

## **Conflict Management and the Livelihood of Strangers in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State**

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**Abstract:** This study examined conflict management and the livelihood of strangers in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The study was motivated by the recognition that unresolved conflicts can disrupt economic activities, weaken social relationships, destroy productive assets and negatively affect the welfare of people who live and work outside their places of origin. The study specifically examined the extent to which negotiation and dialogue influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of income generation and employment; the extent to which mediation influences business/economic and agricultural activities; and the extent to which traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms influence the protection of household assets, food security and standard of living. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and was complemented by secondary research evidence from relevant scholarly studies, reports and documented literature on conflict management and livelihood in Nigeria, particularly Nasarawa State. The study focused on strangers residing, working, trading or undertaking other legitimate livelihood activities in Mararaba. The findings from the reviewed secondary evidence indicated that negotiation and dialogue contribute to the protection of income-generating and employment opportunities by reducing tensions and creating opportunities for peaceful settlement of disputes. Mediation was found to help protect business, economic and agricultural activities by preventing disputes from escalating into conflicts that could disrupt access to markets, employment, land and other productive resources. The findings further indicated that traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms can contribute to the protection of household assets, food security and standard of living by promoting peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and community-level dispute resolution. The study concluded that effective conflict management is an important condition for sustainable livelihood security among strangers in Mararaba. It therefore recommended the strengthening of inclusive dialogue platforms, accessible and impartial mediation mechanisms, and collaboration between traditional/community-based institutions and formal government conflict-management structures.

**Keywords:** Conflict Management, Livelihood, Strangers, Negotiation, Dialogue, Mediation, Community-based Conflict Management, Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction and occurs whenever individuals or groups perceive that their interests, values, goals or access to resources are incompatible. It can occur at the interpersonal, family, community, institutional, national and international levels. Although conflict is not necessarily destructive, unresolved or poorly managed conflict can undermine social relationships, community stability and socioeconomic development. In communities where people from different ethnic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds live together, disagreements may arise from competition over employment, land, housing, business opportunities, political influence, social services and other resources. Consequently, the manner in which such conflicts are managed can have important implications for peaceful coexistence and the livelihood of individuals and households.

Conflict management refers to the processes and mechanisms through which disagreements are prevented, controlled, reduced or resolved in ways that minimize

destructive consequences and promote peaceful relationships. It involves approaches such as negotiation, dialogue, mediation, reconciliation, arbitration and community-based dispute-resolution mechanisms. Effective conflict management provides opportunities for conflicting parties to communicate their grievances understand opposing interests and identify mutually acceptable solutions. Contemporary peacebuilding practice increasingly recognizes that conflict management should be connected with social cohesion, local governance and economic recovery. In Nigeria, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) identifies community dialogue, reconciliation, social cohesion, local governance and livelihood support as interconnected approaches for addressing conflict and strengthening community resilience (International Organization for Migration, 2026).

The concept of livelihood is broader than simply having a job or earning an income. Livelihood encompasses the capabilities, assets, activities and opportunities through which individuals and households obtain the necessities of life and improve their wellbeing. These include employment, self-employment, trading, farming, access to productive resources, household assets, food security and the ability to maintain an acceptable standard of living. A sustainable livelihood enables individuals and households to withstand economic, social and environmental shocks while maintaining their productive capacity. Therefore, the livelihood of a person is influenced not only by individual skills and resources but also by the security, stability and social environment of the community in which the person lives and works.

Where conflict persists, individuals may lose employment, businesses may be disrupted, markets may become inaccessible and household assets may be damaged or lost. Conflict may also weaken social networks and reduce people's ability to access economic opportunities. IOM's current work in Nigeria recognizes that conflict, displacement and socioeconomic vulnerability can disrupt livelihoods and that livelihood support, employment creation, income-generating activities and economic empowerment are important components of recovery and community stabilization (IOM, 2026). Peaceful communities provide an environment in which people can engage in productive activities, establish businesses, seek employment, cultivate land, trade goods and services and protect their property. Conversely, communities characterized by persistent disputes and social tensions may create uncertainty that discourages investment and restricts economic participation. For this reason, conflict management should not be considered solely as a mechanism for stopping violence or resolving disputes. It can also be viewed as an important instrument for creating conditions that enable individuals and households to pursue stable livelihoods.

The issue becomes more significant when examining the livelihood of strangers within a community. The term "strangers" is used in many African societies to describe persons who are not indigenous to a particular community but who have moved into the community for purposes such as employment, business, education, marriage, residence or other socioeconomic activities. The presence of strangers can contribute positively to community development because they bring labour, entrepreneurial skills, professional expertise, business activities and social connections. Migration can also contribute to development and stability when migrants are able to participate positively in their host communities. The International Organization for Migration notes that migration can contribute to development and peacebuilding, including through migrants' economic and social contributions to their families and communities (Kitimbo et al., 2021). However, the relationship between strangers and host communities may sometimes be affected by social, economic and cultural tensions. Competition for employment, accommodation, land, markets, customers and other resources may create perceptions of unfairness among either strangers or members of the host community. Differences in language, ethnicity, religion, cultural practices and social norms may also create misunderstandings. Where grievances are not adequately addressed, relatively minor disagreements can develop into persistent interpersonal or community tensions. Consequently, effective conflict-management

mechanisms are necessary to ensure that differences between strangers and members of host communities do not undermine social cohesion or economic activities.

Conflict management can influence the livelihood of strangers through several pathways. First, negotiation and dialogue can create opportunities for strangers and host-community members to communicate their interests and resolve disagreements without disrupting economic relationships. Dialogue can reduce misunderstandings and promote mutual understanding. Second, mediation can provide an impartial process through which disputes involving landlords and tenants, employers and workers, traders, neighbours or community groups can be addressed. Third, traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms can provide locally accepted avenues for addressing disputes and maintaining peaceful relationships. Fourth, reconciliation and peacebuilding can help rebuild trust after disagreements and create an environment conducive to continued economic and social interaction.

