1 Introduction

1.1 Problems and issues

PEPISAO aims to strengthen the capacities of States and regional and national actors so that they can develop approaches to secure livestock mobility and integrate livestock farming methods in line with a shared regional vision and offering maximum guarantees for the peaceful cohabitation of different users of natural resources. In order to achieve this ambition, the ECOWAS Commission, in collaboration with UEMOA and CILSS, has initiated a prospective reflection on mobile livestock systems. Such an exercise reflects an anticipatory approach based on the analysis of relevant factors of change for the future of livestock systems. The present note, which is part of this exercise, aims to characterise the socio-political dynamics at work in the region, in relation to mobile livestock systems. The link between anticipation and strategic planning is tenuous. Moreover, the challenge of exploring the likely future of transhumance and consequently the future of millions of people - development actors in their own right of territories for which they are overlooked - is of crucial importance for regional integration and stability of the region and for peaceful cohabitation between socio-cultural groups. Studies, regional programmes and high-level meetings have multiplied in recent years, reflecting both the acuteness of the issue for the various actors and the complexity of the process of constructing political and social arrangements at the relevant levels of decision-making and action in the areas concerned by these problems.

1.2 Objectives of this note

The objective of this note is to put mobile livestock systems into perspective with the ongoing political, social, technological and security mutations in West Africa and the Sahel. This exercise was based mainly on the exploitation of available documentation, in particular studies on the future of young pastoralists, territorial foresight work, capitalisation reports on experiences of inter-community dialogue, the results of conflict analyses and the exploitation of material from a few interviews with resource persons.

Specifically, the note seeks to answer the following questions:

a. What are the political, social, technological and security mutations taking place in the Sahel and West Africa and how have they affected and will they affect mobile livestock systems ont the 2040 horizon?

b. What are the main dynamics emerging in the territories and within social groups and which of them carry the relevant seeds of large-scale and/or medium- and long-term structural change?

c. What public policies and other initiatives could be implemented to promote better cohabitation between social groups in the territories?

d. How can we support initiatives that can contribute to the consolidation of social links, the improvement of territorial governance and the economic and social integration of young pastoralists?

1.3 Methodological approach

In the preparation of this note, two complementary approaches were adopted:

a.   A literature review was carried out, which made it possible to exploit the work carried out by research centres (in this case CIRAD, ILRI, LASDEL), think tanks (International Crisis Group and Watchi) and certain agencies such as UNOWAS. The literature review also looked at documents on the future of livestock systems produced by international institutions (FAO, African Union, etc.);

b.   Conducting interviews (audio or video conference) with resource persons involved in initiatives relating to the development of pastoralism and transhumance management in West Africa, namely leaders of agricultural and rural producers' organisations (ROPPA) and leaders and animators of regional networks of livestock breeders and pastoralists (APESS and RBM). These exchanges made it possible to gather the perceptions that these actors have of the way in which mutations in the political, social, technological and security spheres have affected pastoralism and transhumance over the past period and will affect them over the coming decades.

2 Putting into perspective the ongoing political, social and security mutations in West Africa and the Sahel

Social systems, regardless of how they function, are constantly reconfigured by the influence of the socio-economic, political and technological environment in which they evolve. Despite their apparent disconnection from social dynamics, pastoral livestock systems are in fact influenced by political mutations and global economic and technological evolutions that impose new forms of exploiting natural resources, new social relationships with a consequent modification in the socio-economic performance of the various ways of valorising natural environments. Over the past thirty years, the Sahel zone has been confronted with multifaceted crises that tend to mask the performance of mobile livestock systems, in particular their capacity to adapt to fragile ecosystems, as well as their social agility in weaving interdependent relationships with agricultural production systems that use the same resources as pastoral systems (land and water). Several recent studies highlight the driving forces behind pastoral crises. The interviews conducted for this study show that these crises are caused by factors of different nature, but that they are interconnected with each other and influence each other.

From the perspective of anticipating the future of livestock farming in the West African region, this note attempts to identify and explain the driving forces of political, social, economic and technological change. On the one hand, the exercise presents the factors of change based on bibliographic analysis, focusing on the dimensions mentioned above (impacts of political, economic, social, technological and security mutations on pastoral livestock systems). On the other hand, it highlights public policies and initiatives at several levels to deal with the impacts of the changes at work.

2.1 Political, economic, social and technological factors affecting mobile livestock systems

Four major elements of social and political dynamics affect mobile livestock systems in the territories in which transhumance takes place, in West Africa and the Sahel:

1) The aggravation of the land tenure crisis, which is the result of climate change, strong demographic growth and changes in settlement patterns, has multiple effects, notably the advance of the agricultural front, with extensive production systems and the territorial exclusion of pastoralists in a context where land tenure legislation tolerates rather than accepts livestock activity;

2) The change in the perception of transhumance linked to the question of security has led some coastal countries to adopt a stricter regulatory framework for cross-border livestock mobility in order to control animal flows. Indeed, the flare-up of terrorist violence in the Sahelian zones where transhumant herders originate is a source of confusion between transhumant herders and jihadist groups that have taken control of several vast Sahelian and Saharan areas from which pastoralists have been chased out;

3) The lack of governance of pastoral and agro-pastoral territories and the corruption of institutional actors, which reinforces frustrations and fuels tensions instead of calming them, as well as the politicisation of relations between actors, which is largely induced by the implementation of the decentralisation process;

4) The exclusion of young pastoralists from the socio-political system and the loss of reference points for these social categories, who are faced with a very uncertain future (rejection of the profession of livestock breeder, which is highly devalued in the societies concerned, lack of alternatives apart from illicit activities, etc.).

The diagram below shows the main social and political issues affecting current trends.

