

TRANSFORMATIVE PEACEBUILDING TO ADDRESS CATTLE RUSTLING AND ARMED BANDITRY IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract. This study examines the effectiveness of transformative peacebuilding approach in addressing the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state. The study used primary and secondary data. Thus, administered 384 questionnaires across the eight (8) local government areas purposely selected. The study also interviewed thirty-nine (39) stakeholders. These include, traditional and religious leaders, academicians, security personnel, CSOs and the state standing committee on cattle rustling members. Content and descriptive analyses were adopted and presented the findings using graphs and simple percentages. The respondents (56%) confirmed that genuine stakeholders' engagement would resolve the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state. Most interviewed respondents admitted that the collective stakeholders' efforts were lost in curbing the insecurity challenges. The insecurity issues should not be limited to a specific part, institution, or group of people. It is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders. The study concluded that it is possible to resolve the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state through the stakeholders' complementarity and contingency efforts as advocated by the transformative peacebuilding approach.

Keywords: *stakeholders, complementarity, contingency, sustainable peace, communities*

Introduction

The problem of insecurity is as old as humanity itself. Many ancient philosophers like Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Karl Marx have addressed the problem of insecurity using various ideas when discussing issues of creation of peace during their time (Chikwado, 2017; Terminski, 2010; Anifowose and Enemuo, 1999; Appadorai, 1974). However, following the Second World War, the insecurity challenges appeared more complicated to resolve, especially in the contemporary African states of Rwanda, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Libya, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan, among others (Avis, 2019). Nigeria is not an exception. It has the challenges of effectively managing security issues across its 36 states and 774 local government areas, which were administratively divided into 6 geo-political regions. For example, the Northwestern region has had to address the challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry for many years. Katsina state is one of the affected areas by this challenge. In fact, Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) categorized the states within the region as either facing critical or ordinary flashpoints. The latter comprises Sokoto, Kebbi, Jigawa, and Kano states. The former consists of Zamfara, Kaduna, and Katsina states. Katsina became a state in September 1987. It shares an international border with the Republic of Niger to the north, Kano and Jigawa states to the east, Kaduna state to the south, and Zamfara state to the west. It has an area of 24,971 square kilometers, with a 10,368,483 population size as projected in 2022

(NPC, 2020). Trading, farming, and rearing cattle, sheep, and goats are the primary occupations of majority people in the state (Ladan, 2019). It has 34 local government areas (LGAs) spread across 3 senatorial districts: Katsina north, central, and south. Katsina city is the capital of state. Generally, the problems of cattle rustling and armed banditry are mainly in the central and southern districts of Katsina (Shehu et al., 2017). Within the districts, the local governments of Jibya, Batsari, Safana, and Dan-Musa in Katsina central and Kankara, Faskari, Dandume, and Sabuwa from Katsina south are the most devastatingly affected areas.

The problems of cattle rustling and armed banditry have destabilized public safety, local business activities, and the security system in Katsina state. Many people have lost their lives, cattle, and properties. Between June 2011 and May 2019, rustlers/bandits killed 2,000 people, displaced 35,000, and destroyed 500 communities (Garba, 2021). As of October 2020, there were 80,115 displaced people in Katsina state (UNHCR, 2021). Moreover, from July to October 2021 alone, 387 incidents of armed banditry were recorded, which affected over a thousand people, including the loss of 213 lives, injured 115 people, and rustled 2,788 livestock across the state (Ogalah, 2021). The rustlers/bandits have razed several villages, and farms are no longer accessible, deepening poverty and hardship for the residents' state (Rosenje and Adeniyi, 2021; Ibrahim and Mutawalli, 2020). The state government have implemented different approaches, like amnesty, dialogue, and promulgating new laws and policies. It has collaborated with the federal government regarding military operations to tackle the issues. However, these efforts have not yielded the required results, as the attacks remain unabated (Umar and Muhammad, 2022). It reached a pinnacle in 2021 when the former state governor Alh. Aminu Bello Masari called upon the residents to defend themselves (Chibuike et al., 2022). This calls for a prompt search for a lasting solution to the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in the state. Besides, most studies conducted on the issues by the scholars: Abdulyakeen (2021); Dami (2021); Garba and Singh (2021); Lawal and Kyarem (2021); Mohammed and Abdullahi (2021); Rosenje and Adeniyi (2021); Usman and Ahmed (2021); Adi and Onyebuchi (2020); Ladan and Usman (2020); Yahaya and Bello (2020); Abdullahi (2019); Ahmadu (2019); Ladan (2019); Shehu et al. (2017); Egwu (2016); Olaniyan and Yahaya (2016); Ladan (2015); Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) and so on, concentrated on the causes, effects and the government's efforts alone, thereby neglecting the importance and the potential roles that other stakeholders can play. The few studies that tried to applied approaches, specifically conducted by Bello (2021); Abdulrahman and Akuva (2020); Abubakar and Ibrahim (2020); as well as Ibrahim et al. (2016) have further exposed the lack of proper application of methods or approaches that will engage all the stakeholders for a progressive and strategically speedy resolution of the insecurity problems, not only in Katsina state, but the northwestern region. Hence, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of transformative peacebuilding as an approach to address the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state.