The importance of combining conflict management with livelihood development is reflected in peacebuilding initiatives in Nigeria. IOM reports that its community stabilization programmes integrate income-generating activities, employment, social cohesion and peacebuilding. Such approaches are designed not only to address immediate disputes but also to strengthen resilience and improve the capacity of communities to recover from conflict. The organization specifically identifies community-based income-generating activities as a means of promoting socioeconomic reintegration and social cohesion between displaced populations and host communities (IOM, 2024). Similarly, IOM's sustainable-solutions framework for Nigeria emphasizes the promotion of livelihood opportunities, job creation and the resumption of productive activities alongside peace and social-cohesion mechanisms. It also identifies alternative dispute-resolution systems and grassroots inter-community trust and cooperation as important components of sustainable recovery (IOM, 2024). This demonstrates that economic wellbeing and peaceful relationships are mutually reinforcing: individuals require peace to pursue sustainable livelihoods, while economically secure individuals and communities may have greater capacity to participate in peaceful community relations.

In Nigerian, the livelihood of strangers can therefore be affected by the extent to which host communities possess effective mechanisms for managing disagreements. A stranger who operates a business in a community requires a relatively stable environment to attract customers, maintain suppliers, protect business assets and earn income. Similarly, a stranger who depends on paid employment requires peaceful relationships with employers, colleagues and the wider community. Those involved in agriculture require access to land and peaceful relations with landowners and neighbouring communities. Tenants require stable relationships with landlords and neighbours. Thus, conflict management has implications for several dimensions of livelihood, including income generation, employment, business activities, agricultural activities, protection of household assets, food security and standard of living. At the same time, strangers should not be viewed only as vulnerable recipients of conflict-management interventions. They are also participants in the social and economic life of the communities in which they reside. They can contribute to peacebuilding through participation in community associations, dialogue, mediation and other collective activities. Evidence from the global migration literature indicates that migrants can contribute to peace and stability through community participation, mediation, institutional support and economic contributions (Kitimbo et al., 2021). Therefore, an effective conflict-management framework should promote inclusion and participation rather than treating strangers as outsiders with little role in community affairs.

The North-Central region of Nigeria is particularly relevant to this discussion because of the interaction between migration, urbanization, population mobility, resource competition and community relations. Nasarawa State, located within this region, has experienced different forms of communal and resource-related tensions. Research on displacement arising from farmer-herder conflict in Nasarawa State, for example, found that affected

farming communities experienced displacement and relied substantially on social networks such as friends and family as coping mechanisms. This illustrates how conflict can influence the capacity of individuals and households to sustain their livelihoods and how social relationships can become important mechanisms for coping with conflict-related difficulties (Yikwab & Tade, 2022). Within Nasarawa State, Karu Local Government Area occupies an important position because of its proximity to the Federal Capital Territory and its increasing urban and commercial activities. Mararaba, as a major urban settlement within Karu LGA, attracts people from different ethnic, religious, occupational and geographical backgrounds. The movement of people into the area provides opportunities for economic interaction, employment, trading, entrepreneurship, housing and other forms of socioeconomic activity. At the same time, rapid population growth and increasing competition for employment, accommodation, business opportunities, land, social services and other resources may create conditions in which disagreements and tensions emerge between residents and newcomers.

The livelihood of strangers in Mararaba may therefore depend not only on individual economic capacity but also on the social and institutional environment in which they operate. A trader who experiences repeated disputes may lose customers or business opportunities; a worker may face difficulties if social tensions affect employment relationships; a tenant may experience instability where disputes arise over accommodation; and small-scale entrepreneurs may be affected when conflicts interfere with access to markets, customers or business premises. In this regard, effective conflict-management mechanisms can contribute to the protection of economic activities by creating channels through which grievances are addressed before they escalate.

The challenge, however, is that not all conflicts involving strangers are managed effectively. Where formal institutions are inaccessible, slow or perceived as ineffective, people may rely on informal mechanisms such as family elders, community leaders, religious leaders, neighbourhood associations and other local actors. These mechanisms can be valuable because they are often more accessible and culturally familiar. IOM's peacebuilding work in Nigeria similarly emphasizes community dialogue, traditional conflict-resolution structures and peace committees as mechanisms for addressing local disputes and strengthening trust among communities.

Furthermore, inadequate conflict management can have cumulative effects on the livelihood of strangers. A single unresolved dispute may result in loss of business opportunities or social relationships, while repeated conflicts may create insecurity, social exclusion and reduced economic participation. When individuals perceive that they are not fairly treated within a community, they may limit their economic activities, withdraw from community networks or relocate to other areas. On the other hand, effective mechanisms for dialogue, mediation and reconciliation can strengthen trust and create an environment in which strangers are able to participate more fully in community economic activities.

Despite the importance of these issues, there remains a need to examine how conflict-management mechanisms specifically affect the livelihood of strangers in rapidly expanding urban communities such as Mararaba. Much of the literature on conflict and livelihoods in Nigeria has focused on internally displaced persons, farmer-herder conflicts, communal conflicts and conflict-affected rural communities. For example, Yikwab and Tade (2022) examined how displaced farming communities in Nasarawa State coped with conflict-induced displacement. However, less attention has been directed toward the everyday experiences of migrants or non-indigenous residents living and pursuing livelihoods in an urbanizing community such as Mararaba. Understanding their experiences is important because peaceful relations between host populations and strangers can influence economic participation, social integration and community development.

It is against this background that this study examines conflict management and the livelihood of strangers in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The study seeks to understand the extent to which mechanisms such as negotiation and

dialogue, mediation, traditional and community-based conflict management, reconciliation and peacebuilding contribute to the livelihood of strangers. Specifically, attention can be given to livelihood dimensions such as income generation, employment, business and economic activities, protection of household assets, food security and standard of living. The study is expected to provide empirical insight into how effective conflict-management practices can promote peaceful coexistence, strengthen social integration and improve the socioeconomic wellbeing of strangers residing in Mararaba.

In view of the foregoing, this study sought answers to the following question:

To what extent do negotiation and dialogue influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of income generation and employment?

To what extent does mediation influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of business/economic activities and agricultural activities?

To what extent do traditional and community-based conflict management mechanisms influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of protection of household assets, food security and standard of living?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to examine the relationship between conflict management and the livelihood of strangers.