Figure 1: Main social and political issues affecting current trends
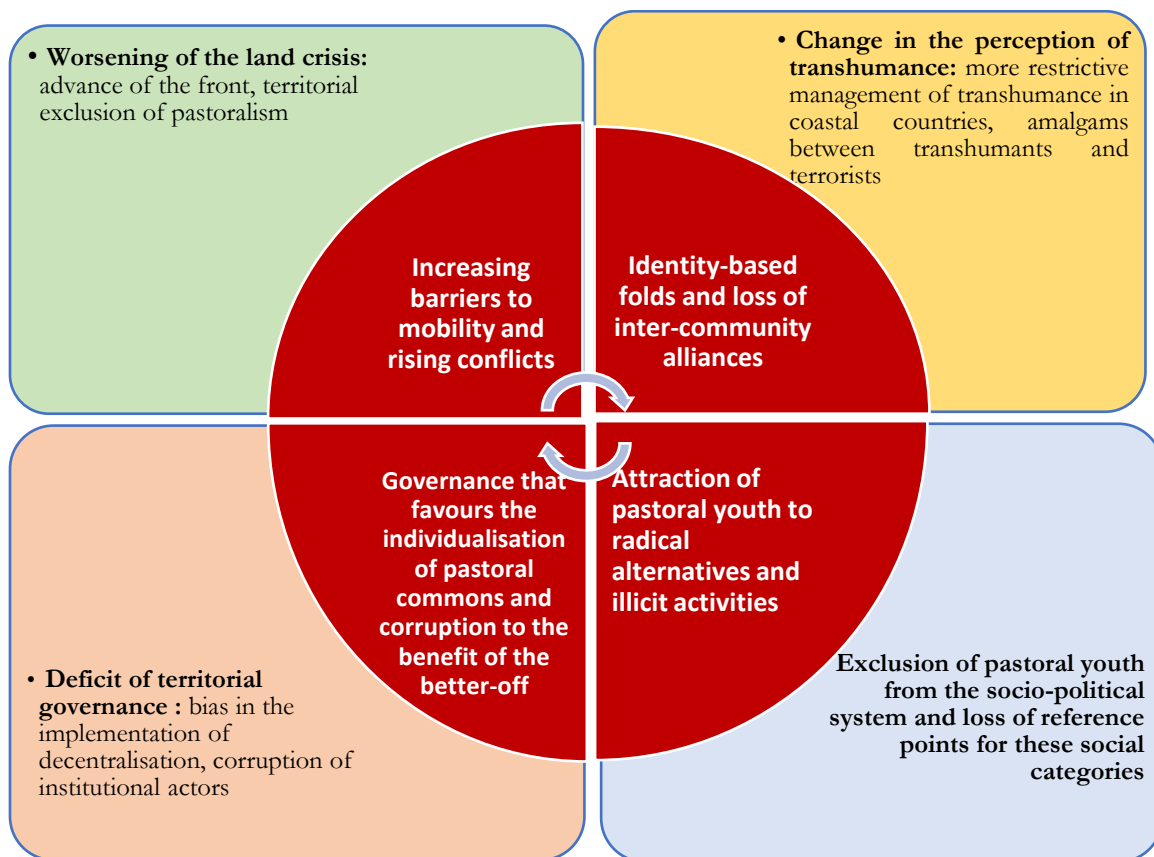
There is extensive literature on the repercussions of public policies on pastoral systems in West Africa[1] . These documentary sources highlight the mark left by decades of implementation of structural adjustment programmes. Marked by the disengagement of states and the restructuring of support services, these programmes have had a strong impact on public services in rural areas in general, and particularly in pastoral areas, where there has been a drastic reduction in the provision of basic social services and rural advisory support. Theoretically, the vacuum created by the reduction of state missions should have been filled by the creation of an incentive framework for the emergence of the private sector and by the strengthening of the dynamics to structure rural

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[1] For the most part, these include research on pastoralism (PPZS, IIED, CILSS, IRAM, SNV, AFL), advocacy notes prepared by NGOs, herders' umbrella organisations or consultancies (RBM, APESS, AVSF, GRET, ROPPA, etc.) and summary reports of colloquia and high-level meetings.

producers. However, pastoral areas are not very attractive to private promoters specialising in the provision of human development services (except for those dedicated to animal health). Moreover, the structuring process of rural producers has developed more rapidly in the agricultural environment (with the emergence and consolidation of sectoral organisations) than in the pastoral environment, because of the geographical dispersion and mobility of livestock farmers, but also because of the inherent limitations of the approaches to support the emergence of pastoral organisations.

In the area of governance of pastoral and agro-pastoral territories, the decentralisation policy initiated in the 1990s has raised many expectations regarding (i) improvement of the efficiency of local public service delivery systems adapted to local needs; (ii) consolidation of local democracy, thanks to the more active and sustained involvement of citizens in the process of administering local affairs; and (iii) improvement of the governance of territories and natural resources. These expectations are based on the fact that in several countries of the region, the legislative and regulatory texts governing decentralisation have transferred competences in the management of land and other natural resources to local authorities. In reality, however, the central administration is still reluctant to transfer real powers to these local authorities, under the pretext that they are not yet able to take full responsibility for such prerogatives.

2.1.1 Pressure on land and pastoral resources, absence of policies to manage agro-pastoral spaces and increasing barriers to mobility

Over time, questions have been raised about the risks of decentralisation for pastoralist communities and livestock mobility systems: multiplying taxes, barriers to animal mobility, a restrictive vision of communal space that does not take mobility systems into account, the importance given to third-party interests, the creation of local authorities without a territory for pastoralists in Niger[2] , etc. Throughout the Sahel, the implementation of the decentralisation policy has caused significant collateral damage for pastoralist populations, due to two main factors: (i) their weak representation in municipal councils set up in agro-pastoral areas; and (ii) the tendency of most rural producers, including those engaged in livestock activities, to give priority to agriculture in municipal planning exercises (Marty et al., 2006)[3] .

In the context of the implementation of the decentralisation policy, the use of local conventions - a previously tested instrument for shared local management of natural resources - has increased in the field. However, the application of this tool has its shortcomings in that it is applied at a level too limited to include transhumant livestock breeders in the dialogue on natural resource management. Moreover, most local conventions have only a contractual value and not a regulatory value, and are therefore not enforceable in relation to third parties, except in Mauritania (Granier, 2010)[4] .

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[2] Hahonou, E. K., 2006: Une communauté " nomade " face à la décentralisation. In "Décentralisation et pouvoirs en Afrique", IRD Editions.
[3] Marty, A., et al (2006): Successful decentralisation for sustainable natural resource management in the Sahel. Assessment of the achievements of a programme of action research, policy influence and capacity building. London, IIED.

4 Granier, L., 2010: Local conventions, effective tools for concerted management of natural resources?

In a context marked by **the exacerbation of competition over natural resources, another significant evolution is currently underway and is reflected in the impetus of a process of recomposition of pastoral areas,** linked to the development of an adaptation strategy of pastoral societies to changes brought about by public policies. This adaptation translates, in part, in the fixation of livestock breeders in their home areas, as well as in the areas they travel through during their transhumance campaigns. This process of settling of families of livestock breeders reveals an awareness of the importance of the territorial dimension and the power issues associated with it in a context of strong demographic growth and persistent economic difficulties. This awareness is at the origin of the desire to strengthen the territorial anchorage of pastoralist communities in their home territories and to consolidate their capacity to act and defend their interests: establishment of settlement points to ensure a land anchorage (cultivation of plots, construction of classrooms and permanent houses, etc.).

