

FROM CONFLICT TO COEXISTENCE

Stories about Prevention of violence and
Increased Agency Among Farmers and Herders

Building Peace through Women's
Leadership



From Conflict to Collaboration
Between Farmers and Herders



Increased Agency Among Farmers
and Herders



COMITAS II

Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict Over Natural Resources Between
Farmer and Herder Communities in Adamawa and Taraba States

Building
**Trust,
Collaboration
& Peace.**
in communities



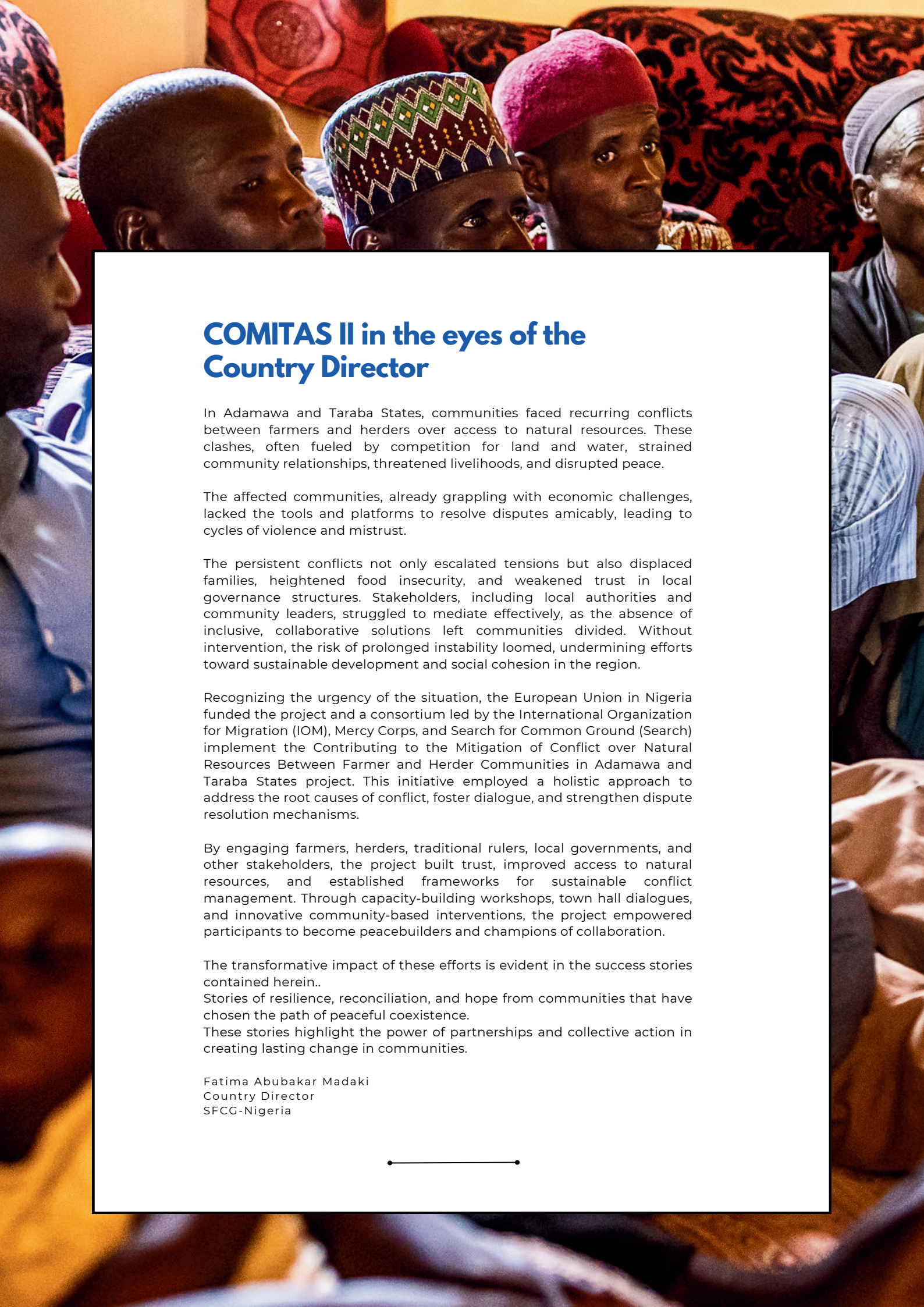
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Funded by European Union

Implementing partners:





COMITAS II in the eyes of the Country Director

In Adamawa and Taraba States, communities faced recurring conflicts between farmers and herders over access to natural resources. These clashes, often fueled by competition for land and water, strained community relationships, threatened livelihoods, and disrupted peace.

The affected communities, already grappling with economic challenges, lacked the tools and platforms to resolve disputes amicably, leading to cycles of violence and mistrust.

The persistent conflicts not only escalated tensions but also displaced families, heightened food insecurity, and weakened trust in local governance structures. Stakeholders, including local authorities and community leaders, struggled to mediate effectively, as the absence of inclusive, collaborative solutions left communities divided. Without intervention, the risk of prolonged instability loomed, undermining efforts toward sustainable development and social cohesion in the region.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the European Union in Nigeria funded the project and a consortium led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mercy Corps, and Search for Common Ground (Search) implement the Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict over Natural Resources Between Farmer and Herder Communities in Adamawa and Taraba States project. This initiative employed a holistic approach to address the root causes of conflict, foster dialogue, and strengthen dispute resolution mechanisms.

By engaging farmers, herders, traditional rulers, local governments, and other stakeholders, the project built trust, improved access to natural resources, and established frameworks for sustainable conflict management. Through capacity-building workshops, town hall dialogues, and innovative community-based interventions, the project empowered participants to become peacebuilders and champions of collaboration.

The transformative impact of these efforts is evident in the success stories contained herein..

Stories of resilience, reconciliation, and hope from communities that have chosen the path of peaceful coexistence.

These stories highlight the power of partnerships and collective action in creating lasting change in communities.

Fatima Abubakar Madaki
Country Director
SFCG-Nigeria

COMITAS II Project overview

Project Overview

The Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict over Natural Resources (COMITAS) Phase 2 project, funded by the European Union's Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (EU-IcSP), aims to address and reduce natural resource-related conflicts in northern Nigeria. Implemented by a consortium including the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Mercy Corps, and Search for Common Ground, the project spans 18 months (January 2023 - July 2024) across key communities in Adamawa and Taraba states, with a budget of €6 million.

COMITAS Phase 2 builds on previous efforts, enhancing peace by focusing on traditional conflict resolution, trust in authorities, collaboration on resource management, and improving communal relationships. The approach emphasizes Early Warning Early Response (EWER) mechanisms, community dialogues, media outreach, and youth engagement, specifically targeting farmers, herders, influencers, policymakers, and traditional leaders.

The project's key objectives include:

Strengthening Conflict Resolution – Supporting community-led networks, increasing early warning capacities, and enhancing traditional leaders' skills.

Building Trust in Authorities – Promoting two-way communication and engaging authorities to address grievances effectively.

Enhancing Resource Management – Increasing skills for sustainable management practices (led by Mercy Corps).

Improving Inter-Communal Relations – Through media training, youth fellowship programs, and cultural exchanges such as theater and film screenings.

A notable difference in Phase 2 is the inclusion of Taraba state, expansion of the AFFAHR platform, and scaling of media and fellowship activities. This project lays a foundation for lasting peace, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and collaboration among all stakeholders to strengthen community resilience against resource-based conflicts.



Contributing to the mitigation of conflict over natural resources between farmer and herder communities in Taraba and Adamawa states, Nigeria, COMITAS-Phase 2 is a consortium project implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – UN Migration, Search for Common Ground (Search), and Mercy Corps. The project is proposed for 18 months (January 16, 2023, to July 15, 2024) and is being implemented in Adamawa and Taraba States (Densa, Girei, Numan, Lamurde, Mayo Belwa, Guyuk, and Shelleng LGAs in Adamawa State, and Zing, Lau, Jalingo, in Taraba State).