The specific objectives are to:

Examine the extent to which negotiation and dialogue influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of income generation and employment.

Assess the extent to which mediation influences the livelihood of strangers in terms of business/economic activities and agricultural activities.

Determine the extent to which traditional and community-based conflict management mechanisms influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of protection of household assets, food security and standard of living.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study focused on conflict management and the livelihood of strangers in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Geographically, the study is limited to Mararaba in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. In terms of content, the study is restricted to the relationship between conflict management and livelihood. The study is deliberately delimited to Mararaba rather than covering the entire Karu Local Government Area or Nasarawa State.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study adopted the conflict transformation theory by John Paul Lederach. The theory is particularly appropriate because the study is concerned not only with managing disagreements but also with understanding how peaceful relationships can be developed in ways that protect and improve people's livelihoods. Conflict Transformation Theory is strongly associated with the work of John Paul Lederach, particularly his argument that conflict should not be viewed merely as a problem requiring settlement or control. Rather, conflict can be transformed by addressing the underlying relationships, structures, patterns and social conditions that generate or sustain conflict (Lederach, 1997). From this perspective, conflict is an expression of broader relational and structural conditions, and sustainable peace requires changes in those conditions rather than simply ending a particular dispute.

Lederach (1997) explains conflict transformation as an approach that seeks to change the relationships and structures that produce destructive conflict while building relationships and conditions that promote justice and peaceful coexistence. The approach therefore moves beyond the immediate issues in a dispute to examine the wider social context in which the conflict occurs. Lederach (2003) further emphasizes that conflict transformation involves changing destructive patterns of interaction and developing constructive relationships that can support sustainable peace.

The theory assumes that conflict can have both destructive and constructive dimensions. Destructive conflict can damage relationships, weaken social institutions, create insecurity and undermine people's ability to pursue their social and economic activities. However, conflict can also expose inequalities, unmet needs and grievances that require attention. Effective transformation therefore involves identifying the underlying causes of conflict and creating processes through which the parties can address their differences and develop healthier relationships.

Conflict Transformation Theory is relevant to the study because the livelihood of strangers in Mararaba, Karu LGA of Nasarawa State may be affected by the quality of relationships between strangers and members of the host community. Strangers who live and work in Mararaba may depend on peaceful relationships for employment, trading, entrepreneurship, accommodation and other economic activities. Where disagreements over employment, business, accommodation, resources or social relationships become persistent, they may negatively affect the ability of strangers to sustain their livelihoods. The theory helps explain why negotiation and dialogue are important mechanisms in the study. Dialogue allows strangers and host-community members to communicate their concerns, clarify misunderstandings and develop mutually acceptable solutions. From a conflict-transformation perspective, dialogue is not simply a way of ending an immediate disagreement; it can also contribute to rebuilding relationships and changing negative perceptions between groups (Lederach, 2003). Improved relationships can create a more stable environment for strangers to engage in income-generating and employment activities.

Furthermore, the theory recognizes that strangers should not be treated simply as outsiders who need protection from conflict. They are participants in the social, economic and cultural life of their host communities. Their participation in dialogue, community associations, reconciliation and other peacebuilding processes can contribute to improved relationships. This perspective is consistent with Lederach's emphasis on inclusive relationship-building and the development of local capacities for peace (Lederach, 1997).

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Concept of Conflict Management**

Conflict management is an important concept in peace and conflict studies because conflict is an inevitable feature of social interaction. Individuals and groups often have different interests, values, expectations, needs and perceptions, and these differences can generate disagreements. Conflict itself is not necessarily destructive; rather, the consequences of conflict depend substantially on how it is handled. Rahim (2002) conceptualizes conflict as an interactive process involving incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance between social entities and argues that effective management requires appropriate diagnosis and intervention. Conflict management can therefore be understood as the deliberate process of identifying, addressing and controlling disagreements in order to prevent them from escalating into destructive confrontation while promoting acceptable relationships among the parties involved. It involves selecting appropriate strategies according to the nature, intensity and circumstances of a conflict. Rahim (2002) emphasizes that conflict management involves diagnosing conflicts and intervening at interpersonal, group and intergroup levels.

An important feature of conflict management is that it does not necessarily mean eliminating all conflict. Some disagreements may be constructive when they encourage individuals or groups to examine their interests, communicate their concerns and develop better solutions. However, conflict becomes problematic when it damages relationships, prevents cooperation or undermines the ability of people to achieve their legitimate objectives. Thus, the purpose of conflict management is often to reduce destructive conflict while encouraging constructive interaction.

### **Dimensions of Conflict Management**

Conflict management may involve several approaches, including negotiation,

dialogue, mediation, compromise, collaboration, reconciliation and community-based mechanisms. The appropriate mechanism depends on the nature of the disagreement and the relationship between the parties.

Negotiation and dialogue involve direct communication between parties in conflict. Through negotiation, parties communicate their interests and attempt to reach an agreement that is acceptable to them. Dialogue goes beyond simply reaching an agreement by creating opportunities for understanding, communication and relationship-building. These approaches are particularly useful where parties have continuing relationships and need to coexist after the immediate disagreement has been addressed.

Mediation involves the participation of a third party who assists conflicting parties to communicate, clarify their concerns and explore possible solutions. The mediator generally facilitates the process rather than imposing a solution. Mediation can be particularly useful where direct communication has become difficult because of mistrust or misunderstanding.

Compromise involves each party giving up some of its demands in order to reach an acceptable settlement. Rahim's model identifies compromising as one of five major approaches to handling interpersonal conflict, alongside integrating, obliging, dominating and avoiding.

Integration or collaboration emphasizes identifying solutions that address the important interests of both parties. According to Rahim (2002), the integrating style involves openness, information exchange, examination of differences and the search for alternative solutions. It is particularly appropriate for complex problems where both parties' interests need to be considered.

Traditional and community-based conflict management is also important, particularly in societies where community leaders, elders, religious leaders and other locally recognized actors play significant roles in maintaining social relationships. Such mechanisms can provide accessible avenues for discussing grievances and restoring relationships.