Box 1: Impetus for a livestock breeders' adaptation strategy based on family settlement

The determining factors in the process of pastoralist settlement refer to the intensification of climatic hazards and the ongoing socio-political mutations in the region.

In pastoral areas, some livestock breeders develop fields mainly to mark their claim on the space, on low-value land to the detriment of the environment. One example is the department of Abalak, in the pastoral zone of Niger, where livestock breeder families develop agricultural activities in order to preserve their living space. This option has an attractive effect on landless farmers from the Maradi region who are interested to settle in the pastoral zone.

In agro-pastoral areas, livestock breeders have a land tenure anchorage that is poorly recognised because the land they cultivate are generally loans without guarantee. As a result, the usage rights they exercise, sometimes since several generations, can be challenged by the groups exercising control over land tenure, when the latter are faced with a shortage of land.

In the Sudanian zones, which serve as areas of retreat for transhumant pastoralists, there is a process of land colonisation by livestock breeders wishing to settle in the host zones of Benin or Chad, for example (settlement of damré in Salamat, Chad). This tendency for transhumants to settle durably, which is caused by the difficulties associated with mobility (especially the high taxes to be paid for each move), accentuates the competition for access to pastoral resources and gives rise to numerous tensions with the indigenous populations.

In a way, the ongoing mutations open the way to a process of territorialisation aimed at establishing better control by resident pastoralist groups over the modes of access to the pastoral resources available in their area. However, this way of giving priority to the right to pastoral usage carries the risk of reinforcing exclusive and privative practices of access to resources that could result from the socio-ethnic territorialisation of pastoral areas. As it is taking place, the modification of the modes of occupation of pastoral areas sometimes leads to forms of restriction of access to forage resources for allochthonous livestock breeders and to the private appropriation of hydraulic infrastructures, with the consequence of monetising access to water. This territorialisation dynamic observed in Niger is a generalised trend, the extent of which varies according to the area, hence the need to pay particular attention to it.

2.1.2 Territorial governance: political politics that 'pollute' decentralisation, lack of respect for the law and growing insecurity

It is worth mentioning that in some contexts, decentralisation leads to an over-politicisation of relations between groups of actors who are competing for access to the spheres of political decision-making at local level. Furthermore, poor governance of local authorities, which is aggravated by the prevalence of corruption and political clientelism, tends to undermine the balance needed to take into account the interests of all. As a recent study in Burkina Faso (Rangé et al, 2020)[5] shows, this situation considerably reduces the functionality of local development structures.

The resource persons contacted believe that the lack of political governance is at the root of the weak implementation of legislative and regulatory texts that take into account the specificities of pastoralism. The recognition of pastoralism in a set of texts is certainly important, but there is still a long way to go to concretise the gains made in a context where public institutions seem to be incapable of enforcing the promulgated pastoral legislation and implementing the public policies adopted. The challenge of fair and legitimate enforcement of the law is acute given several factors, including (i) the low level of ownership of legislation by stakeholders and the delay in drafting implementing texts; (ii) the persistent difficulties in making national transhumance committees operational in Sahelian countries and the inherent limitations of the representativeness of these mechanisms; and (iii) the change in the perception of transhumance in coastal countries, which is leading to stricter regulatory supervision of cross-border livestock mobility

2.1.3 Failing public policies on access to social services and citizenship

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the trajectory of public policies has been marked by numerous sectoral reforms that have made it possible to record certain important achievements, in particular the strengthening of the resilience of populations faced with structural and cyclical food crises. However, the importance of these achievements should not loose view of the fact that in the livestock and pastoralism sector, the pace of expected change remains slow because the reforms are often incomplete or unsuited to the needs of the actors in these economic sectors. These shortcomings are at the root of the persistent difficulties faced by pastoralists in accessing civil status documents, schooling and health care.

2.1.3.1 *Difficulties in obtaining civil status documents, a factor in the pastoralists' complex relationship with citizenship and national identity*

In the context of the functioning of the pastoral system, livestock mobility has a structuring character because it constitutes a vital lever for reducing the vulnerability of the economies of livestock breeders' families. Because of the constant recourse to mobility and the geographical distance between pastoral communities and the institutions responsible for issuing civil status certificates, mobile livestock breeders experience great difficulty in acquiring identity papers. This situation largely explains the fact that pastoralists have a complex relationship with citizenship and

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[5] Rangé et al, 2020: Young pastoralists in the city: "Institutional context of insertion of young people from pastoral populations: perceptions, devices and strategies of public action in Burkina Faso". FAO.

national identity. Similar to what is happening in all the livestock territories of the Sahel, the difficulties in recognising the civic identity of pastoralists are particularly acute in the Soum province in Burkina Faso. Because of the shortcomings of the administrative and political system, administrative corruption and injustice, *'it takes 2 or 3 months to obtain an identity document in Dori, whereas in Ouagadougou, it is done immediately'* (statement by a member of CRUS reported in the study carried out by the FAO in 2019[6]).

Experiences in setting up decentralised mechanisms for issuing civil status documents have been carried out in several pastoral areas, such as in Eastern Niger for example. In this context, the organisation of mobile audiences has aroused real interest among mobile livestock breeder families, who are thus spared the need to undertake long and costly procedures (several trips between the camp and the departmental capital) in order to obtain birth certificates and national identity cards. In addition, in the eyes of these families, the issuing of status documents is an essential act of recognition of the citizen by the republic. Thus, in the Diffa region, the Mohamid Arabs devote considerable effort to obtaining Nigerien identity cards in order to assert their rights as citizens. This concern is shared by other livestock breeder communities who are aware that holding an identity card provides greater security when travelling to neighbouring regions or to neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Chad.

In addition to being an insurance policy for pastoral mobility, civil status certificates are also an indispensable element for herder families to facilitate the schooling of children[7] and to be included in the single social registers, which is an indispensable condition for access to social protection.

2.1.3.2 *Schooling in the pastoral environment: a mixed assessment*

Many observers believe that approaches to supporting the sustainable development of pastoral livestock farming should address certain major issues, in particular the need for grassroots communities to develop the institutional, organisational and technical capacity to strengthen the resilience of livestock systems and the groups' social cohesion. Meeting this requirement requires effectively addressing the challenges of schooling and vocational training that are acute in the pastoral environment.