Conceptual and theoretical framework

Scholars have conceptualized "insecurity, cattle rustling, and armed banditry" differently. Beland (2007) defined insecurity as fear, distress, or disorder caused by an absolute or unproven lack of safety. Adegami (2013) sees insecurity as a lack of protection, peace, and happiness of human beings and physical resources. In other words, Awojobi (2014) viewed insecurity as a means through which individuals or

groups becomes vulnerable to attacks from perceived rivals or enemies. Insecurity also means a breakdown of peace from the civil or social, ethnic or religious, economic or political disorders instigating conflict that can lead to the brutal loss of lives and properties in the society (Ajibola, 2016; Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). This study defined insecurity as any threat against the socio-cultural, structural, economic and political well-being of people that causes fear, injury, loss of life or property, women abuse, and displacement owing to the inability of the authorities to protect the state. Cattle rustling referred to stealing livestock from individuals and communities or grazing herds for personal gain (Adebola and Oluwatoyin, 2022; Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014; Greiner, 2013). Cattle rustling means an unlawful intent to forcefully confiscate livestock from the owner for commercial purposes (Ibrahim et al., 2016). Adi and Onyebuchi (2020) perceived cattle rustling as stealing livestock from its novel proprietor by a well-equipped gang of criminals. Moreover, Adebola and Oluwatoyin (2022) defined cattle rustling as forcefully stealing cattle from an individual, group, or grazing field by armed thugs who planned, organized, and executed the scene to advance their private or commercial gain. Cattle rustling here is refers to the aggressive confiscation of livestock from the owners by criminals operating with sophisticated weapons, which, in the case of resistance, injure, kill, and destroy the properties of their victims without a regular intervention of the state security forces. In the words of Rosenje and Adeniyi (2021), banditry involves the application of force to attack individuals, groups, or rural communities. It encompasses all incidences of criminality, such as armed robbery, raping, abduction, cattle rustling, killing, and village attacks. Banditry is also conceived as a violent quest for and desire to accumulate wealth through stealing or plunder of communities' properties by the criminal mindsets coupled with the availability of sophisticated weapons to accomplish it (Dami, 2021). Mohammed and Abdullahi (2021) conceptualized banditry as any act of stealing accompanied by raping, raiding villages, killing, and kidnapping people for political or economic interest. Armed banditry, therefore, means any violent attack on individual, group, or rural community by armed thugs that injure, rape, kill and displace people, raze their villages or take away their sources of livelihood and abduct some of the victims to collect ransom.

Transformative peacebuilding approach

This study is anchored within the transformative peacebuilding (TP) approach as the theoretical framework because of its ability to advocate for the participation of all stakeholders within the affected areas. It also emphasized the centrality of complementary and contingency strategies among stakeholders at every level in the peace process. It is necessary to acknowledge the singular effort of Lederach (1997) who shifted the focus of peacebuilding activities from the international to local actors. Also, Uesugi (2020) advocates for stakeholders' participation in the peace process using a hybrid peacebuilding approach, even though it values the activities of mid-space intermediaries above other actors. However, the transformative peacebuilding approach introduced by Askandar (2021) advocates for the involvement of all stakeholders in transforming the structures, context, relationships, issues, and the processes to establish sustainable positive peace. It seeks to identify and transform all the fundamental procedures that can lead to positive change in attitudes, behaviors, modes of relationships, and the conditions sustaining the problems of insecurity. Therefore, this requires the participation of all stakeholders (traditional rulers, religious leaders, non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGOs/CSOs), affected communities, and

the state) in peace process for the effective resolution of insecurity challenges in Katsina state. The approach emphasizes the role of actors within the affected insecurity environments, the 'soil of the conflict.' This means the transformative peacebuilding process must start within the state affected by the insecurity challenges since 'this is where it begins and ends' (Askandar, 2021). Moreover, the contingency and complementarity strategies enable stakeholders to prepare for unpredicted actions and support the efforts of one another from bottom to top in the peace process to achieve the desire objectives. Hence, this approach will assist in examining the effectiveness of the participation and collaborative role of stakeholders from within the affected areas in transforming the context, relationships, issues, needs, and parties for a sustainable positive peace. It will also identify whether there is application of contingency and complementarity strategies among stakeholders for the peaceful and sustainable resolution of the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state.