This factsheet spans January 2023 to December 2024. It also includes the activity that was conducted during the NCE in Adamawa and Taraba State.

Project Donor

Project Funder



This project is funded by the EU's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

Project Activities

Stakeholder Engagement and Participation



Established 12 new CRNs, developed 13 Monthly situation Reports. Enrolled 50 new key informants for the project implementation. All the CRN Members both old and new were also trained and participated in the monthly meetings in their communities.

Training of Project Participants



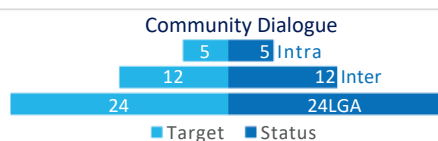
8 CGA training were conducted for the newly established platforms equipping them with the knowledge on Early Warning and Early Response, Conflict sensitivity, Do No Harm, Gender, and Human Rights. 5 Refresher training for existing peace platforms was also conducted.

Early Warning Early Response (EWER)



The project team produced 13 EWER Bulletins, and Established 4 transhumance data collection and information management system.

Meetings and Dialogues



22 Monthly AFFARHR & TAFFARHR meetings were conducted to facilitate research that will drive policy-making in the States of intervention. In August 2024 during the NCE, PAD Meetings were held with 39(13F, 26M) participants in Adamawa, and 46(16F, 30M) in Taraba state.

Media Programs



23

Screening sessions of film were recorded during phase I of the project at the community level and discussions around the film were also facilitated by the project staff.

Script Writing and Presentations



60

Scriptwriting of mini-drama series

121

Sessions of Airing of mini-drama series and talk shows were aired

22

Participatory theatre p were performed

Project Output Indicators Status

S/N	Output Indicators	Target	Status
1	Number of violent conflicts in the targeted area of the Action. Number of emerging	254	74
2	conflicts identified by early warning systems. Number of trained or supported entities	177	68
3	acting to prevent conflict and build peace. Number of people trained on	35	45
4	reconciliation/mediation/conflict management/ conflict transformation/stabilisation, disaggregated by sex	600	859 (229F, 630M)
5	Number of communities that involve relevant authorities in addressing grievances.	22	32
6	Number of stakeholders involved in two-way communication on relevant government policies.	40	40
7	Number of media professionals with enhanced capacity for conflict-sensitive reporting.	40	60

ABOUT SEARCH



2024

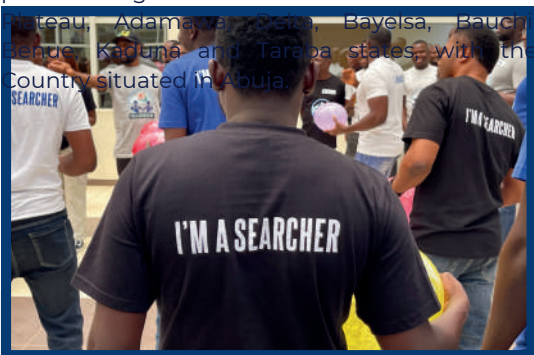
We've been contributing to peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Nigeria

About Us.

Search for Common Ground (Search) is the world's largest peacebuilding organization working on the frontlines of today's conflicts where millions of lives are at stake. We are a locally rooted, global peacebuilding organization working in 33 countries worldwide. Our mission is to find local solutions to today's toughest violent conflicts and save millions of lives in the process.

Hence, we shift the everyday interactions between hostile groups of people, so they can work together to build their communities, through joint problem-solving over violent means. We use key principles to align people's aspirations and influence their actions to achieve transformations that last well beyond our intervention and map the thresholds we need to facilitate change at the highest order.

In Nigeria, Search has worked through a multifaceted set of activity streams since 2004, focusing on community peace architecture, media programming and capacity building. Search's expertise cuts across different thematic areas, such as research, conflict analysis/sensitivity, democratic governance, religious engagement, reintegration as well as conflict prevention, response and resilience. Based on these thematic areas, Search has implemented over 20 projects contributing to peace in Nigeria and has established offices in



Our Approach.

Search designs and implements multifaceted, culturally appropriate and conflict-sensitive programs using a diverse range of tools, including media and training, to promote dialogue, increase knowledge and determine a positive shift in behaviors. Search works at all levels of society to build sustainable peace through three main avenues:

Dialogue, Media and Community.



Dialogue

Search brings people together at the local or national level and across dividing lines to discover and achieve shared goals. We target those traditionally in power and those without a platform, often women, youth and other marginalized groups. We promote mediation, capacity building and Community peace platforms.



Media

Search believes that the media impacts millions. Hence, we use media to stir up thoughts and discussions across societies about the root causes of violence and how to overcome differences. We, therefore, promote television and radio drama series, radio talk shows, jingles social media engagements and other media activities.



Community

Search provides a safe space for people to work out their conflicts and differences at the local level. With some creative thinking, we bring divided communities, neighbors, and families together to discover their common humanity.

These three approaches are deployed through Search's core methodology, the Common Ground Approach which helps adversaries learn to trust each other, create avenues for collaboration and generate breakthroughs for peace. We are building a future where collaboration in the face of conflict is the norm- where our difference stimulates social progress rather than precipitate violence.

Our Projects Thematic Areas

- 1 Freedom of Religion and Belief
- 2 Conflict Sensitivity, Analysis and Research
- 3 Conflict Prevention, Response, and resilience
- 4 Democratic Governance and Elections
- 5 Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) & Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)

Project Locations:



- **North East** – Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Bauchi, Taraba, Gombe (Over 20 projects implemented)
- **North West** – Kaduna, Niger, Katsina, Kano, Zamfara, Sokoto, (Over 5 projects)
- **North Central** – Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa - (Over 8 projects)
- **South West** – Osun, Ekiti, (Oyo and Lagos for radio programs) – Covered by the National projects
- **South East** – Ebonyi, for radio programs – Covered by the National projects
- **South-south** – Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers - (5 projects)
- **National** Projects – (over 5 projects)

Current Projects



CRIN-VIN

A Community-Centered Approach to Transforming Criminality and Violence in the Niger Delta

DRL

United in Security: A Collaborative Approach to Civilian Protection" funded by the United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour

COMITAS

Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict over Natural Resources between Farmers and Herders