In several Sahelian countries, efforts have been made to innovate in education policy. In this context, various experiments on schooling in pastoral areas have been carried out, notably institutional mobile schools in Chad that travel short distances with livestock breeder communities[8] , relay schools set up on transhumance routes and open during periods when pastoralists are on the move, and community schools set up in certain pastoral areas of Niger, for example. The justification for these experiences lies in the fact that school attendance in pastoral areas is hampered by three main factors: (i) the characteristics of the social environment (in particular the involvement of children in productive activities); (ii) the opportunity cost of schooling; and (iii) the poor match between the supply of educational services and the expectations of pastoral populations.

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[6] FAO, 2019 / Jeunes pasteurs en ville Contexte institutionnel des jeunes issus des populations pastorales Perceptions, dispositifs et stratégies d'action publique au Burkina Faso
[7] The application file for the primary school certificate competition must include the pupil's birth certificate.
[8] Due to insecurity, these mobile schools were closed in 1970 and replaced by fixed nomadic schools in villages and settlements, with boarding facilities to accommodate children from nomadic families.

In the opinion of some leaders of livestock breeders' organisations, the experiments that were carried out have an important added value linked to the fact that the penetration of schools in pastoral areas mainly benefits the poorest families for whom schooling is a means of social emancipation. For these families, schooling is an investment aimed at guaranteeing their children's future, knowing that they are not likely to receive a significant number of animals as inheritance. Moreover, school is a factor of integration into the national community for certain ethnic groups at risk of marginalisation, particularly the most mobile pastoralists (Wodaabe, Mohamid Arabs, etc.).

The experience of mobile schools has highlighted the problems associated with the schooling of children from nomadic families (Swift et al, 2010)[9] . For the most part, these problems stem from factors related to the environment (low population density, mobility of high amplitude of families, etc.), the economic role of children (guarding of herds), the quality of teaching (poor pedagogical monitoring of schools) and shortcomings in school management (lack of resources allocated by the public authorities, insufficient number of teachers from the livestock breeding community, etc.).

With regard to community schools, the experiment conducted in the Diffa region (eastern Niger) was based on the social mobilisation of parents and support for the establishment of school canteens (with the support of external actors), with a view to improving the learning capacity of children in areas with a structural deficit. The intervention plan provided for the eventual integration of community schools into the school system set up by the Ministry of Education. The evaluation of the experiment showed that the community schools played a driving role in school recruitment and offered the children of livestock breeder families the possibility of access to quality basic education managed at local level. In addition, the community social mobilisation strategy has created a momentum for girls' schooling. Another decisive achievement of the experience was the creation of a regional network of community schools in pastoral areas, which served as a framework for exchanges on the management mechanisms of these establishments, strategies for social mobilisation and the search for financial resources, as well as the prospects for sustainability.

2.1.3.3   Challenges in organising and offering health care to pastoralists

Research results from the Sahel show that the mobility of pastoralists and their proximity to livestock has a negative impact on their health (Montavon et al. (2013)[10] . The continuous presence of livestock breeders near the animals and the consumption of raw milk often lead to zoonotic infections such as anthrax, brucellosis, Q fever and bovine tuberculosis. In addition, mobile herders have little protection from environmental stresses that affect their health (high humidity in the rainy season, scorching heat and dust in the dry season). Despite the high health risks faced by pastoralists, they have difficulty accessing health services because health care provision is not adapted to the needs of livestock breeders' families, nor designed for a mobile lifestyle. The factors that hinder or limit pastoralists' access to health care are of several kinds: (i) the mismatch between the socio-cultural and organisational paradigms of pastoralists and the vision of health planners; (ii)

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[9] Swift, J. et al, 2010: Education en milieu nomade. Rapport d'étude. Juin – Septembre 2010. Agence Française de Développement.
[10] Motavon, A. et al., 2013: The health of mobile pastoralists in the Sahel - A review of 15 years of research and development. In *Tropical Medicine and International Health*.

insufficient human resources, poor health infrastructure and low quality of care; and (iii) geographical and financial accessibility constraints (Wyss et al., 2004)[11] .

In order to overcome the obstacles to access to health care for mobile livestock breeders and to combat social inequalities in health, action research programmes have been carried out in nomadic environments in some Sahelian countries, such as Chad. These programmes have highlighted a virtually zero vaccination rate among children, linked to the low level of knowledge among nomadic families regarding the importance of vaccination. Remedial solutions were sought through the use of two complementary levers: (i) the conduct of grassroots planning processes, with a view to strengthening interactions between nomadic communities and health services; and (ii) the implementation of a communication strategy that takes into consideration the diversity of the organisation of pastoral communities and their power systems (hierarchical system among the Fulbe, with a social elder exercising a strong hold on the group, diffuse power in the Arab environment, where priority is given to individual autonomy, etc.).

In recent years, awareness of the shortcomings inherent in classical approaches (compartmentalisation of sectoral approaches, use of fixed health infrastructures, etc.) has prompted several countries in the region to move towards the new integrated health approach *('one health'),* which seeks to take better account of the links and interdependencies between human health, animal health and ecosystem health. In pastoral areas, the intervention of mixed teams of veterinary and human health staff has revealed a significant potential for the provision of preventive care, thanks to the optimisation of logistical means and the improved organisation of joint vaccination campaigns. The implementation of the '*one health'* approach benefits from favourable conditions in countries that run programmes dedicated to pastoral populations - as in the case of the National Programme for the Health of Nomadic and Insular Populations and Zones of Difficult Access in Chad - or that have set up systems combining the provision of mobile and fixed health services (as in Niger).

2.1.3.4   *The lack of consideration for the problems of young people in pastoral environments*

Studies on the current realities of rural youth highlight the fact that these groups are in dissimilar but generally difficult socio-economic situations (Inter-réseaux, 2015)[12] . The characterisation of the realities of rural youth has highlighted three major features, namely: (i) a rupture in the intergenerational link that is keenly felt within families; (ii) the lack of recognition by elders of the place of young people and the work they do on family exploitations; and (iii) the marginalisation of rural youth in a social and political context that is not conducive to access by these groups of actors to natural resources, economic opportunities and decision-making fora.

