

Social contract between farmers and pastoralists in the commune Rugombo, Cibitoke province, Burundi

For several years there has been such an entrenched disagreement between farmers and pastoralists in the commune of RUGOMBO, in the Province CIBITOKÉ, that in certain places the two parties do not even greet each other. Offences such as the slaughter of cows and the murder of shepherds have already been registered, highlighting difficult cohabitation between the two groups.

After several exchanges with each other, the participants in the workshop have come to the conclusion that these attitudes derive from the following causes:

- the laxity of the cow herders;
- the plethora of herds;
- the shortage of pastures available for the grazing of cows;
- the notorious impunity benefiting herders responsible for damage;
- the nuisance attached to the attitudes of contempt shown by herders;
- the vagrancy of uncontrolled cattle;
- a galloping demography;
- a rapid expansion of herds in the areas of grazing;
- The free entry of cows across national borders;
- a great concentration of herds from the communes nearby and neighbouring countries;
- pathways obstructed for the passage of cows and transformed into fields. After having made a broad overview of these various problems, farmers and breeders have agreed as follows:

1. Commitments and claims of pastoralists

1.1. Commitments

We, breeders, commit ourselves to the following in relations with farmers:

- Prohibit firmly to our shepherds from letting the cows invade the fields and, if that ever happens, seek the forgiveness and discuss with the farmers affected so that there is agreement with them for reparation of damages;
- Seek to rapidly ascertain the damage caused by cows, before the herd has left;
- To avoid hurtful words uttered against the farmer.

1.2. Claims

We, breeders, call on the farmers to do as follows:

- Not poison our cows, nor their inflict of injuries or beating;
- Not intimidate herders with the objective of scaring them away so that the cows left to themselves can wander in the fields and devastate large areas;
- Not to imprison cows, in particular those who have to breast-feed calves;
- Not criminalise cows when the latter have not been taken in the fields;
- Do not come rushing to lead the cows to the Municipality before having warned the owner and have shown to the elders. 2.

Commitments and claims of farmers

2.1. Commitments

We, farmers, among farmers take the firm commitment below:

- Not to cause the death of cows, in any way whatsoever;
- Not to impose sanctions ourselves;
- Not to use hurtful words vis-à-vis the farmer.

2.2. Claims

We, farmers, ask of the pastoralists and their livestock as follows:

- Not to graze their cows in our fields, but rather to contribute to protect our produce;

- If the incident is happening, diligently try to minimise the damages;
- Give good instructions to the herders of their cows;
- Not to burn the fields;
- Not to unearth the cassava and steal any other produce from the fields for the purposes of feeding their cattle.
- To avoid to carry weapons of war such as the rifles, grenades and lances during the custody of cows;
- Not to be physically violent to farmers;
- Do not take pretext that the cows kept belong to the authorities

3. Recommendations

3.1. Directed at the administration:

- Avoid take party at the conflicts between farmers and pastoralists.
- To separate the areas of pasture from those reserved to the farms by well-defined perimeters.
- In the Commune of RUGOMBO, prohibit the entry of cows from other Communes and particularly of neighbouring countries.
- Intervene only after failure of amicable arrangements between the parties in conflict or failure of mediation at the base.
- In the programming of projects of public interest, take into consideration the concerns of farmers and ranchers.

3.2. Directed at the legal authorities:

- Do not request pots of wines, because they are in fact of corrupt practices ;
- When the farmer is the complainant and injured, do not compel him/her to endless back-and-forth with the obvious intention to oblige him/her to be denied and losing the trial for having failed to continue due to the

discouragement of the delaying tactic. 3.3. Directed at the D.P.A.E.:

- To separate the spaces reserved to agriculture of those devoted to cultures.
- To establish the estimate of litigation, without bias.
- Leave it to the agronomist the competence of assessing the damage before the disappearance of traces.
- Accompany the farmers and ranchers by the contribution of appropriate techniques that can help to improve yields of their farms. 3.4. Directed at the NGOS and other stakeholders/ donors
- Support the efforts for strengthening and the dissemination of commitments of parties throughout neighbourhood, and on all the hills of the Commune.
- To help farmers in the granting of equipment watering and support the work of maintaining and maintenance of irrigation channels.
- To assist in the production of reports of the workshop. 3.5. Directed at the Monitoring committee

A monitoring committee shall be set up to ensure respect of the commitments of parties and execute the following mandate defined.

What is the mandate of committees?

Take part in, to the administrative authorities and judicial had not participated, the commitments and conclusions from the dialog between two days of trade between farmers and ranchers.

Monitor the incidents of invasion of cows in the cultures (ubwone).

Facilitate dialog between the parties in the case of ubwone.

Work with the agronomists to establish the estimate damaged areas in the case of ubwone.

Ensure respect of the contract between the parties.

Ensure the monitoring of meetings during which: a. advice and information can be exchanged b. arrangements may be negotiated on the non-consensual solutions but rows in the possible solutions

The members of the committee are elected by area and represent all the hills of the Commune RUGOMBO.

[Signatures]

Rugombo Zone: 6 names

Cibitoke Zone: 6 name

This contract, although signed by the members of monitoring committee, was adopted by sixty thirteen men and women representing farmers and ranchers. They came from all the hills of the Commune RUGOMBO. These meetings have been supported by the presence of representatives of the Administration, Justice and the D. P. A. E. and were held in CIBITOKÉ of 22 to 23 March 2006

Source: Community Peace Recovery and Reconciliation: A Handbook for Generating Leadership for Sustainable Peace and Recovery among Divided Communities (Nairobi, The National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC), Ministry of Provincial Administration and Internal Security, Office of the President; Agency for Co-operation & Research in Development (ACORD) and United Nations Development Programme, 2011), pp. 59-62