Nigeria Youth CARE

Nigerian Youth CARE: Nigerian Youth Collective Action for Religious Engagement

I-RENEW

Inclusive Religious Engagement in Nigeria Enhanced by Women

PP-ForB

Protecting and Promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief

Adamawa and Taraba states

Adamawa and Benue states

Bauchi, Plateau and Gombe states

Kaduna and Plateau states

Nigeria's 6 Geo-political zones

Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta states

Some Donors



Funded by the European Union



Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



DRL

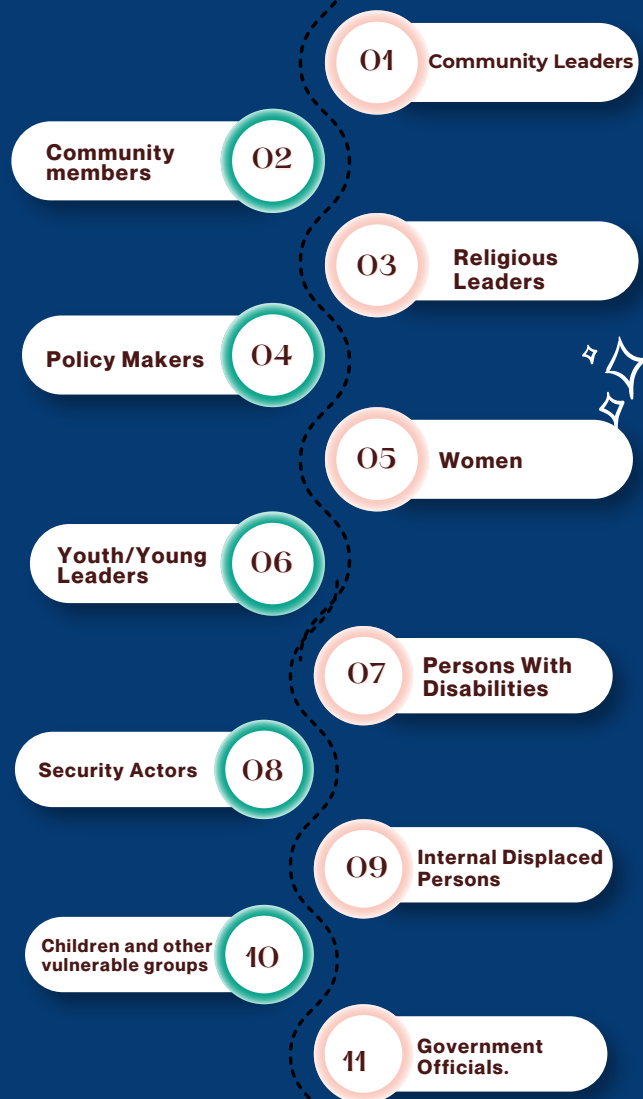
U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Achievements

- Our long-term programming in 43 countries with 839 local partner organizations and a network of over 1,200 partners around the world enabled Search to reach 309,430 participants, from artists and media professionals to political and religious leaders to build trust, foster collaboration, and create breakthroughs for sustained peace.
- Through our large collaboration with 313 radio stations and 26 TV stations worldwide, we estimate that we have reached 39.3 million people through media programs in many of the world's most challenging conflicts. We have built a toolbox of tactics that are tailored to each conflict's specific dynamics and history. While our programs may vary, they are based on the same foundation.
- Since it began its engagement in Nigeria, Search has deployed several approaches in its work on promoting peace and mitigating violence at the community, state and national levels, which has produced remarkable results including the establishment of a network of peacebuilding practitioners and scholars, under the Forum on Farmers and Herders in Nigeria (FFARN). Building on the successes of this network, Search has replicated same in Adamawa and Taraba states, to ensure the expertise and influence of scholars, practitioners and policymakers is strategically channeled to address the farmers and herders conflict and security issues affecting the states.
- The Peacebuilding agency in Plateau state, is a product of Search's intervention in the state to improve the relationship between farmers and herders. The Agency has since its establishment

- Search, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) championed the reintegration of over 1000 children formerly associated with armed groups in Borno state.
- Search has established networks of locally-rooted and self-sustaining peace architecture platforms, identifying, reporting and addressing conflict issues in their respective localities. These platforms were established through several interventions in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Rivers, Delta and Bayelsa states.
- In line with UNSCR 1325, Search has worked and is working with women through various interventions. Through the COMITAS project in Adamawa and Taraba states, Search empowered women with enhanced capacity to address conflict between farmers and herders. The women have gone beyond resolving conflicts, to sensitize female and youth herders and farmers to desist from violent conflict and utilize the common ground approach to mitigate violent conflicts. Search through the I-RENEW projects is promoting women's inclusion in religious affairs and institutions. With enhanced skills, the women have intervened in religious issues to mitigate FoRB violations. Furthermore, female security actors have been empowered to adopt the conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm approaches to protect the civilians in their designated locations.
- Search has also supported victims of FoRB violations, and trained legal and media practitioners to utilize their workspaces to promote Freedom of Religion and Belief. Through the PP-FoRB intervention, a toll-free line was launched and has been used to report FoRB cases. **(Toll free line - 08000002233)**
- Search has also developed a novel approach to empowering young girls as peacebuilders in their religious communities, developed a toolkit for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR).

Target Groups





COMITAS II

**BUILDING PEACE
THROUGH
WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP**

Bilhatu and Wonosato making a difference in their communities

Q&A

After undergoing training on gender-based violence and peacebuilding, one woman's journey has not only transformed her community but has also deeply changed her personal outlook on life.

In communities across Nigeria, cultural norms and challenging traditions often create barriers for women and their rights. However, thanks to projects like COMITAS, funded by the European Union, one courageous woman is breaking these barriers, leading a grassroots movement toward peace and social justice. Recently, we had the opportunity to sit down with Wonosato Angama Uziel, a woman leader in Numan Local Government Area of Adamawa State and a COMITAS-trained community leader who has become a beacon of hope in her community.

Wonosato's story is a testament to the power of education and support to inspire change, and her journey highlights the transformative impact that peacebuilding projects can have in communities struggling with conflict and gender-based violence.

Thank you very much, ma'am. Please introduce yourself.

Thank you. My name is Mrs. Wonosato Uziel Frank Angama. I am from Salewaja in Numan Local Government Area, and I belong to the Bachama tribe. In my community, I serve as a women's leader and am actively involved in peacebuilding.

What kind of conflict issues are affecting peace in Numan Local Government?

In Numan, one of the major issues we face is the intense conflict between farmers and herders. This has led to the loss of lives and properties, displacing people from their homes. Some individuals have struggled to recover emotionally and mentally. Beyond this, we also see conflicts within families, particularly affecting children—especially young girls.

Are there also cases of rape, drug abuse, kidnapping, or theft?

Yes, indeed. Before we gained the knowledge we have now, such issues were rampant—cases of theft, kidnapping, even violence at home, with husbands sometimes abusing their wives and children falling into drug use. When Search for Common Ground (SFCG) came to our community, they taught us that farmer-herder conflicts bring many additional challenges. The violence left many widows, and children lost their parents. It has devastated our community in so many ways, making it difficult for families to survive and even pushing some into forced marriages or unhealthy behaviors like drug abuse.

When you began engaging with SFCG, what kind of support did you receive?

SFCG truly built my capacity, awakening the passion within me to make a difference. Before their training, I was deeply saddened by what I saw in the community, but I didn't know how to approach these issues effectively. SFCG gave me the tools and skills to address these problems, including training on early warning and early response, conflict sensitivity, and the Common Ground approach.

Building Peace through Women's Leadership: One Woman Making a Difference



They also trained me as a trainer, which allowed me to share this knowledge with other women in the community.

Apart from training, what other initiatives has SFCG introduced to foster peace in Numan?

SFCG established several platforms, including one at the district head's residence and another in our local palace, where we mediate and hold dialogues. These platforms have been instrumental in building understanding and trust between farmers and herders.

What have you done to improve the relationship between farmers and herders in your community?

We've made significant progress. We encourage both sides to see situations from each other's perspectives. Through this approach, people have started to understand one another better. For example, in the past, you would rarely see people from different backgrounds interacting or trading together, but now it's common. We buy from each other and even share meals together. It's amazing to see the trust that's grown.



Through engagement, patience, and even small projects—like encouraging them to plant and care for trees named after their loved ones—these young people are starting to see their own importance.



Farmers and herders now engage in respectful dialogue. If a farmer has concerns about his crops, he can approach the herders without fear. Herders no longer carry weapons; instead, they bring tools to tend their cattle. This peaceful co-existence is the impact of SFCG's work in our community, and we are truly grateful.

It sounds like you're actively involving women in this peacebuilding effort. Can you tell us more about that?

Absolutely. I believe women are natural peacemakers because we own the home. We raise our children, and our words can influence the hearts of our husbands. I work with both farmer and herder women, helping them understand their role in promoting peace. When a husband leaves for the field, he carries his wife's words with him, reminding him to seek peace and avoid conflict. By fostering this attitude, we are building a peaceful environment for everyone.

Since you started engaging with women and building their capacity, can you share some examples of conflicts or issues you've successfully addressed?

We've managed to resolve various issues, from drug abuse to reconciling youth with their families. We've helped children return to their homes after conflicts with their parents, and we've provided education and healthcare to those who needed it.