With regard specifically to young people in livestock breeders' environment, it can be seen that they are beset by difficulties resulting from several processes: exclusion from traditional modes of access to goods, lack of schooling and vocational training, lack of economic prospects, rejection of the profession of livestock breeder, which no longer corresponds to the desired life model, etc. In

[11] Wyss, K. et al, 2004: What kind of health services for nomadic populations? Learning from research and action activities in Chad. In *"Médecine Tropicale"*.
[12] Inter-Réseaux - Développement rural, 2015: Rural youth in West Africa: what realities and what perspectives? Issue 17, September 2015.

pastoral areas suffering from growing insecurity, the young part of the population is all the more susceptible to the influence of violent extremist groups as they feel excluded from the social and political system, which is a powerful motor of revolt. In addition, insecurity helps to fuel illicit trafficking (arms, drugs, cigarettes, people, etc.) which is developed by mafia and terrorist groups. This parallel economy and the money generated by trafficking are used as bait for the manipulation and recruitment of vulnerable individuals and young people who have lost their reference points.

This situation is worrying because young people are on the front line of inter-community conflicts. Having chosen to stay away from the traditional grouping frameworks of rural producers, in which they do not always recognise themselves, young people are engaged in a dynamic of identity construction. Indeed, the current context is marked by the distancing of social links between communities, which particularly mobilises identities and favours the emergence of organisations constituted on an ethnic basis (collective of youth associations of Pulaku, Vision, Kisal, Pinal, Natal, Dental, Wodaabe associations, Dogon youth organisation, etc).

2.1.4 The weakening of social ties resulting from the intertwining dynamics of conflict and security crisis

With regard to the social links between users of rural areas, it can be seen that their evolution has been marked by three main features.

The first feature concerns **the reduction of complementarities between agriculture and livestock farming**, which is at the origin of certain tensions and the rise in conflicts between the various users of natural resources, which are multiplied by a lack of governance of the territories. Thus, the old balances between agricultural and pastoral activities are being disrupted by new competition for access to natural resources (crop residues, water points, areas traditionally dedicated to grazing, etc.), which is being expressed more and more between farmers and livestock breeders, but also between resident and transhumant livestock breeders. Social inequalities and inequity in access to natural resources are aggravated by the entry of new actors into the land dynamics (agribusiness, mining industries, property development, etc.). These actors are capable of imposing themselves in the power struggle that they set up when appropriating a community pastoral area.

The second feature relates to **the flare-up of insecurity throughout the Sahel since more than a decade**, which has severely affected cross-border areas characterised by a weak presence of public administrations and defence and security forces; this tends to exacerbate the phenomenon of livestock theft. The growing insecurity has many negative impacts on pastoral communities: deterioration of security conditions, complex restructuring of cross-border transhumance circuits and routes for animal conveyance on foot, in order to bypass areas plagued by insecurity (North-East Nigeria, Lake Chad Basin, etc.), and the closure of many livestock markets that have been the object of terrorist attacks (particularly in Burkina Faso). It is clear that livestock breeders - and by extension the predominantly pastoralist communities - are the primary victims of endemic crime and armed violence.

The third evolution is that **terrorist movements are developing strategies that aim to make use of pre-existing forms of violence in their opposition to the state** for political or ideological reasons. This largely explains the strong interrelationship between conflicts over access to natural

resources and the current security crisis in the Sahel and West Africa. The inability to find equitable and sustainable solutions to the antagonisms favours the development of a dynamic of identity-based fold, which results in the distancing of social links between certain rural communities, as well as the weakening of social cohesion. When rivalries over natural resources cut across the dividing lines between villages or ethnic communities, conflicts often take on a collective dimension (inter-community clashes). They are sustained by the emergence of community-based self-defence groups[13] . Inter-communal clashes have sometimes led to mass killings in Mali and Burkina Faso (notably the killings in 2019) and are still frequent in central Nigeria.

2.2 Initiatives that create social links, improve territorial governance and promote the economic and social integration of young pastoralists

In the current context of the Sahel and West Africa, any reflection on the future of pastoral livestock farming should take into account the interrelated challenges facing the sub-region, namely (i) the reconfiguration of rural production systems; (ii) the modification of local governance and natural resource management; (iii) the expansion of the security threat which is transforming pastoral and agro-pastoral areas into areas of violence and lawlessness; and (iv) the increasing marginalisation of young pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who find themselves in a dead-end situation. ECOWAS, States and livestock breeders' organisations have realised the importance of addressing key issues such as improving cross-border governance, protecting the rights of pastoralist communities, social inclusion, and developing information and communication technologies.

2.2.1 Strategies to promote respect for citizens' rights and access to natural resources

The precariousness of pastoralists' rights has reached such a high level that these communities feel threatened in their existence as human groups with cultural, social and professional specificities.

In order to help guarantee the rights of pastoralist communities, livestock breeders' organisations have recently undertaken extensive advocacy campaigns with the support of some international NGOs and human rights associations to draw the attention of public authorities to their responsibilities. For example, a collective of livestock breeders' organisations in Niger initiated the '*Save the Pastoral Lands'* campaign in 2015, based on a roadmap with several actions, notably: (i) advocacy for the compensation of pastoralists who have lost their land rights; (ii) evaluation of the ways in which the pastoral dimension is taken into account in environmental impact studies prior to the implementation of large-scale projects in pastoral areas; (iii) carrying out an audit of land titles granted since 2010; and (iv) advocacy for the speedy adoption of the implementing texts of the pastoral legislation.

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[13] The emergence of these militias is linked to the crisis of legitimacy of states and the loss of control of the security sector by public authorities. In several Sahelian countries, the authorities have encouraged or tolerated the intervention of self-defence groups, so that they can make up for the absence of security forces in certain remote areas.

At the same time, livestock breeders' organisations in Niger have decided to use the courts to protect pastoral land from property speculation. In this context, complaints are filed with the courts against sales of plots of land and applications for registration of pastoral land to third parties. Other avenues of recourse are being tested, such as the participation of pastoralist rights organisations in public enquiries in the case of public utility projects, or involvement in social and environmental impact studies of extractive industries and the various audits launched by the public authorities (Aubague et al., 2017)[14] .

In Benin and Chad, too, some livestock breeders' organisations have set up a legal service to provide assistance to livestock breeders in the event of conflicts arising from the challenge to their rights.

2.2.2 Social protection as a new field for resilience

With regard to social protection, it should be noted that it is currently a central concern for regional integration institutions, which are fully aware of the difficulties caused by the intensification of climatic hazards, as well as the amplification of risks and multiple uncertainties. The Sahelian and West African countries have formulated their Resilience Priorities *(*PRP-AGIR*)*, taking into account some of the concerns expressed by pastoral communities, including the need to strengthen social protection. Operationally, they have established social safety nets that are both social protection and resilience-building instruments. Such instruments have at least two important advantages: first, they provide a minimum income to vulnerable individuals and/or households, but also facilitate their minimum access to essential services; and second, they are built on the principle of respect for the rights of beneficiaries. In several Sahelian and West African countries, preventive and regular cash transfers, as well as cyclical or seasonal transfers, are being implemented, in conjunction with the definition of national social protection policies.