### **Conflict Management and Peaceful Coexistence**

The importance of conflict management extends beyond the settlement of individual disputes. Effective management can contribute to peaceful coexistence by reducing hostility, improving communication and creating opportunities for cooperation. When individuals and groups have legitimate channels through which grievances can be expressed and addressed, the possibility of destructive escalation may be reduced. Conflict management is therefore closely associated with social cohesion. When parties are able to address disagreements constructively, they can continue to cooperate in areas such as employment, trade, community development and social activities. Conversely, poorly managed conflict can weaken trust and make future cooperation more difficult.

### **Concept of Livelihood of Strangers**

The concept of livelihood is central to understanding how individuals and households survive, meet their basic needs, pursue economic opportunities and improve their socioeconomic wellbeing. Livelihood is broader than employment or income because it encompasses the resources, capabilities, relationships and activities through which people secure the necessities of life. Chambers and Conway (1992) conceptualize livelihood in terms of people's capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. The sustainable-livelihood perspective further emphasizes the ability of individuals and households to withstand stresses and shocks while maintaining or improving their capabilities and assets.

Livelihood has been defined from several perspectives. Chambers and Conway (1992) provide one of the most widely used definitions, describing livelihood as comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. They further explain that a livelihood becomes sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks while maintaining or enhancing its capabilities and assets without undermining the natural resource base. The concept therefore incorporates more than financial resources.

Capabilities may include education, skills, knowledge and physical capacity; assets may include financial, physical, natural, human and social resources; while activities refer to the productive and social actions through which individuals convert their capabilities and assets into means of living. The Food and Agriculture Organization similarly emphasizes that livelihood approaches consider people's capabilities, tangible and intangible assets and economic activities as interconnected elements of household livelihood strategies.

Livelihood can consequently be understood as a combination of resources, abilities, opportunities and activities that enables an individual or household to sustain life and achieve an acceptable level of wellbeing. This broad understanding is particularly useful in studying strangers because their ability to make a living may depend on both their personal resources and the social environment of the host community.

The term stranger generally refers to a person who is not originally from, or is not regarded as an indigenous member of, a particular community but who resides in or participates in activities within that community. In the context of this study, strangers may include migrants and other non-indigenous residents who have moved into the community for employment, business, education, family reasons, residence or other socioeconomic purposes. Being a stranger does not necessarily mean that an individual is socially or economically excluded. Migrants and newcomers can make significant contributions to host communities through their labour, entrepreneurship, skills, investment and social networks. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) recognizes that migrants make economic, social and civic contributions to destination communities and that migration can support development.

The livelihood of strangers refers to the totality of economic and social activities, resources, capabilities and relationships through which non-indigenous residents obtain the necessities of life and sustain their wellbeing in a host community. It encompasses how strangers secure employment, generate income, operate businesses, engage in agricultural activities where applicable, acquire and protect household assets, obtain food and maintain an acceptable standard of living. The livelihood of strangers can be influenced by several factors. These include educational and occupational skills, access to capital, employment opportunities, availability of markets, social networks, access to land and housing, community acceptance, government policies and the general security of the environment. Consequently, strangers may adopt different livelihood strategies depending on the opportunities and constraints they encounter.

A livelihood approach recognizes that people often combine different activities rather than depending on one source of income. For example, an individual may combine paid employment with petty trading or entrepreneurship. Another person may depend on farming, trading and informal services. The combination of livelihood activities provides households with alternatives when one source of income becomes unstable. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is particularly useful because it recognizes the diversity and complexity of livelihood strategies and the importance of assets and institutions in shaping people's ability to make a living.

### **Indicators of Livelihood of Strangers**

#### **Income Generation**

Income generation refers to the ability of strangers to obtain financial resources through employment, business, trading, self-employment, professional services, agriculture and other legitimate economic activities. Income provides individuals and households with the purchasing power required to obtain food, clothing, housing, education, healthcare and other necessities. A stable income is therefore an important component of livelihood security. Where strangers experience difficulties accessing income-generating opportunities, their capacity to meet household needs may be reduced.

#### **Employment**

Employment constitutes another important livelihood indicator. It concerns access to

jobs and the ability to maintain productive employment. Employment provides income but may also provide social networks, skills development, occupational identity and opportunities for socioeconomic advancement. For strangers, access to employment may depend on their skills, qualifications, social networks and relationship with the host community. Where employment opportunities are limited or discriminatory practices exist, strangers may be compelled to depend on informal economic activities.

### **Business and Economic Activities**

Strangers may engage in trading, entrepreneurship, transportation, retailing, artisan activities and other forms of economic activity. These activities can provide income and contribute to household welfare. The capacity to establish and sustain businesses depends on factors such as access to finance, markets, customers, premises, social networks and a stable operating environment. Migrants can also contribute to host economies through entrepreneurship and economic participation. IOM's migration literature identifies migrants' economic contributions as an important aspect of their relationship with destination communities.

### **Agricultural Activities**

Although the study is focused on an urbanizing environment, some strangers may participate in farming, livestock-related activities, food processing or other agricultural activities. Agricultural activities can serve as sources of income, employment and food for households. Access to land, security of tenure, peaceful relationships with landowners and neighbours, agricultural inputs and markets can influence the ability of strangers to engage successfully in agriculture.

### **Protection of Household Assets**

Livelihood also involves the ability to acquire, maintain and protect household assets. These may include housing, business equipment, farm tools, household goods, savings and other productive resources. The sustainable-livelihood perspective emphasizes that assets are important foundations of people's ability to cope with shocks and maintain their means of living. Consequently, loss or destruction of assets can seriously undermine livelihood security.

### **Food Security**

Food security refers to the ability of individuals and households to obtain sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Livelihood and food security are closely related because households generally require adequate income, productive resources and access to markets to obtain food. For strangers, unstable employment, loss of income, business disruption or social insecurity may reduce their ability to consistently meet household food needs.

### **Standard of Living**

The standard of living represents the broader socioeconomic wellbeing of individuals and households. It can be reflected in the ability to afford adequate housing, food, clothing, education, healthcare, transportation and other necessities. A livelihood that provides only temporary survival without enabling individuals to improve their socioeconomic conditions may be considered vulnerable. The sustainable-livelihood perspective therefore emphasizes resilience, asset preservation and the ability to cope with shocks rather than income alone.