For instance, there's a popular place in our community where illicit drugs are sold, and youth often gather there. Through engagement, patience, and even small projects—like encouraging them to plant and care for trees named after their loved ones—these young people are starting to see their own importance. Some have left the area altogether, and parents now thank us for our efforts.

Can you tell us about your experience with the training on gender-based violence?

Before the training, I used to think of rape and gender-based violence as something common and normal. But the training opened my eyes to the real harm it does. Now, I campaign and educate others on the topic. I've seen people come to understand the importance of speaking out instead of staying silent. In our community, cultural and religious beliefs often make families hide cases of rape because they see it as shameful.

But through awareness, they now understand the risks—like the possibility of diseases or other severe outcomes. That's why, when cases arise, they reach out to people like me. We've started using Hope Centers to help survivors, and I also teach them how to preserve evidence before visiting the center.

That's impressive! Have there been any cases where your work has led to convictions?

Yes, we've had about four convictions so far. One person is still in prison, though I'm unsure about the others since cases can get complicated when they're out of our hands. But we're still keeping an eye on things.

What about the women you've worked with? Do they have stories of their own that show the impact of your work?

Absolutely. We create action plans together, and they handle tasks on their own now. Even when I'm not around, they send me reports on what they've achieved. Each of them has stories about their contributions to the community, and they've learned so much about taking action.

How about early warning signs for conflict, Are you able to detect and respond to these?

Yes, we're much better at spotting these signs. For example, new faces or unusual movement in the community at night can indicate trouble. We report these signs to the right authorities, and now we have a local vigilante group that helps monitor things.



“Farmers and herders now engage in respectful dialogue. If a farmer has concerns about his crops, he can approach the herders without fear. Herders no longer carry weapons; instead, they bring tools to tend their cattle.”

You’ve shared how your perspective has changed. Could you tell us more about this personal transformation?

My life has changed a lot. I used to hold grudges, sometimes for years. If someone upset me, I’d hold onto that anger for ages. But now, I let things go. I see them as just small parts of life. The training taught me to treat people with dignity and respect, no matter the situation.

Have you had cases of rape or other forms of gender-based violence that you have reported to the police or handled with the women you work with?

Yes, we’ve encountered many cases of rape and gender-based violence. Before my training through the COMITAS project, I used to think such incidents were just part of life. But now, I understand the importance of addressing these issues openly. I campaign against gender-based violence and encourage others to speak up.

In this part of Nigeria, cultural and religious beliefs often push families to hide cases of rape. Parents fear the shame that could follow, but through my work, people are beginning to realize the dangers of staying silent. We have introduced the use of Hope Centers, where survivors receive care without fear of stigma. I have also taught families the importance of preserving evidence to support justice.

That’s truly inspiring. Have you seen the women you work with share their own stories and make an impact, even when you’re not there?

Yes, absolutely. Many of these women have become leaders in their own right. Whenever we meet, we create action plans for raising awareness in our community.

Each woman knows her role, and when I am unavailable, they update me on their activities. They share their successes and challenges, and I guide them. Together, we’re building a network of strong women committed to creating lasting change.

In addition to addressing gender-based violence, has the project helped you identify and respond to early warning signs of conflict?

Yes, I’ve learned to recognize early signs of potential conflict, like new faces in the community or unusual nighttime activity. I report these signs to local leaders and the police, which has helped prevent issues from escalating. We even have vigilantes now who monitor our communities for these early warning signs.

SFCG-Nigeria: How has your personal transformation through COMITAS inspired your work with these women?

It has been a complete change for me. Before, I used to hold grudges for years, but the training taught me to forgive and approach challenges with compassion. Now, I treat everyone with respect, and this has allowed me to set an example for others.

That’s remarkable. What are some of the challenges you face in this work?

There are so many. Some people accuse me of being “bought” by COMITAS to spread messages of peace. They even say I’ve lost my conscience for the sake of peace. Another big challenge is funding; it’s hard to gather people and keep them engaged when there are no resources for basic things like water or transportation.

Given your journey, how would you say your life has changed since joining COMITAS?

My life has changed tremendously. I have grown more compassionate and forgiving. Where I used to hold onto grudges, I now let go. My husband has noticed the change as well, and it has brought peace into my home. He respects my work and supports my efforts, and even my children understand the importance of peace.

If you were to tell someone about the COMITAS project, what would you say?

I breathe COMITAS, I live COMITAS—it’s at the core of everything I do. The project has transformed me and my community. When I meet others, I tell them how COMITAS has changed my life. My husband, once hot-tempered, has even softened because he sees the peace COMITAS has brought into our lives.

Finally, do you have any message for the EU, Search for Common Ground, and the entire COMITAS consortium?

Words cannot express my gratitude. The EU, Search for Common Ground, and the COMITAS team have brought hope and healing to our communities. They have given us the tools to live in peace, to speak with respect, and to resolve conflicts nonviolently. Thanks to COMITAS, my community is stronger and united.



A photograph of a man, Boniface Nakulmide, sitting on a yellow plastic stool. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and dark blue trousers. He is looking slightly to his left with a serious expression. The background consists of a wall with a metal mesh screen and some rusted metal. The ground is covered with small, light-colored stones. A blue vertical bar is visible on the left side of the image.

INTERVIEW WITH **BONIFACE NAKULMIDE**

A peasant farmer living in Guyuk with his wife and four children,

Boniface's journey as a peacebuilder began in response to the devastating clashes between farmers and herders that shook his community in 2004. "The clashes were almost routine," he recalls, his eyes reflecting both weariness and determination.

See story in next page

From Conflict to Collaboration: Boniface Nakulmide's Journey of Peace in Guyuk



In the quiet town of Guyuk, located in Adamawa State, North East Nigeria, both Christians and Muslims predominantly engage in farming and herding. However, the struggle to share dwindling natural resources like water and grazing fields has historically led to communal conflicts between these groups. Guyuk has not been immune to disputes, experiencing violent clashes in 1999 and 2003. Yet, one man emerged with a vision to change this narrative: Boniface Nakulmide.

A peasant farmer living in Guyuk with his wife and four children, Boniface recognized the necessity of building sustainable peace within his community. He dedicated himself tirelessly as a volunteer and community leader to this worthy cause.

Boniface's journey as a peacebuilder began in response to the devastating clashes between farmers and herders that shook his community in 2004. "The clashes were almost routine," he recalls, his eyes reflecting both weariness and determination. "Farmers and herders often fought over land and resources. When animals wandered into farms, it wasn't just about crops—it was personal. Lives were lost, and relationships were torn apart."

The situation was further complicated by drug abuse among the youth, which escalated minor conflicts into full-blown crises. "Youth involved in drug abuse were easily provoked, leading to more violence," Boniface explains.

A turning point came when Search for Common Ground launched the COMITAS project in Guyuk Town in 2023. This initiative equipped Boniface with tools and skills he never imagined he would use as a farmer to broker peace with herders in his community.

He attended training sessions that introduced him to concepts such as early warning systems and the Common Ground Approach. For him, this was empowerment. "They taught us to look out for signs of trouble and address them before conflicts could escalate," he recalls. "I learned that it's better to prevent violence than to look for ways to fix things afterward."



"I gather young people and talk to them about the impact of drugs on their lives and our community," he explains. "I tell them that it doesn't make them stronger; it just brings more pain."



One of the most impactful changes he initiated was reopening cattle routes—essential pathways used by herders to access water sources. Over time, many of these routes had been blocked by farms, leading to inevitable conflicts when animals strayed onto farmland. Armed with his training and newfound understanding, Boniface took it upon himself to clear these paths. He mobilized young people in the community to mark the cattle routes so that both farmers and herders would know where they were located.

Despite facing challenges—including whispers of accusations from some farmers who believed he had been bribed by herders—Boniface remained resolute. "It wasn't about money," he asserts firmly. "I knew this was a step toward peace. I could see it, even if others couldn't yet." His persistence eventually garnered the support of local leaders, including the village head.