At the regional level, social protection approaches are developed by several ECOWAS bodies with the support of the FAO and the World Bank (Single National Register). Thus, the Department in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources is working to develop social food security nets through PRIASAN, which constitutes the framework for the operationalisation of its interventions and whose lines of action include, among others, the AGIR / Resilience process, the establishment of the RRSA and the support programme for social food security nets. At the same time, the Department of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action, in partnership with UNICEF, has initiated the process of developing a region-wide social protection strategy. The scope of these advances resulting from the efforts of these two regional governance bodies is diminished by the low level of consultation and coordination of the initiatives undertaken (Oxfam et al., 2018)[15] .

The regional networks of livestock breeders' organisations believe that it is necessary to promote new social protection tools and mechanisms to secure the living conditions of livestock breeders and strengthen their resilience capacities. In their view, the social protection systems put in place by the public authorities do not allow for a coordinated, rapid and effective response to pastoral

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[14] Aubague , S. et al., 2017: Pastoral lands in Niger: herders facing the defence of their rights. In Grain de Sel, July 2016 - June 2017, N° 73/74.
[15] Oxfam et al, 2018: Issues and recommendations for contributing to the standardisation of social safety nets in West Africa. Advocacy note for regional institutions and their partners.

crises. This increases pastoral vulnerability and makes it more difficult for pastoralist families to recover economically in the post-crisis period.

To remedy this situation, ECOWAS and regional livestock breeders' networks agree on the need to implement innovative social safety nets that rely on several levers, notably: (i) the continuation of action research and operational initiatives to establish a risk insurance scheme for livestock, in the specific context of the Sahel and West Africa (Thébaud, 2017)[16] ; (ii) the provision of innovative ICT-based services to pastoralists and agropastoralists, with a view to supporting the process of modernisation and intensification of livestock systems; and (iii) the use of social protection instruments that are complementary to existing endogenous solidarity mechanisms, in order to improve the effectiveness of resilience strategies developed by livestock breeders' families.

Some progress has been made in this direction through the launch of pilot initiatives aimed at developing social safety net models adapted to the realities of the pastoralist livestock system. Capitalising on the innovations tested in the framework of certain ongoing interventions[17] would allow useful lessons to be learned regarding the conditions for success and replication of experiments, with a view to scaling up.

2.2.3 The development of new information and communication technologies

In West Africa, as in other regions of the world, the development of information systems and the diversification of communication modes are taking place at a high rate, leading to profound changes on several levels, notably political (strengthening of citizens' participation), economic (dynamics of transactions between economic actors) and social. However, the significant achievements in the region in terms of the development of tools for disseminating and sharing information should not make us lose sight of the disparities that exist in terms of equipment between the various countries and within them. In several West African countries, one of the main factors blocking the development of new information technologies is the weakness of the telecommunication infrastructure, which prevents the development of applications and services. In addition to the physical and technical accessibility of infrastructure, the appropriation of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the expansion of their uses are also dependent on the income level of the population and their level of education.

In contrast to agricultural areas, the dissemination and use of ICT in the livestock environment is more recent and penetration rates remain very low. However, the use of these technologies in a context marked by the geographical dispersion and mobility of pastoral populations is proving to be very useful in facilitating the movement of animals, the supply of livestock feed and market access. Thus, the STAMP project[18] , which has been implemented in Mali since 2017, contributes to improving the resilience of pastoralists faced with extreme climatic phenomena, thanks to the

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[16] Thébaud, B., 2017: Micro livestock insurance for mobile livestock keepers in West Africa: Proceedings of the workshop held in Dakar, 2-3 November 2016.
[17] These are mainly the following initiatives: "*Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disaster (BRACED)*" and "*Projet d'appui à la conception de modèles de filets sociaux adaptés aux réalités de l'élevage pastoral (FISOREP)*".
[18] Sustainable Technology Adaptation for Mali's Pastoralists.

implementation of an updated information service based on geo-satellite data and data collected in the field. This information service, called *"Garbal"*, is accessible from mobile phones through a call to a centre managed by a telephone operator. It provides a package of information (availability and quality of biomass, availability of surface water resources, concentration of livestock and market prices) that gives more predictability for the management of animals in transhumance. Since 2019, the *"Garbal"* system provides advice to pastoralists exploitations, notably information on good animal health practices and financial products adapted to the needs of livestock breeders and likely to facilitate access to credit.

Other interesting experiences include the development of cash transfers by telephone (a scheme negotiated by the Chadian POs with several telephone companies in Chad and Nigeria) and the establishment of a Pastoral Alert and Information System (SPAI) in the Senegalese Ferlo area[19] .

The question arises whether the information disseminated integrates the endogenous information systems of pastoralists. Pastoralists rely on systems that are more precise, contextualised and socialised, which allows them to be more useful for livestock mobility and trade. However, these social and personalised livestock breeders' information networks are severely handicapped by the weakness of telephone networks in pastoral areas.

We must also be aware of the negative effects of social networks in the dissemination and amplification of violence. The circulation of unverified information, photographs of massacres and accounts of inter-communal violence can be a catalyst for conflict.

3 What are the evolution scenarios and prospects on the 2040 horizon?

Putting political, economic, social and technological mutations into perspective with mobile livestock systems highlights the factors that are at work in the ongoing mutations. Among the driving forces of change, those that play a decisive role are: **(i) the multi-level governance of pastoral and agro-pastoral territories; (ii) the state of public policies for access to social services and citizenship; (iii) the fragility of Sahelian pastoral systems (repeated crises and exclusion of young people); and (iv) social ties between communities (competing users of common resources, identity-based fold of ethnic groups, and security crisis).** The table below identifies what these drivers of change mean in relation to the three scenarios for the development of mobile livestock systems in West Africa and the Sahel, which are investigated in this thematic reflection note.

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[19] The purpose of this monitoring and alert system for pastoral resources is to support users and local decision-makers in the decision-making process, in order to strengthen the resilience of livestock systems to climate change. It collects, processes and disseminates environmental data (rainfall, biomass, hydrography, bush fires, etc.) and socio-economic data (agriculture, livestock, livestock trade, animal health).