Materials and Methods

This study adopted a survey research approach using questionnaires and interviews as instruments for data collection in the affected areas.

Study population and sampling method

The table below provide the population size of each affected local government area (LGAs) purposively selected to study based on data from the National Bureau of Statistic (2018) (*Table 1*). Therefore, using the total population size of 1,886,300, the study employed the sampling method advanced by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to establish an accurate sample size for administering questionnaires. Hence, applying the stated formula: $S = X^2 NP (1 - P) \div d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 P(1 - P)$, the study arrived at the $S = 383.98$ equals to 384 required sample size. The *Table 2* provide more details.

Table 1. LGAs and population size.

State	Senatorial disctrict	LGAs	Population size
Katsina	Katsina Central	Batsari	280, 600
		Dan-Musa	152, 800
		Jibia	226, 000
		Safana	250, 000
	Katsina South	Dan-Dume	196, 200
		Faskari	262, 400
		Kankara	328, 400
		Sabuwa	189, 900
Total	Two (2)	Eight (8)	1, 886, 300

Table 2. Distribution of required sample size by LGAs.

S/No/	LGAs	Percentage (%)	Sample size
1.	Batsari	15	58
2.	Dan-Musa	8	31
3.	Jibia	12	46
4.	Safana	13	50
5.	Dan-Dume	10	38
6.	Faskari	14	54

7.	Kankara	18	69
8.	Sabuwa	10	38
Total		100	384

Data collection and analysis

Three hundred and eight-four (384) questionnaires were shared and administered according to the proportional population percentages of each LGA selected for the study (Table 2). The questionnaires were designed based on the open and closed-ended questions. Three Likert measurement scales (agreed, disagreed, and neutral) were used to provide options for the respondents regards to the closed-ended questions, while expressed their views through the open-ended questions. It is essential to note that 348 questionnaires (91%) were successfully recovered for data analysis (Table 3). Besides, semi-structured questionnaires were designed and interviewed 39 stakeholders from the selected LGAs and other relevant institutions in the state. These include: the traditional rulers, religious leaders, academicians, civil society organization (CSOs) and the state standing committee on cattle rustling members and security personnel from the army, police, and civil defense corps. The interviewed respondents (IR) were coded from IR1-IR39 for proper analysis. The table below provide more details about the interviewed respondents (Table 4). Lastly, the study employed content and descriptive methods for data analysis. The qualitative data from questionnaires and interviews were transcribed and content analyzed. Meanwhile, the quantitative data in the questionnaires were coded and analyzed using a descriptive method. Graphs, and percentages were used to present the results.

Table 3. Recovered and un-recovered questionnaires.

S/No/	LGAs	Recovered	Un-recovered
1.	Batsari	54	4
2.	Dan-Musa	30	1
3.	Jibia	39	7
4.	Safana	50	0
5.	Dan-Dume	34	4
6.	Faskari	47	7
7.	Kankara	58	11
8.	Sabuwa	36	2
Total		348	36

Table 4. Location, position/title, date, and code.

S/NO	Capital city/LGAs	Position/title	Code	
1.	Capital City	Member, State Standing Committee on cattle rustling.	IR1	
2.		Military Commandant, Katsina State.	IR2	
3.		Police Public Relations Officer, Katsina State.	IR3	
4.		PA to Commandant, Nigeria Security & Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC).	IR4	
5.		Head of Arm Squad Unit (NSCDC).	IR5	
6.		Lecturer, Katsina State Polytechnic.	IR6	
7.		Lecturer, Federal University Dutsin-ma, Katsina State.	IR7	
8.		Chairman Concern Youths Forum of Katsina State.	IR8	
9.		Batsari	Kasai Village Head.	IR9
10.			Religious Leader.	IR10
11.			Coordinator Dangote Foundation.	IR11
12.			Village Head (Magaji Darini).	IR12
13.			Imam Jummaa Mosque Batsari.	IR13
14.		Dan-Musa	Secretary General Batsari Local Government Forum.	IR14
15.			Ward Head, Dan-Musa.	IR15
16.			Chief Imam of Jummaat Mosque.	IR16
17.			Chairman Mai-Nasara Foundation.	IR17