The impact of his efforts was almost immediate. With the cattle routes open, farmers and herders could navigate shared spaces without conflict. Grateful for Boniface's work, herders began providing manure for his farm, strengthening the bond he was cultivating with them. Reflecting on this transformation, Boniface states, "Before, I saw herders as my enemies. But now, I realize they are my partners."

My farm has benefited from the manure they give me, and we both gain when we work together."

The COMITAS project not only trained Boniface in conflict resolution but also empowered him to become a trusted leader within his town. "People know me as the 'peacemaker,'" he proudly shares.



"They call me even at midnight if there's a problem, and I go, no matter the time." He has organized town meetings that bring together farmers, herders, and local leaders to collaboratively discuss their shared challenges.

Beyond conflict prevention, Boniface has also taken on advocacy against drug abuse among youth—an issue he sees as a root cause of violence in Guyuk Town. "I gather young people and talk to them about the impact of drugs on their lives and our community," he explains. "I tell them that it doesn't make them stronger; it just brings more pain."

Recently completing advanced training on early warning systems has further enhanced Boniface's ability to identify potential threats to peace. He has learned the Common Ground Approach, which emphasizes empathy, active listening, and collaboration. "Thanks to COMITAS, I have the skills to handle problems before they escalate," he says. "Now I teach others to look out for early signs of conflict and address them immediately."

Through these efforts, Boniface has become more than just a farmer or committee leader; he is now an integral part of Guyuk Town's social fabric—trusted and respected by all. "I promised myself to be a peacemaker," he smiles. "COMITAS has shown me that peace is something we must build together, day by day."



Boniface's work exemplifies the power of community-led change. Guyuk Town is not only witnessing fewer conflicts but also experiencing a renewal of trust and unity between farmers and herders. His story serves as an inspiring testament to how one determined individual can alter the fate of an entire community through collaboration and commitment to peacebuilding initiatives like COMITAS.



Building Peace through Participatory Theatre

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In an effort to bring peace and unity to the farming and herding communities of Adamawa and Taraba states, Search for Common Ground, with funding from the European Union, has successfully conducted participatory theatre in 22 different communities across Adamawa and Taraba States—a powerful Social Behavioural Communication tool.

This approach has given over 10,000 people across 22 communities in 9 Local Government Areas in both Adamawa and Taraba States the opportunity to address their conflicts openly, share their concerns, and learn about peaceful coexistence. In the past couple of months, participatory theatre performances have sparked dialogues across these communities. Guided by trained local leaders, the plays reveal common issues that often trigger misunderstandings and tensions between farmers and herders. Each act is thoughtfully designed to showcase real-life situations and conflict resolution methods, encouraging viewers to reflect on the importance of dialogue, empathy, and community unity. To make this happen, Search for Common Ground trained focal points within each community on mobilizing community members and developing impactful scripts. These focal points identify the root causes of local disputes, create meaningful stories, and lead performances that resonate with their neighbors. By involving community members in acting out these scenarios, the approach revives traditional problem-solving methods, where local leaders play a central role, helping issues get resolved before they escalate.

Each act is thoughtfully designed to showcase real-life situations and conflict resolution methods, encouraging viewers to reflect on the importance of dialogue, empathy, and community unity.

Mayo-Belwa Local Government Area took the community theatre concept to the LGA level, showcasing a play that illustrated peaceful resolutions to farmer-herder conflicts. At the event, Mayo-Belwa LGA Chairman, Umar Nashion, expressed his gratitude to Search for Common Ground, noting the positive impact the COMITAS project has had in uniting farmers and herders. “We will always support Search for Common Ground to ensure peacebuilding in our community,” he shared. He also encouraged farmers and herders to avoid illicit drugs, highlighting that substance use often triggers conflict.

Victor Baba Okpanachi, Media Coordinator on the COMITAS II project, praised the collaborative spirit of the LGA leaders and community actors. He emphasized that these community-led theatre groups help foster stronger bonds between the communities and local government authorities, creating a network of support for continued dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.

The highlight of the event was a vibrant play performed by both farmers and herders. Together, they showed how conflicts can be discussed and resolved through respectful dialogue, setting a hopeful example for everyone in attendance. The cultural performances, with traditional dances and displays, symbolized the beauty and strength of a united community. The COMITAS II project is making a lasting impact by empowering communities to take ownership of peacebuilding. As they watch their own neighbors on stage resolving conflicts, community members are reminded of the power of unity and dialogue. Through these shared experiences, Search for Common Ground is fostering a legacy of peace in Adamawa and Taraba, ensuring that the lessons learned today will benefit future generations.



IMAGES FROM OUR PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

Through Participatory Theatre we have given over 10,000 people across 22 communities in 9 Local Government Areas in both Adamawa and Taraba States the opportunity to address their conflicts openly, share their concerns, and learn about peaceful coexistence.



UNITING DIFFERENCES FOR PEACE IN ADAMAWA

Meet Aliyu Ahmed Yanhga and Filibus Amadu, two friends from different backgrounds and religious beliefs who share a common goal of promoting peace in their community.

They both live in Libbo ward, Shelleng LGA of Adamawa State, a community with a diverse population consisting of Muslims and Christians, a place often marred by violent conflicts between farmers and herders.

To address the incessant violent conflicts in their community, the two friends who met during one of the trainings facilitated by Search team in Adamawa decided to join forces with the Community Response Network (CRN), a platform established by Search for Common Ground to enable community members use local resources and mechanisms to address conflict issues.

As members of the CRN, Aliyu and Filibus took their learnings and the skills they acquired from Search's training to build trust and collaboration among fellow community members across the divide.

They discovered the benefits of respecting and appreciating their differences, rather than allowing them to create divisions through the Common Ground Approach training. Their actions soon made them role models and leaders in their community, demonstrating how to resolve disputes peacefully and constructively.

Together, they crafted a unique model of intervention. They took turns engaging with the farmers and herders, depending on the situation at hand. When farmers were involved, Aliyu, a Muslim and a herder, took the lead, with Filibus, a Christian and a farmer, standing alongside him.

Likewise, when herders needed assistance, Filibus led the way, with Aliyu offering his support. This approach ensured justice, equity, and peaceful resolution while sending a powerful message to their community that they were united and bound as brothers, despite their differences.



"Filibus is like a twin brother to me. Despite our differences, he is a Christian and a farmer, while I am a Muslim and a herder, we have worked together to promote peace in our communities." Aliyu said. According to Filibus, he decided to work hand in hand with Aliyu because he has realized from the engagement with Search that sustainable peace is possible if people in the community are constantly reminded about the need to live in peace.

In his words "No one can help us live in peace except we ourselves are willing to make it happen. Search as an organization will not be here when farmers and herders start fighting in our community, we are the ones who will suffer during and after the fight. This is why I am working together with my friend (Aliyu) to promote peace in Libbo"

Aliyu and Filibus successfully mediated numerous conflicts between farmers and herders in their community. They put to good use the skills and knowledge they acquired through the training provided by Search.

Aliyu recounts his experience with Search saying "The training we received by the team from Search is what has helped us in this community in maintaining peaceful coexistence in Libbo". What's more, they shared this invaluable knowledge with neighboring communities, extending their helping hand to transform conflicts far and wide. In doing so, they became true agents of change and peace in their region.

Aliyu and Filibus take pride in their achievements and remain grateful for the opportunity Search has given them. They hold steadfast to their mission, hoping to inspire more individuals to join them in their quest for a peaceful and prosperous future.



BILHATU LEADS HER COMMUNITY TOWARDS LASTING PEACE



My name is Belhatu Titus from Ndikong Community in Mayo-Belwa, I am a member and a women leader in my community.

Prior to the COMITAS project, I had no knowledge about Search for Common Ground. I knew about Search during the mobilization for the Peace Architecture platforms. Before the project there were so many problems between farmers and herders, such as crop destruction, farming along the road, attacks on the farmland and general insecurity.