Table 1: *Manifestations of driving forces of change in the 3 scenarios for the development of mobile livestock systems*

Development scenarios / Driving forces of change	Marginalisation, identity-based fold and spiralling conflicts (trend scenario)	'Acceleration of the depastoralisation' of livestock farming societies and increased employment of young pastoralists in the agricultural and urban sectors	'Modernisation' of the pastoral system which has become more attractive to young people
Multi-level governance of pastoral and agropastoral territories	o Territorial governance under severe strain o Incomplete decentralisation and insufficiently adapted to the needs and rights of pastoral communities o Diverse and deleterious strategies of marking territories by different communities	o Ban on cross-border transhumance between the Sahel and countries of the Gulf of Guinea	o Strengthening and '*de-sectoralisation*' of the governance of pastoral and agropastoral territories o Consolidation of livestock mobility management mechanisms that have a solid legal basis
The state of public policies for access to social services and citizenship	o Lack of access to basic social services (school, health) o Development interventions that are incomplete and not adapted to the specificity of pastoral communities	o Marginalisation of livestock breeder communities who have been unable to convert to other activities o Impoverishment of pastoral areas	o Implementation of public policies for human development that are resolutely multisectoral o Provision of technical and vocational training that responds to the needs and aspirations of rural youth o Strengthening investment in the agricultural and livestock trades o Development of information technologies that serve value chains and education systems
The fragilization of Sahelian pastoral systems (repeated crises	o Precarity of pastoral families o Increasing social inequalities	o Disappearance of pastoral systems o Subsistence of a core group of livestock	o Harmonious cohabitation between different livestock systems (mobile/semi-

and exclusion of young people)	o Loss of reference points for young pastoralists in a context of recurrent insecurity o Boom of parallel economies based on trafficking (migrants, drugs, cigarettes, etc.)	breeding families that are struggling to keep their heads above water o Mass exodus of young people	extensive/intensive systems) o Promotion of structuring value chains on a territorial scale
Social ties between communities (competing users of common resources, identity-based fold of ethnic groups and security crisis)	o Weakening of social ties o Intertwining dynamics of conflicts and the security crisis o Reduction of complementarities between agriculture and livestock o Resurgence of pre-existing violence	o Withdrawal of pastoral communities into their own communities	o professional identity as a livestock breeder affirmed by various categories (young, old, women...) o new forms of production associated with the values of social self-development and a rewarding image of the livestock farming profession, o new complementarities between communities o integrated production mode (complementarity in the flow of materials, income, investments, etc.)

3.1 Status quo scenario in public policy, a laissez-faire approach that poses serious threats to pastoral livestock farming

The scenario on the horizon is characterised by the absence of change in the orientation of public policies. Indeed, the various situations described above and their implications for mobile livestock systems point to an unfavourable evolution that could be characterised by the following features

- Poor land governance resulting in the exacerbation of conflicts over access to natural resources;
- The tendency to transfer to the local level the shortcomings of the central state, through the continuation of the current policy of decentralisation, which is not adapted to the needs of pastoral communities and does not sufficiently take into account their rights of access to citizenship (representation in the deliberative bodies of the local authorities) and to factors of production;
- The persistent lack of access by livestock breeders to basic social services, as well as to production and marketing infrastructure and equipment;

- Low recognition of the economic, social and environmental contribution of pastoralism by policy makers ;
- The development of predation practices to the detriment of livestock breeders during their movements (transhumance and conveyance of livestock);
- Increasing barriers to national and cross-border livestock mobility (border closures, illegal taxation, etc.);
- Increased vulnerability of pastoral communities to insecurity (murders, kidnapping for ransom, cattle raids, etc.).

The hypotheses that can be envisaged to explain the realisation of the scenario are the following**:**
   a) The attention and priority given to the development of pastoralism and the management of transhumance are relegated to second place by the Sahelian political authorities in favour of concerns related to the promotion of a modern and intensive livestock systems, making the best use of fodder production, supplementary feed and the results of genetic improvements; whereas this modern intensive model does not really see the light of day due to high production costs that are unviable in view of the realities of the market for livestock products (ruminant milk and meat).
   b) Coastal countries are distancing themselves from Sahelian transhumance in a context marked by two main factors: (i) the dissemination of distorted representations of cross-border transhumance in the public opinion in coastal countries; and (ii) the use of massive imports of cheap meat (poultry, offal, etc.) and frozen fish, which are tending to replace local meat in consumers' purchases.

3.2 Scenario of radical change leading to the end of transhumance

Such a perceived worst-case scenario is not a mere figment of the mind. In view of the promotion of a restrictive policy on mobile livestock farming (Benin, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, and recently Togo), the fear of the realisation of the dreaded scenario of the radical questioning of transhumance is not unjustified. Under this scenario, the expected changes are as follows:

- The loss of legitimacy of states and the decline in the intensity of their presence in pastoral areas;
- Improved access to basic social services (school, health, water, etc.) for pastoralist communities that have become sedentary;
- The blocking of national and cross-border livestock mobility, leading to increased tensions between farmers and livestock breeders, especially as land will have to be found to sedentarise large numbers of animals;
- Increased economic and social vulnerability of pastoral households ;

The hypotheses that can be envisaged to explain the realisation of the scenario include those mentioned in the previous scenario plus two others**,** namely
   a) The flare-up of conflicts in the Sahel, coupled with the expansion of the security threat to the countries of the Gulf of Guinea;

b) The difficulties in promoting intensive agricultural production systems that are less voracious in natural resources, particularly land, and demographic pressure (over the last thirty years, human densities have more than doubled),

c) States that question the leadership of integration institutions in addressing livestock mobility and land management issues.

3.3 Scenario of resolute investment in the modernisation of the pastoral system integrated at the regional level and providing social links

This scenario, which is strongly supported by the leaders of livestock breeders' organisations, should make it possible to make the citizenship of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists effective and to bring about other qualitative transformations, through : (i) increased investment in strengthening social ties around mobility; (ii) the promotion of inclusive land governance that takes into account the needs of all groups of actors in the territories; (iii) the liveability of pastoral areas integrating the development of inclusive value chains and (iv) the socio-economic and political promotion of pastoral youth. In the framework of this scenario, the expected changes are the following:

- The emergence and/or consolidation of new value chains that are able to promote the optimal valorisation of animal products and the integration of young people into the promising value chains;
- The development of win-win alliances between users of rural areas (in particular between farmers and livestock breeders) and actors in the livestock value chain (producers, transporters, feed suppliers, traders, etc.);
- The use of digital technologies to facilitate and secure the mobility of livestock (improved network coverage, money transfer services, legal and social services).
- the promotion of alternative forms of production associated with the professional affirmation of young people and women, allowing the expression of new complementarities between agricultural and livestock production methods, etc.
- the modernisation of forms of mobility guaranteeing access for herds to pastoral resources, valorising the new technologies for sharing information and peaceful social links that are beneficial for all usages of common resources