18.		Leader, Orphan Charity Foundation.	IR18
19.	Jibia	Ward Head, Jibia.	IR19
20.		Imam, Central Mosque.	IR20
21.		Religious Leader.	IR21
22.		Jibia Desk Officer, Community Information and Advocacy Initiative & Gender Base Violence.	IR22
23.	Safana	Village Head, Sahihuwar Nagumba.	IR23
24.		Chief Imam, Dan-Nagayya.	IR24
25.		Coordinator, Nigerian Red Cross.	IR25
26.	Dan-Dume	Ward Head, Hayin Abasa, Dan-Dume.	IR26
27.		Religious Leaders.	IR27
28.		Acting Chairman, Human Rights Access International.	IR28
29.	Faskari	Kadisau Village Head.	IR29
30.		Chief Imam (Darika Sects).	IR30
31.		Chief Imam (Izalah sects) Kadisau.	IR31
32.		Hunters Group Organization.	IR32
33.		Chairman, Faskari Local Government Youth Forum.	IR33
34.	Kankara	Ward Head, Sabon Garin Kankara.	IR34
35.		Chief Imam (Darika Sect).	IR35
36.		Secretary, Vigilante Group, Sabon Garin.	IR36
37.	Sabuwa	Village Head, Marmara, Mai-Bakko community.	IR37
38.		Secretary, Darika Awareness Forum.	IR38
39.		Leader, Vigilante Group, Damari.	IR39

Results and Discussion

Stakeholders' collaboration in transforming the context of insecurity challenges

The *Figure 1* illustrated the percentages of respondents who believed that collaborations among all stakeholders can transform the context of insecurity challenges in Katsina state. *Figure 2* indicated that 64% of the respondents believed that harmonious collaborations among all stakeholders could transform the context of insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state. While 16% disagreed and 20% were neutral.

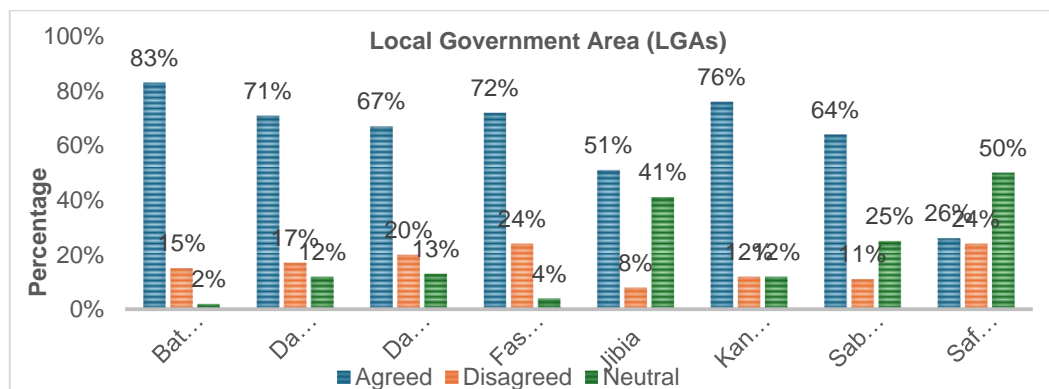


Figure 1. Respondents' percentages on the stakeholders' collaboration in transforming the context of insecurity challenges at LGAs.

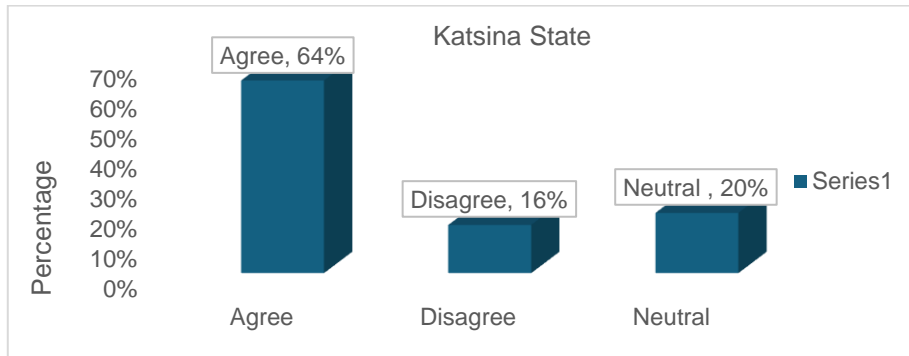


Figure 2. Respondents' percentages on the stakeholders' collaboration in transforming the context of insecurity challenges in Katsina state.