These issues were often reported to the police, who usually requested for some amount of money, before intervention. When the COMITAS project was introduced, Search trained us on different topics such as the Common Ground Approach, Training of Trainers, Advocacy and Early Warning Early Response. After the training of trainers, I collaborated with other members of the CSAD and we conducted training for some communities in Mayo-Belwa LGA and encouraged both farmers and herders in those communities to live peacefully with one another and peacefully resolve their conflicts. We also encouraged them to report conflict issues to their leaders.



Now, most people prefer to report issues to their Community leaders without any payment, than the police.

I have also engaged women in my community to train them on livelihood skills such as pot making, sewing of handbags and purses and sale of beads. To promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders, the women in my community, especially the Muslim (mostly herders) and Christians (mostly farmers) now gather together in a designated location every Saturday to pray for peace in the community. This has improved the relationship between both groups such that the Muslims now freely move from their settlement to live among the Christians.

In addition, I have resolved conflicts using the lessons learned from the training. In one of such interventions, which happened around my neighborhood, I was able to convince a farmer to reduce the compensation for his stolen stalk from N5000 to N1500. Both the herders (the culprit) and the farmer were satisfied with the resolution. I also ensured that the perpetrator of a rape case in my community was arrested after he was identified by the victim.

*I want to appreciate Search,
they opened our eyes to the
problems existing in our
communities and taught us how
to resolve them without
violence."*

BELHATU TITUS FROM NDIKONG COMMUNITY.

EMPOWERING YOUTH LEADERS FOR DIGITAL PEACEBUILDING IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA

At Search for Common Ground-Nigeria, our commitment to fostering peace and harmony resonates deeply, especially in regions grappling with conflicts over natural resources.

In Adamawa and Taraba states in Northeast Nigeria, Search is currently engaging with 30 passionate and determined youth leaders on the project, contributing to the mitigation of conflict over natural resources between farmer and herder communities (COMITAS) empowering them to become catalysts for change in mitigating conflicts between Farmer and Herder communities.



These young leaders, recognized as critical stakeholders in our digital peacebuilding efforts, are undergoing comprehensive training. Equipped with competencies in transformative leadership, non-violent communication, and combating misinformation, they are gearing up to utilize their social media platforms as powerful tools to combat divisive narratives that sow seeds of discord between farmer and herder communities. Through mentorship sessions and engagement, Search is witnessing a transformation within these youth leaders. They now use their social media platforms to promote peace messages and social cohesion. They are gaining confidence to not just counter negative narratives but to actively generate and post positive messages within their communities. Their dedication and passion are the driving force behind a vision for a more harmonious coexistence between Farmer and Herder communities.



Additionally, Search has introduced them to Bridgebot, an innovative and interactive chatbot developed by Search for Common Ground. This tool is designed to empower these digital stewards, aiding them in mediating, building trust, ensuring online safety, promoting non-violent communication, and combating hate speech and fake news within the online space.

The synergy between these budding leaders and Bridgebot signifies a dynamic approach towards leveraging technology for peacebuilding. Together, they represent a new wave of changemakers, ready to navigate the digital realm with empathy, understanding, and a commitment to fostering a culture of peace.

At Search for Common Ground-Nigeria, our collaboration with young people stands as a testament to our belief in their potential as agents of change. We are optimistic about the positive impact they will create in transforming narratives, bridging divides, and fostering a future where peace prevails.

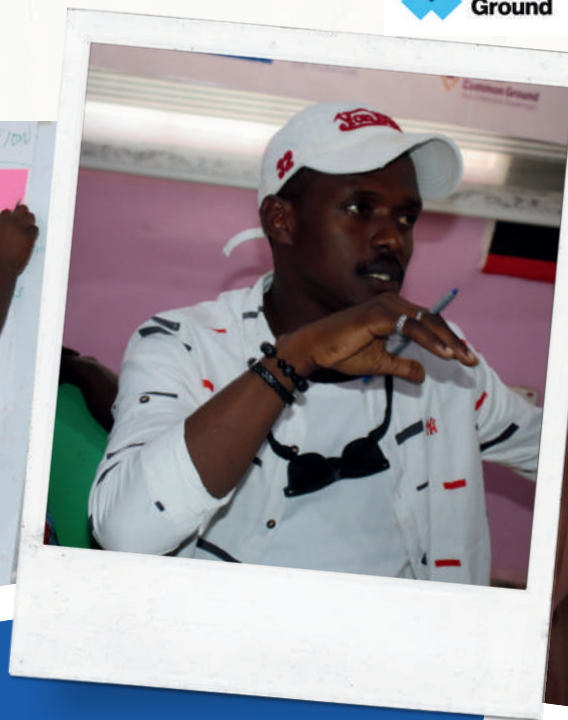




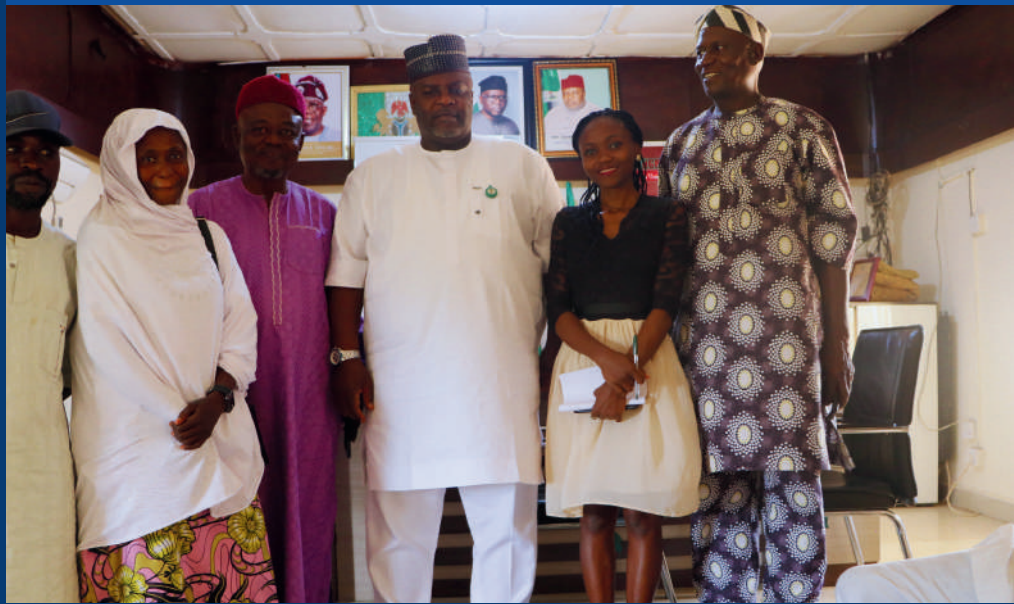
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the European Union

Interstate Induction

COMITAS II Media Fellowship
Program in Numan, Adamawa state



Building Peace: COMITAS Impact in Girei Local Government



In the heart of Adamawa State lies Girei Local Government, a community once fraught with tension and unrest. Before the intervention of Search for Common Ground (Search) through the COMITAS project, the region faced dark days marked by violent farmer-herder clashes, rampant kidnappings, and widespread drug abuse among youth.

As Muhammad Bakari Girei, the chairman of the Community Security Architecture Dialogue (CSAD) and a local mobilizer, recalls, "There was a time when 26 people were killed in a single day due to farmer-herder clashes. Even a divisional police officer lost his life during that tragic incident." Kidnappings were an almost daily occurrence, and the prevalence of drug abuse hubs, locally known as "temples," compounded the challenges. The arrival of the COMITAS project brought hope to Girei. Through its focus on fostering peaceful coexistence, Search established platforms like the CSAD, bringing together diverse stakeholders, including security agencies, local leaders, and community members. Regular monthly meetings and collaborative dialogues became a cornerstone for addressing pressing issues. Search went beyond dialogue by equipping community leaders like Muhammad with the skills to mediate conflicts and foster understanding. "They gave us a lot of training and organized workshops on handling conflict areas. We were trained to give lectures, sensitize the people, and address issues at the grassroots level," Muhammad shared.