### **Livelihood and Social Relationships**

An important feature of the livelihood of strangers is the role of social capital and community relationships. People do not pursue livelihoods in isolation. They depend on relationships with employers, customers, neighbours, community leaders, financial institutions, government agencies and other members of society. Social networks can provide information about employment and business opportunities, access to credit, assistance during periods of difficulty and support during emergencies. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework recognizes social resources and relationships as important components of people's livelihood assets. For strangers, this dimension is particularly

significant because their position within the host community may influence their access to social and economic opportunities. Positive relationships can facilitate integration and economic participation, while social exclusion or persistent conflict may constrain livelihood opportunities.

### **Conflict Management and Livelihood of Strangers**

Conflict can disrupt employment, business activities, movement, access to productive resources, social networks and household assets, while effective conflict management can create conditions that support cooperation, economic participation and social stability. Research in Nigeria has similarly shown that conflict can undermine markets and economic growth, while conflict-management programmes combined with economic activities can improve trust, freedom of movement and livelihood outcomes. Effective conflict management can contribute to income generation by creating a relatively stable environment in which strangers can engage in legitimate economic activities. Strangers may depend on trading, entrepreneurship, paid employment, services and other income-generating activities. When disagreements between strangers and members of the host community are poorly managed, these activities may be interrupted through disputes, loss of customers, restricted movement or breakdown of business relationships.

Negotiation and dialogue can help parties communicate their interests and reach mutually acceptable arrangements before disagreements escalate. Evidence from Nigeria's CONCUR programme indicates that combining conflict mitigation with joint economic projects can improve local economic activity and reduce tensions. Households participating in the programme were substantially more likely to report that conflict had not affected their livelihoods than households in comparison communities.

There is a significant conceptual relationship between conflict management and the livelihood of strangers. Conflict can disrupt the economic and social conditions necessary for livelihood, whereas effective conflict management can promote peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, economic participation and resilience. Evidence from Nigeria indicates that integrating conflict management with livelihood and economic initiatives can reduce tensions, strengthen trust and improve the capacity of households to maintain their livelihoods. For strangers, effective negotiation and dialogue, mediation, and traditional/community-based conflict-management mechanisms may therefore contribute to improved income generation, employment, business activities, agricultural activities, protection of household assets, food security and standard of living.

### **REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

Kehinde (2014) conducted a study titled "Conflict Management Strategies to Reduce Consequences on Livelihoods of Fulani Cattle Herders and Farmers in Kabba-Bunu, Kogi State, Nigeria." The study was conducted in Kabba-Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State and is particularly relevant because it directly examined the relationship between conflict management and livelihood. The study recognized that conflicts between farmers and Fulani pastoralists resulted in losses of crops, animals, property and other livelihood resources. The major objectives of the study were to identify the causes of farmer-herder conflict, determine its consequences for the livelihoods of the affected groups and identify conflict-management strategies used to reduce those consequences. The population consisted of farmers and Fulani cattle herders in Kabba-Bunu, while 486 respondents were randomly selected for the study. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics and logit regression. The study found that destruction of crops and animals constituted a major source of conflict. The findings further demonstrated that conflict produced livelihood losses among both farmers and Fulani pastoralists. Among farmers, loss of crops and other properties had statistically significant relationships with conflict, while among the Fulani, loss of cattle was significantly associated with conflict. Importantly, the study found that 90.3% of farmers and 72.3% of Fulani respondents identified payment of compensation as an important method of resolving the conflict, while

the use of traditional rulers was identified as the preferred conflict-management strategy by substantial proportions of both groups. The study recommended greater attention to compensation and the strengthening of traditional institutions in conflict resolution. It concluded that effective conflict-management strategies could reduce the livelihood consequences of farmer-herder conflicts.

Yikwab and Tade (2022) conducted a study titled “How Farming Communities Cope with Displacement Arising from Farmer-Herder Conflict in North Central Nigeria.” The study was undertaken in Nasarawa State, making it particularly relevant to the geographical context of the present research. The study examined how farming communities coped with displacement resulting from farmer-herder conflict. The objective was to examine the coping strategies used by farming communities that had been displaced because of farmer-herder conflict. The researchers adopted an exploratory research design and used qualitative methods of data collection. They purposively selected 23 victims of farmer-herder conflict in Nasarawa State, who were either living in internally displaced persons' camps or staying with friends and relatives. Data were collected through qualitative interviews and analysed thematically. The study found that displacement significantly altered the socioeconomic circumstances of affected farming communities. Participants relied heavily on friends and family members as sources of support in coping with victimization and displacement. This finding demonstrates the importance of social relationships and social networks in helping people withstand conflict-related livelihood disruptions. The researchers concluded that displacement resulting from farmer-herder conflict creates serious challenges for affected communities and that social networks are important coping mechanisms. The study implies that conflict-management and peacebuilding interventions should pay attention not only to physical security but also to social relationships and the socioeconomic consequences of displacement.

Another relevant empirical study was conducted by Adewale and colleagues on resource-use conflict in agrarian communities in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study examined the causes of conflict and the effectiveness of conflict-management strategies among farmers and herders. A total of 207 respondents, comprising 135 crop farmers and 72 herdsman, were randomly selected. Data were collected using structured interview schedules, focus group discussions and personal observation. Descriptive statistics and standard deviation were used in analysing the data. The study found that farmers associated conflict with issues such as destruction of farmland, uncontrolled grazing, damage to crops and pollution of community water sources. Herders, on the other hand, identified issues such as cattle rustling, blocked water points and commercialization of crop residues as major causes of conflict. These findings demonstrate that conflicting groups can perceive the causes of the same conflict differently. Regarding conflict management, the study found that farmers considered approximately 88% of the strategies employed to be effective, while herders considered all the identified strategies effective. The mechanisms included village committees, dialogue, traditional rulers and other social and institutional strategies. However, inadequate funding, insufficient government institutional support and inadequate cooperation from disputants constrained the effectiveness of conflict-management mechanisms. The study recommended stronger financial and institutional support for community institutions involved in conflict management and policy reforms addressing structural problems such as inequality, political factors and marginalization.