The likelihood of the scenario occurring is based on two hypotheses that have been envisaged with great optimism:

a) The resolute political commitment of the public authorities of the Sahelian and coastal countries in favour of the development of pastoralism and the management of transhumance with the determined support of regional bodies and technical and financial partners;

b) Strengthening the coherence of public action at the regional level, through the consolidation of the capacity of integration institutions to take on their leadership and define the policy directions to be given to the development of livestock farming and pastoralism in the region;

c) Strengthening the high-level dialogue to monitor and share knowledge on the evolution of mobile systems at regional level

d) The resolute development of social and economic innovation in the field of the association of agriculture and livestock, the regeneration of pastoral areas and the contractualisation of farmer-livestock breeder relations in transit and host areas

e) The implementation of a policy of revalorising the professions linked to the pastoral and agro-pastoral livestock breeding value chain and the processing of products, combining the knowledge of livestock breeders and professionals with knowledge acquired by research in these fields.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

Reflection on the evolution of livestock systems in the light of political, social and technological mutations shows that there is great uncertainty about the future of pastoral livestock farming in West Africa. The possible futures of mobile livestock systems are multiple and contrasting (maintenance of the status quo, acceleration of the *'depastoralisation'* process and *'modernisation'* of the pastoral system). The dynamic mobilisation of local, national, regional and international stakeholders over the past ten years (workshops, consultation frameworks, formulation of projects, etc.) demonstrates the acuteness of the issue of the future of pastoralism and the complexity of the process of building political and social consensus at the different levels of intervention.

The resource persons interviewed estimate that the scenario that is emerging on the horizon is the most unfavourable possible and could lead to a ban on transhumance. Faced with such a situation, it is essential to define measures to prevent such a scenario from occurring. The levers of action to be identified must enable the advent of the favourable scenario, which is the modernisation of pastoral livestock farming.

The socio-economic performance of pastoral households is severely tested by repeated and frequent crises. At the same time, uncontrolled land and social insecurity in pastoral areas projects the image of territories at war, without social regulation mechanisms. In reality, the situations observed in the field are diverse and the determinants of insecurity are multiple. Manifold interventions in the face of these multiple interdependent fronts risk being ineffective if they are not supported by medium- and long-term multisectoral policies. Therefore, regional policies (regulation of livestock mobility, policy dialogue, trade between the Sahel and coastal countries, etc.) should be strengthened and the process of including young people in human development programmes should be consolidated. In order to structurally reduce pastoral vulnerability, it is essential to promote coordinated, coherent and convergent approaches to social protection, ensuring that the instruments of social safety net systems are complementary at the different levels of intervention (regional, national and local).

The need for greater social and political consideration of the concerns of young people from the pastoral environment is recognised by ECOWAS, which has begun to operationalise a strategy to support the employability of young people in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector. The implementation of this strategy will be based on programmes that mobilise youth employability, which are not yet fully operational.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Collection tool

Interview guide

A. **General assessment of the process of the aggravating land crisis, which leads to the territorial exclusion of livestock farming activities**

1) From your point of view, what are the main factors that provoke and/or amplify the processes of land insecurity and inequity of which the livestock breeders are the first victims?
   ➢ What is the extent of these changes and which areas are most affected?
   ➢ How are these phenomena part of broader trends?
   ➢ How might they affect the future of mobile livestock systems?

B. **Findings and analyses concerning the reduction of alliances between the communities concerned by transhumance and the Islamic fundamentalist influence which reinforces amalgams**

2) From your perspective, what are the main factors causing the erosion of the social capital that enabled livestock breeders to negotiate access to natural resources in their areas of retreat?
   ➢ What is the extent of this phenomenon?
   ➢ What are the interrelationships between the process of erosion of the social capital of transhumance and the new restrictive legislation and decisions that are being adopted in some coastal countries?
   ➢ What are the factors that create and/or amplify the risks of amalgams and stigmatisation?
   ➢ What is the role of religious and ideological determinants in the process of turning to violence?

C. **Appreciation of the lack of legitimate governance at the territorial level and the corruption of institutional actors, which reinforce frustrations and fuel tensions**

3) What are the explanatory factors for the weakness of local public action in favour of mobile livestock breeders?
   ➢ What are the reasons that lead to the development of politico-land tensions in pastoral territories and in areas of retreat of transhumant livestock breeders?
   ➢ What should be done to improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of land regulation systems?

D. Assessment of the politicisation of relations between actors, largely induced by decentralisation, particularly at the municipal level

4) From your point of view, what are the main collateral effects of decentralisation on pastoral communities?
   ➢ What is the extent of these effects?
   ➢ What should or could be done about it?

E. Assessment of the phenomenon of exclusion and loss of reference points of young pastoralists facing a very uncertain future

5) What factors have led to the rejection of the livestock breeding profession, which is increasingly devalued in pastoral societies?
   ➢ What should or could be done to improve the economic and social situation of young people from the pastoral environment?
   ➢ What approach should be taken to respond to the aspirations of these young people and to offer them alternatives that correspond to the life model with which they identify?

F. Representation of the future of transhumant livestock farming in the region

6) How do you think the situation could change over the next 20 years?
   ➢ Three scenarios can already be projected:
      o Scenario without policy change: laissez faire in progress : towards total chaos, insecurity, a lawless society, survival of the fittest, pastoralists stop breeding livestock
      o Radical change scenario: end of transhumance: disappearance of mobile livestock farming, withdrawal of states into themselves, withdrawal of these regions into themselves
      o Scenario of resolute investment in the modernisation of mobility: controlled agro-pastoralism, well controlled, taking into account traditional values, attention to agro-business, capitalising on age-old expertise, what size of herd to manage on a minimum of space with maximum yield, diversifying sources of wealth, professional migration, well chosen, professional training, the states making it their pre-occupation, setting up pastoral soudure
   ➢ What are the levers of action and/or measures likely to promote progress towards a particular scenario?

Annex 2 - List of resource persons

1) Dramane Guétido (RBM - Benin)
2) Hassan Baka (RBM - Maradi)
3) Blamah Jallo
4) Bodé Sambo (Niamey)
5) Harouna Bary
6) Lucien Nanéma (Burkina Faso)
7) Dr Ibrahima Aliou
8) Dr PATO Pidemnéwé Steed (Togo)
9) Boubacar Maiga (RECOPA-East, Burkina)
10) Paul Onibon (Livestock Specialist Benin)