The impact was transformative. Farmer-herder clashes reduced significantly, and the once-prominent temples for drug abuse dwindled. "The drug abuse has reduced drastically. We even convinced some youths to stop and proposed support for alternative livelihoods," Muhammad noted with pride. Moreover, the project's reach extended to every corner of Girei Local Government, even beyond the initial focus communities. With encouragement from Search, CSAD members visited remote areas, bridging divides and fostering unity. "Search empowered us to connect with communities without CSAD structures, ensuring the entire local government felt the impact," Muhammad emphasized.

The COMITAS project stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and capacity-building in transforming communities. It has not only reduced violence and substance abuse but also inspired hope and resilience among the people of Girei.

As Muhammad reflects, "Search for Common Ground has brought light to our dark days. Together, we are building a Girei where everyone feels included and peace thrives."



Funded by
the European Union

Implementing partners:



FELLOWS ENGAGED IN BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS.





The inter-state media youth fellowship is a 6-months program aimed at equipping 30 youth leaders from Adamawa and Taraba with media skills especially in maintaining social media presence to counter negative and divisive narrative on farmer-herders conflicts.

The selected youth leaders are currently being trained on Common Ground Approach (CGA), transformative leadership, Social media skills, community radio production etc.

REMEMBER
**PEACE RESTORED
ALWAYS LEAVES
SCARS AND SAD
MEMORIES**

LET'S AVOID VIOLENCE AND SUSTAIN
PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

A portrait of Chief Albert Vidon, an elderly man with a weathered face, wearing a white and black traditional cap and a white shirt. He is holding a red and gold beaded necklace. The background is a plain, light-colored wall with a wooden door visible on the right. A blue decorative bar is at the top left.

INTERVIEW WITH **CHIEF ALBERT VIDON**

Bwatiye Ethnic Leader in Numan

Through Chief Albert's story, it's evident that the COMITAS project made significant strides in restoring peace in Numan and beyond. By establishing structured, grassroots-level dialogue and empowering local leaders, SFCG has helped bridge gaps between farmers and herders, transforming a once-volatile landscape into one of hope and understanding. As Chief Albert and his community continue to champion these peacebuilding efforts, their story serves as a reminder of the resilience that can arise from unity, communication, and commitment to a shared future.

[See story in next page](#) →

Restoring Peace in Numan

A Community Leader's Effort At Resolving Farmer-Herder Conflicts

In this interview, Chief Albert, a respected leader from the Bwatiye ethnic group and a title holder in the Bachama traditional council, reflects on his experiences and insights into the peacebuilding process in Numan, a region that has experienced both harmony and violent conflicts. He shares his observations on the origins of the conflicts, the initiatives taken to rebuild trust, and the importance of sustaining peace beyond the project's timeline.

Chief Albert, could you tell us about some of the key issues that disturbed the peace in Numan and Adamawa State over the years?

I've lived in Numan my whole life, watching this community transform. Decades ago, farmers and herders coexisted in peace. I grew up alongside young Fulani herders, mingling without a thought about ethnicity or territory. But as populations grew, so did the competition for land and water. The increasing number of farms and herds created conflicts over grazing routes and access to water, problems that started showing up around the 1980s. Over time, governmental changes, population growth, and blocked grazing routes made it almost inevitable for conflict to arise.

In 2017, our community faced a particularly violent conflict. A dispute escalated after the tragic killing of a farmer, triggering a response from both the locals and herders, who were supported by groups outside our region. I can still remember the devastation—the lives lost, the properties destroyed. Villages were bombed, and we were left grappling with losses till date. Many of our communities are still recovering.

Besides competition over resources, have other factors contributed to the conflict?

Absolutely. Recently, issues like drug abuse, cattle rustling, and night grazing have made things worse. Political influence has also played a role. These problems emerged in the past 10 to 15 years. In areas like Numan, with an increasing population, these issues became more visible. Drug and substance abuse in particular has been on the rise, affecting young people and sometimes fueling tensions. Thankfully, these challenges are now being addressed with support from SFCG through structures like the Community Response Network (CRN), the Community Security Architecture Dialogue (CSAD), and the Peace Architecture Dialogue (PAD).

Did this conflict impact your own perception of the Fulani herders?

The conflict was painful, and while I didn't suffer a direct injury, I was affected by seeing my neighbours and friends suffer. The incident in 2017 was an eye-opener; it showed us that when things escalate, herders we've known for years may receive support from outside groups. This made us realize that the problem might not just be local but also external.



However, it didn't change my view of Fulani herders as individuals. It only highlighted the need for better structures to manage and prevent conflicts. We needed a platform where both sides could air grievances and seek solutions collaboratively, and that's exactly what SFCG's project has helped provide.

Can you share more about the COMITAS project activities that helped promote peace?

The COMITAS project, through the structures set up by SFCG, has been truly transformative. Platforms like the CRN at the community level, CSAD at the local government level, and PAD at the state level brought us together. These structures allow us to address issues locally first. Herders and farmers meet, discuss grievances, and, more often than not, resolve them without police involvement.

These platforms act as bridges—creating avenues for both groups to communicate peacefully, identify solutions, and avoid further conflicts. This has been incredibly effective in fostering peaceful coexistence. When conflicts arise now, we have trained mediators and community members who can step in before things escalate.

Were you personally involved in any of the training sessions offered by SFCG?

Yes, I've attended several training programs, from Yola to Jalingo and even Abuja. Each session taught us essential skills in conflict management, mediation, and community dialogue. Now, we're able to pass on this knowledge to others. In fact, PAD members are now actively training people in other communities. We've held sessions for young people in areas where substance abuse is high, like Mang and Numan, to help them break free from it. Some youths, inspired by these training, have left prostitution and returned to their families.

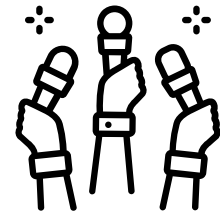
The impact of these step-down training is clear. Youths who previously engaged in substance abuse are now part of CSAD monthly meetings. They're eager to attend, to learn, and to change. The only challenge now is providing them with a means to earn a living. Without that, they might relapse, so there's still work to do in that regard.

With the COMITAS project having a timeline, what are your plans for sustaining these peacebuilding structures?

Sustainability is crucial. We're appealing to the government and other stakeholders to support the CRN, CSAD, and PAD structures so they can continue operating. Ideally, we want these platforms to expand across all 21 local governments in Adamawa and Taraba. Monthly PAD meetings bring together representatives from all seven local governments currently involved, and this model has proven effective. Now, it's about securing the resources to keep these platforms active once the project concludes.

EQUIPPING JOURNALISTS

WITH CONFLICT-SENSITIVE REPORTING SKILLS.



Communities across Adamawa are beginning to see the results of this work. “People who once viewed each other with suspicion are now collaborating to resolve issues peacefully,” Aaron shared. The COMITAS project has not only transformed the way journalists report but has also inspired communities to embrace dialogue and coexistence.



**“PEOPLE WHO
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PEACEFULLY,”**

Background

Adamawa State, a region heavily impacted by the insurgency in northeastern Nigeria, has faced recurring conflicts between farmers and herders over scarce resources such as grazing land and water. These tensions, compounded by youth unemployment and the activities of groups like the “Shila Boys,” destabilized communities, threatened livelihoods, and undermined peacebuilding efforts.

The media’s role in these conflicts was critical, but often problematic. Sensationalized, biased, or one-sided reporting exacerbated divisions, fueling mistrust and escalating disputes. Recognizing the critical role of the media in shaping perceptions and fostering understanding, Search for Common Ground introduced a transformative training to equip journalists with conflict-sensitive reporting skills.