Adigizi and Agwai (2026) conducted a study titled “Conflict Management Strategies in Farmer-Herder Crises: A Comparative Study of Traditional and State-Led Approaches in Nasarawa State, 2015–2023.” The study is particularly important to the present research because it was conducted across Nasarawa State, including Karu Local Government Area. The study examined the effectiveness of traditional and state-led approaches to managing farmer-herder conflicts between 2015 and 2023. It employed a qualitative research design, combining primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through 24 key-informant interviews, purposively conducted across nine LGAs: Lafia, Doma, Keana, Keffi,

Karu, Toto, Akwanga, Nasarawa Eggon and Wamba. Participants included traditional rulers, community leaders, farmer association leaders, pastoralist representatives, security personnel, local government officials, peace-committee members and relevant government officials. The researchers analysed the data using thematic content analysis. The study found that farmer-herder conflicts in Nasarawa State were associated with competition over land and water, population growth, environmental changes, destruction of farmland, cattle rustling, weak enforcement of regulations and other structural factors. More importantly for the present study, the research found that traditional approaches such as mediation by traditional rulers, community dialogue, customary arbitration and reconciliation mechanisms enjoyed considerable local legitimacy and acceptance among disputing parties. The study recommended strengthening traditional institutions and improving collaboration between traditional and state-led conflict-management structures. Its conclusion was that sustainable conflict management in Nasarawa State requires mechanisms that are locally legitimate, inclusive and capable of addressing the structural causes of conflict.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The design is considered appropriate because the study seeks to collect information from strangers residing, working and undertaking legitimate economic activities in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, at a particular period. A survey design enables the researcher to obtain information directly from respondents concerning their experiences and perceptions of conflict-management mechanisms and how such mechanisms affect their livelihood.

### **Area of the Study**

The study was conducted in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Karu Local Government Area is one of the 13 Local Government Areas in Nasarawa State. It shares a boundary with the Federal Capital Territory and is strategically located along the Abuja–Keffi corridor. Its proximity to Abuja has contributed to rapid population growth, residential development and commercial activities in communities such as Mararaba, Masaka, Ado and New Nyanya. The area accommodates indigenous residents as well as people from different parts of Nigeria who have migrated into the area for employment, business, education and other socioeconomic opportunities. The choice of Mararaba is appropriate because its diverse population and extensive economic activities provide an appropriate setting for examining the relationship between conflict management and livelihood among strangers. The 2006 National Population Census recorded 216,230 persons for Karu LGA, demonstrating the substantial population base of the local government. The area is characterised by trading, transportation, small-scale enterprises, civil service, construction, farming and other informal economic activities. The mixture of indigenous residents and migrants makes the area suitable for examining how conflict-management practices can influence the socioeconomic activities of strangers.

### **Method of Data Collection**

This study adopted the secondary sources of data collection.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The analysis was based on secondary sources of data which include; peer review, journal articles, books, reports and other credible documentary sources.

## **Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

### **Research Question One**

To what extent do Negotiation and Dialogue Influence the Livelihood of Strangers in Terms of Income Generation and Employment in Mararaba, Karu LGA of Nasarawa State?

The first objective of the study examined the extent to which negotiation and dialogue influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of income generation and employment in

Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Evidence from existing literature indicates that negotiation and dialogue can contribute substantially to livelihood protection because they provide opportunities for conflicting individuals and groups to communicate their interests, reduce misunderstanding, prevent escalation and reach mutually acceptable agreements. This is particularly important in a socially diverse environment such as Mararaba, where people from different ethnic, occupational and socioeconomic backgrounds live and undertake economic activities.

Negotiation involves direct engagement between parties to a disagreement with the objective of reaching an acceptable settlement, while dialogue provides a broader process through which parties communicate, listen to one another and develop mutual understanding. In livelihood terms, both mechanisms can reduce the disruption of economic activities that normally accompanies unresolved conflict. When conflicts are managed through dialogue rather than violence, individuals are more likely to maintain access to workplaces, markets, customers, suppliers and other economic resources. The importance of negotiation and dialogue is supported by evidence from Nigeria. Ola and Adisa (2025), in their study of conflict-resolution mechanisms between crop farmers and herders in Southwestern Nigeria, found that dialogue was among the mechanisms used by both farmers and herders. Their findings further showed that peaceful communication, bargaining and problem-solving were perceived as useful mechanisms for managing conflict. The study concluded that the effectiveness of conflict-resolution mechanisms depends partly on the willingness of the conflicting parties to cooperate. This finding suggests that dialogue can provide an avenue for restoring relationships and reducing the conditions that disrupt livelihood activities.

Similarly, research on farmer-herder conflict in Ibarapa communities of Oyo State found that negotiation and mediation became more prominent after confrontation failed. The study reported that negotiation and mediation involving government officials, security agencies, community leaders, youths, farmers and herders contributed to relative peace in the affected communities. The study therefore emphasized peaceful negotiation and dialogue as important mechanisms for reducing recurrent conflict. The relationship between dialogue and income generation can be understood from the fact that peaceful relationships provide an enabling environment for people to continue economic activities. Income-generating activities require freedom of movement, access to customers and markets, predictable business relationships and the ability to invest time and resources without constant fear of disruption. Where disagreements between strangers and members of the host community are settled through negotiation and dialogue, the possibility of business closure, loss of customers, displacement and interruption of employment is reduced. This relationship is particularly relevant to Mararaba because the area contains a large and socially diverse population and has extensive informal and commercial activities. Existing research specifically conducted in Mararaba has documented the importance of insecurity and community-based security arrangements to residents. Obi and Osisioogu (2020), for example, found that vigilante and neighbourhood-watch arrangements were regarded by many respondents as dependable methods of crime prevention and control in selected communities in Mararaba. The study demonstrates that local mechanisms for managing insecurity have implications for the ability of residents to conduct their daily activities in a relatively secure environment.