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

HOW SEARCH'S INTERVENTION TRANSFORMED CONFLICT REPORTING IN ADAMAWA STATE



The Challenge

“Adamawa is an agrarian society,” explained Aaron, a journalist and participant in the training. “Most people depend on farming or herding, and as the population grows, competition over resources has intensified. This led to clashes that weren’t just about land and water but also about misunderstandings fueled by biased reporting.”

Aaron reflected on the challenges journalists faced. “Often, stories were reported from one perspective. If a journalist gave voice only to farmers, herders felt targeted, and vice versa. Ethnic stereotypes were amplified, and instead of promoting peace, we sometimes escalated tensions. Logistics and fear of entering conflict zones made it harder to get the full picture, so we unknowingly fanned the flames of conflict.”

Search’s Intervention

Through the COMITAS project, Search for Common Ground provided journalists in Adamawa with training on conflict-sensitive reporting. This training emphasized neutrality, accuracy, and storytelling that prioritizes humanity. Aaron shared how the training changed his perspective: “One phrase stood out —‘Think of humanity first.’ We learned to avoid sensationalism, to tell stories that foster dialogue, and to frame narratives in ways that promote understanding and resolution.”

The training extended beyond reporting. Journalists were also equipped with skills in early warning and response systems. “In Dum Local Government Area,” Aaron recalled, “we received news of a potential crisis. Instead of rushing to report, we waited for confirmation from official sources, ensuring our reporting was accurate and didn’t create panic. That training transformed our approach.”

Impact and Outcomes

The results have been transformative. In communities like Demsa, where biased reporting once threatened to escalate local disputes, journalists now adopt balanced, sensitive approaches, mitigating potential crises. Programs like “Wuro Lafia,” introduced as part of the initiative, have resonated deeply with audiences. “Listeners call in to share how these programs have impacted their lives,” Aaron said. “Some even request copies to share with their families.”

The influence of the COMITAS project extends beyond the project’s lifespan. Aaron’s station, recognizing the value of peace-promoting content, chose to continue airing these programs even without direct support. “Our general manager put it perfectly: ‘The campaign for peace should stay alive.’”

The Common Ground Journalist Forum, established during the project, has further institutionalized these gains. “The forum is essential,” Aaron noted. “It helps us hold each other accountable and ensures we stay balanced and responsible in our reporting.”

Looking Ahead

Communities across Adamawa are beginning to see the results of this work. “People who once viewed each other with suspicion are now collaborating to resolve issues peacefully,” Aaron shared. The COMITAS project has not only transformed the way journalists report but has also inspired communities to embrace dialogue and coexistence.

In Aaron’s words: “COMITAS is about peace and togetherness. It’s about enabling development by fostering peaceful coexistence. Without peace, there can be no true development.”

This success story exemplifies how empowering journalists with the tools for responsible reporting can ignite a broader movement for peace, transforming both narratives and lives in conflict-affected regions.





The Female Herder Who Cultivates Peace: Hauwa Musa's Inspiring Journey

Hauwa Musa isn't just a herder tending to her animals; she's a peacemaker, working tirelessly with Search for Common Ground's Community Response Network (CRN) to bridge divides and foster understanding in her community.

Her journey began in the conflict-prone community of Dakkiti, in Libbo ward of Shelleng Local Government Area, where clashes between farmers and herders had reached a boiling point. Violence and mistrust hung heavily in the air, threatening livelihoods and community cohesion.

A Mission for Peace

Determined to make a difference, Hauwa embarked on a mission to bring hope and healing to this troubled community. Her goal was clear: to engage the women in the herding community, urging them to become active participants in transforming the cycle of violence.

At first, skepticism greeted her efforts. The women of Dakkiti had witnessed countless failed attempts at peacebuilding and were understandably wary. But Hauwa's persistence, compassion, and unwavering belief in the power of dialogue eventually won them over.

"When I first approached them, they said, 'Why should we listen to you? Others have tried and failed,'" Hauwa recalled. "I told them, 'I am not here to impose solutions. I am here to listen, to learn, and to work with you to find a path to peace.'"

A Listening Ear and a Call to Action

In a neutral, safe setting, Hauwa listened attentively to the women's stories and fears. She encouraged them to reflect on the root causes of the conflicts and highlighted the devastating consequences these clashes had on their lives. "I told them, 'You have the power to change things,'" Hauwa said. "It starts with small steps talking to each other, understanding the other side, and working together to find solutions. Peace is not something that just happens; it is something we must build."

Her message was simple but profound: peace begins with understanding, and everyone has a role to play. Hauwa's heartfelt plea resonated deeply, inspiring the women to take bold steps toward change.

They pledged their support for her peacebuilding mission, starting with a decision to speak with their husbands about ending the practice of sending young boys to herd cattle. This practice, often a flashpoint for disputes, had perpetuated misunderstandings and violence.

Fostering Dialogue and Cooperation

The women also committed to engaging directly with farmers in their area, seeking common ground and peaceful resolutions to ongoing disputes. Hauwa's efforts didn't end there—she promised to remain by their side, offering guidance and support as they embarked on this transformative journey.

"I told them, 'We will not solve everything overnight, but every conversation, every step toward understanding, makes a difference. Together, we can create a future where our children grow up in peace.'"

A Ripple Effect of Peace

Hauwa Musa's work demonstrates the incredible power of individual action in driving collective change. Her courage and determination have not only eased tensions in Dakkiti but have also inspired others to take an active role in building a peaceful future.

"Hauwa's actions remind us that women are powerful agents of change," said a member of the CRN. "Her leadership is transforming how communities address conflicts and is setting a new standard for reconciliation in Adamawa State."

Reflecting on her journey, Hauwa shared, "I believe that peace is possible, but it takes all of us. As women, as herders, as farmers, we each have a role to play. My dream is for our communities to live as neighbors, not as enemies."

A portrait of Hauwa Musa, a woman with dark skin and a gentle smile. She is wearing a vibrant green lace-trimmed hijab and a matching green top. Her headscarf features a colorful pattern of red, yellow, and black lines. She is also wearing large gold hoop earrings. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a wooden structure.

Hauwa

MUSA

**I told them, 'I am not
here to impose
solutions. I am here
to listen, to learn,
and to work with you
to find a path to
peace**

Hauwa Musa



Photos from community theater





Learn more about Search

Search holds the proud distinction of being the world's preeminent peacebuilding organization. Our mission carries us to the forefront of the most pressing conflicts where we strive to make a profound difference in the lives of millions. As an organization with deep local roots that extend globally, we operate in 33 nations and have had a transformative presence in Nigeria since 2004.

In Nigeria, we are utilizing consensus-based advocacy training, conflict resolution training, human rights monitoring and reporting, and the facilitation of dialogue processes that engage all levels of society.

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OUR CORE VALUES



COLLABORATION

- We are purposeful in creating a more diverse and inclusive culture at Search
- We know that no one succeeds alone, so we embrace courageous engagement and collaboration
- We listen deeply to new ideas, welcoming multiple and fresh perspectives



AUDACITY

- We are hopeful and undaunted by what may seem insurmountable
- We imagine solutions for some of the most complex problems
- We are unafraid to try new things and to experiment



TENACITY

- We take on big challenges
- We are not discouraged by our failures, instead we learn from them
- We prefer action over perfection and we never give up



EMPATHY

- We build relationships based on respect
- We seek to understand each others' circumstances and experiences
- We encourage the potential in each person and celebrate their growth and success



RESULTS

- We each have a vital role in achieving the mission of Search
- We take pride in what we can accomplish together
- We are constantly learning, adapting and improving

COMITAS

Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict Over Natural Resources Between Farmer and Herder Communities in Adamawa and Taraba States project



★ COLLABORATION



★ DIALOGUE



BUILDING TRUST, COLLABORATION & PEACE IN COMMUNITIES

Contributing to the Mitigation of Conflict Over Natural Resources Between Farmer and Herder Communities in Adamawa and Taraba States project



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