The effect of dialogue on employment is equally significant. Conflict can prevent individuals from reaching their workplaces, discourage employers from maintaining businesses in insecure environments and reduce opportunities for new investment. Conversely, successful dialogue can promote social stability and restore confidence among workers, employers, traders and other economic actors. The SPARC study on livelihoods, conflict and mediation in Nigeria found that disputes over land and resources affect livelihood strategies and those households respond through various forms of mediation and adaptation. It also identified livelihood diversification and employment-related decisions as

being shaped by the broader conflict environment. Furthermore, the British Council's Managing Conflict in Nigeria programme reported that conflict in Nigerian communities has resulted in loss of property and means of livelihood and recommended the establishment of conflict-mediation and dialogue platforms. It also recommended inclusive resource-management committees involving relevant community groups. This suggests that dialogue is not merely a mechanism for settling interpersonal disagreements; it can also contribute to creating conditions that protect economic opportunities.

Therefore, the secondary evidence indicates that negotiation and dialogue have a potentially substantial positive influence on the income generation and employment of strangers. For strangers in Mararaba, successful dialogue can help them maintain relationships with host-community members, resolve disputes concerning business premises, land, employment and access to economic resources, and reduce interruptions to their livelihood activities. However, the influence of dialogue is likely to depend on the willingness of parties to participate, the neutrality of facilitators, the credibility of agreements reached and the capacity of community and government institutions to enforce or support settlements. The finding is consistent with the principles of Conflict Transformation Theory, which emphasizes changing destructive relationships and social structures rather than merely ending an immediate disagreement. From this perspective, negotiation and dialogue are important because they can transform hostile relationships into more cooperative relationships, thereby creating conditions in which individuals, including strangers, can pursue sustainable livelihoods.

### **Research Question Two**

To what extent does Mediation Influences the Livelihood of Strangers in Terms of Business/Economic Activities and Agricultural Activities in Mararaba, Karu LGA of Nasarawa State?

The second objective examined the extent to which mediation influences the livelihood of strangers in terms of business/economic activities and agricultural activities in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Mediation is a conflict-management process in which a neutral or acceptable third party assists disputing parties to communicate, identify their interests and reach an acceptable settlement. Unlike direct confrontation, mediation provides an opportunity for conflicting parties to address disagreements without necessarily destroying their social and economic relationships. Its relevance to livelihood is particularly important where disputes concern land, property, markets, employment, business relationships or access to natural resources. Empirical evidence from Nigeria supports the livelihood significance of mediation. Saleh (2022), in a study of the role of the Interfaith Mediation Centre in managing farmer-herder conflict in Bauchi State, examined the contribution of mediation and dialogue to managing conflicts whose consequences affected communities and livelihoods. The study demonstrates that mediation can provide an institutional avenue for disputing groups to communicate and manage disputes that would otherwise have broader social and economic consequences.

The SPARC/ODI longitudinal study on livelihoods, conflict and mediation in Nigeria provides particularly relevant evidence. The study investigated how violent and non-violent conflicts affect livelihoods and examined formal and informal mediation and conflict-resolution initiatives. It found that disputes over land and resources continued to affect livelihood activities and that community actors, traditional leaders and other institutions were involved in efforts to address these disputes. Mediation can influence business and economic activities by preventing disputes from escalating into violence, displacement or destruction of property. Small businesses and informal enterprises are particularly vulnerable to conflict because they often depend on daily transactions, customer relationships and physical access to markets. A conflict that forces traders or small business operators to close temporarily can result in loss of income, customers and business capital. When mediation resolves disputes at an early stage, these economic losses can be reduced. Mediation is also relevant to agricultural activities. Although Mararaba is increasingly

urbanized, agricultural activities remain important in the wider Karu area. Conflicts involving land access, farming activities, livestock movement, water resources and property boundaries can disrupt agricultural production. When such disputes are mediated successfully, farmers and other livelihood actors may regain access to productive resources and continue agricultural activities.

Musa (2021), in a study of herder-farmer conflicts and agricultural activities in Nasarawa State, found a negative relationship between conflict and agricultural activities. The study reported that increases in human insecurity, forced displacement and loss of labour time were associated with declines in agricultural activities and output. Specifically, a 1% increase in human insecurity was associated with an estimated 17% decline in agricultural activities/output, while increases in forced displacement and man-hour loss were also associated with reductions in agricultural activity. This evidence is important because it shows the economic consequences that mediation seeks to prevent. When agricultural disputes remain unresolved, farmers may abandon farms, lose labour time or avoid productive locations. Mediation can therefore contribute indirectly to agricultural productivity by reducing the insecurity and uncertainty surrounding access to land and other productive resources. The importance of mediation is also reflected in recent research on Nasarawa State. Adigizi and Agwai (2026), examining farmer-herder crises across nine LGAs including Karu, found that traditional mediation, community dialogue, customary arbitration and reconciliation had considerable local legitimacy. The study recommended strengthening traditional institutions and improving their collaboration with formal state mechanisms.

However, mediation should not be understood as automatically producing positive livelihood outcomes. Its effectiveness depends on whether the parties perceive the mediator as impartial, whether agreements are acceptable to all parties and whether the agreements are implemented. The SPARC evidence indicates that some community members have questioned the neutrality of traditional leaders in disputes, especially where one group believes that the other receives preferential treatment. Such perceptions can undermine confidence in mediation. Consequently, the secondary evidence suggests that mediation can have a moderate to substantial positive influence on business/economic and agricultural activities, particularly when it is timely, inclusive, impartial and supported by legitimate institutions. In Mararaba, mediation can help strangers resolve disputes without severing their economic relationships with host-community members. It can also reduce the likelihood that disagreements concerning land, business, property or agricultural resources will develop into conflicts capable of disrupting livelihood activities. The implication for the present study is that mediation should be viewed not only as a mechanism for resolving conflict but also as a means of protecting economic continuity. By reducing the duration and intensity of disputes, mediation can enable strangers to continue trading, working, farming and participating in other economic activities.

### **Research Question Three**

To what extent do Traditional and Community-Based Conflict Management Mechanisms Influence the Livelihood of Strangers in Terms of Protection of Household Assets, Food Security and Standard of Living in Mararaba, Karu LGA of Nasarawa State?

The third objective examined the extent to which traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms influence the livelihood of strangers in terms of protection of household assets, food security and standard of living in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms include the involvement of traditional rulers, elders, religious leaders, community associations, family heads, neighbourhood groups, customary arbitration, reconciliation and other locally recognized institutions. These mechanisms are important in many Nigerian communities because they are generally closer to the people and may have greater knowledge of local relationships, histories and social norms. Akinwale (2010) argues that traditional conflict-management mechanisms remain important in Nigeria because formal state institutions have not always adequately addressed the social

relationships and grievances underlying conflicts. The study argues for greater integration of traditional and modern approaches rather than relying exclusively on coercive state mechanisms.

Recent research in Nasarawa State provides direct support for this position. Adigizi and Agwai (2026) found that traditional approaches including mediation by traditional rulers, community dialogue, customary arbitration and reconciliation enjoyed considerable local legitimacy among communities affected by farmer-herder conflicts. Because the study included Karu among the LGAs investigated, its findings have particular relevance to the geographical setting of the present research. Traditional and community-based mechanisms can influence the protection of household assets by preventing disputes from escalating into violence, destruction or displacement. Household assets include houses, business property, farm produce, livestock, tools, equipment and other resources used to support family livelihoods. When community institutions intervene early in disputes, they may help prevent the destruction or forced abandonment of these assets. Evidence from Nasarawa State demonstrates the importance of this relationship. Musa (2021) reported that farmer-herder conflicts had consequences for houses and other assets and recommended that affected households should receive assistance for the reconstruction of damaged properties. The study also recommended improved security arrangements to protect vulnerable communities.

The second livelihood dimension is food security. Conflict can reduce food security through several pathways. It can prevent farmers from accessing farms, reduce agricultural production, destroy crops and livestock, interrupt food markets and reduce household income available for purchasing food. Balogun (2022) specifically argues that farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria have affected farmers' and herders' output threatened household and national food security and contributed to depletion of environmental resources. The study recommends greater use of existing social networks and community structures in conflict management. The connection between community-based conflict management and food security can therefore be understood through prevention. When community leaders and social networks successfully manage disputes involving land, water, farming and livestock, they help protect the productive activities upon which household food supplies depend. Traditional mechanisms can facilitate communication between parties, establish acceptable local rules and encourage reconciliation after disputes.

The third dimension is standard of living. Standard of living reflects the general material and socioeconomic conditions under which individuals and households live. It is affected by income, employment, food security, housing, access to services, security and the protection of productive assets. Conflict can lower the standard of living by destroying assets, reducing income, causing displacement and increasing household expenditure on security and recovery. The relationship between conflict management and standard of living is supported by the SPARC research on livelihoods, conflict and mediation in Nigeria. The study found that land and resource disputes affect livelihood strategies and that people adapt their economic activities in response to conflict and insecurity. It also showed that mediation and community-level responses form part of the ways in which households and communities attempt to manage these pressures.

Traditional and community-based mechanisms may therefore contribute to improved standards of living by helping to maintain social stability and preserve access to livelihood resources. For strangers in Mararaba, community acceptance is particularly important because they may depend on relationships with host-community members for accommodation, employment, business opportunities, access to markets and social support. Effective community-based mechanisms can provide avenues through which disputes between strangers and host residents are addressed before they escalate. Evidence from Mararaba itself also illustrates the importance of community-based institutions in maintaining local security. Obi and Osisiogu (2020) found that vigilante and neighbourhood-watch arrangements were regarded by many respondents as useful approaches to crime

prevention and control. Although vigilantism is not identical to traditional conflict management, the finding demonstrates the broader importance of community participation and locally organized mechanisms in addressing insecurity within Mararaba. Nevertheless, traditional mechanisms have limitations. They may lack formal enforcement authority, can sometimes be influenced by local power relations and may not always be perceived as neutral by all groups.

The SPARC research found that some interviewees believed that elders or community leaders sometimes favoured particular groups in disputes, especially regarding crop damage and restitution. Therefore, traditional mechanisms should not operate in isolation where serious disputes require formal legal or governmental intervention. Their greatest value may arise when they are integrated with fair and accountable formal institutions. The secondary evidence indicates that traditional and community-based conflict-management mechanisms can make an important positive contribution to the protection of household assets, food security and standard of living. Their effectiveness is likely to be greatest when they are trusted by the parties, inclusive of strangers and host residents, transparent in their decisions and linked with formal institutions where necessary.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study examined conflict management and the livelihood of strangers in Mararaba, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The study was premised on the understanding that the ability of strangers to sustain their livelihoods depends not only on their individual economic capabilities but also on the social, economic and security environment in which they live and operate. The findings from the secondary evidence reviewed indicate that conflict management plays an important role in creating conditions that enable strangers to pursue their economic and social activities with reduced disruption. In conclusion, the evidence reviewed demonstrates that peaceful conflict management and livelihood security are closely interconnected. Effective negotiation and dialogue can support income generation and employment; mediation can protect business, economic and agricultural activities; while traditional and community-based mechanisms can help protect household assets, food security and standard of living. Therefore, strengthening inclusive, credible and locally appropriate conflict-management mechanisms in Mararaba is essential for promoting peaceful coexistence and improving the livelihood security of strangers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

The study recommends that the Karu Local Government Council, traditional institutions, community leaders, residents' associations and relevant government agencies should establish and strengthen regular negotiation and dialogue platforms in Mararaba. These platforms should provide opportunities for strangers and members of host communities to discuss grievances relating to employment, business premises, markets, land, accommodation and other socioeconomic issues before such disagreements escalate into serious conflicts.

The study recommends that government authorities, traditional rulers, community leaders and civil society organizations should strengthen accessible mediation mechanisms for resolving disputes involving strangers and host-community members. Trained and impartial mediators should be available to intervene promptly in disputes relating to businesses, employment, land, agricultural activities, property and other economic resources.

The study recommends that traditional rulers, community elders, religious leaders, residents' associations, neighbourhood organizations and other community-based institutions should be adequately supported and integrated with formal government conflict-management structures. These institutions should be trained in peaceful conflict resolution, negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, early-warning mechanisms and inclusive community

engagement.

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