The respondents (64%) stated that the issue of insecurity is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders. For its successful transformation, the stakeholders must cooperate to work as a team, because the stakeholders have better information about the trends, people involved, and the environmental conditions that cause insecurity problems better than the authorities. With these huge experiences, their collaborations would initiate constructive ideas and develop a comprehensive framework that could lead to peaceful resolutions and sustainable peace in Katsina state. Transformative peacebuilding requires the participation of all stakeholders in transforming the context of insecurity challenges (Askandar, 2021). A respondent said that:

“We have some levels of cooperation through meetings, where everyone brings and shares his ideas, opinions, and advice. These meetings usually produced new ideas and strategies on how to mitigate the insecurity problems and restore peace in our communities”

(IR13)

According to the village head ‘the religious leaders and traditional rulers are always together. Whatever the religious leaders do, they do it with traditional rulers. We also cooperate with the authorities by informing security personnel about the conditions in our communities’ (IR9). Another interviewee revealed that ‘we work hand in hand with the traditional and religious leaders. The traditional rulers are the patron of this organization, and our Imams are also part of this organization’ (IR18). ‘What brings relative peace to us here is working together and complementing each other’s efforts, as nothing could be achieved without cooperation. The contribution of others makes us stronger’ (IR29). Transformative peacebuilding advocates for the complementarity of actors’ efforts for the success of the peace process (Askandar, 2021). In addition, a respondent stated that:

“We invite the village and ward heads in our preachings. Whenever the preaching time was fixed, like in Gidigi village, I could not count how many times we entered the area with the village head of Kasai. Sometimes, they have messages to pass across or call people’s attention on other issues. So, they used that atmosphere created by religious leaders to deliver their messages”

(IR10)

Another interviewee revealed that:

“Sometimes, if we are afraid of the terrain, the security personnel follow us to the places of our programs. Other civil society organizations, especially vigilante groups, are always together with us. We have almost similar work, so we are always together helping each other”

(IR24)

A respondent also explained that:

“It is necessary to work together. We invited religious leaders who preached to calm down the victims’ minds and made them understand that it cannot be sustained forever. Whenever we plan to organize a program within the IDP camps, we liaise with security personnel. We also have been communicating with government officials, and we liaised with the traditional rulers while seeking funds to support the victims”

(IR33)

One of the interviewees reiterated that:

“It is impossible to resolve the insecurity problems without harmonious working relations among the various stakeholders. The government cannot work alone. The religious leaders can also not work independently, and all other stakeholders. We must cooperate. It is a sacrifice and necessary”

(IR21)

A key informant disclosed that:

“The problem of insecurity is just too big for one agency to do alone. Traditional institutions play a vital role at the grassroots. They are those who know what is happening locally. A traditional ruler can tell you information that will surprise you. So, we co-opt them. We have other non-governmental key players, like hunters and vigilantes. They know the terrain better, and sometimes, they lead the fight. We also involve religious leaders because people listen to them”

(IR4)

The respondents (64%) stressed that stakeholders must maintain their integrity, eradicate informants among themselves, and avoid partisan politics in resolving insecurity issues. In Batsari, Kankara, Dan-Musa, Jibia, and Faskari LGAs (*Figure 1*), the respondents noted that stakeholders are the pillars that promote peaceful coexistence within the communities. Every actor has a vital role to play. The efforts of stakeholders from all angles within are needed to address the insecurity problems ‘soil of the conflict’ (Askandar, 2021). Thus, the peace process should be open to all without intimidation to achieve the desired goal. Stakeholders can also uphold the principle of equality before the law by bringing the perpetrators and their associates to justice to discourage others. A respondent disclosed one of the contingency efforts to transform the contextual issues causing the insecurity challenges as follows:

“Katsina state government has created and expanded grazing routes for 905 kilometers, and we are giving another task to create 1140 kilometers, including resting points. As of now, we have completed over 800 kilometers and remain 340 in this second phase. In Katsina state currently, if herders graze with their cattle from the Niger Republic, they can follow through Katsina grazing routes and enter Kaduna state safely without blockage”

(IR1)

Respondents in Batsari, Faskari, Kankara, Dan-Musa, and Jibia LGAs (*Figure 1*) stated that the insecurity problem of cattle rustling and armed banditry is an organized crime among some of the traditional rulers, politicians, securities personnel, governmental officials, and other civil organizations like the Meyatti Allah and vigilante groups. They provide the rustlers/bandits with relevant security information to maintain the businesses. In their studies, Ojo et al. (2023) confirmed the alleged involvement of some politicians, political officeholders, traditional rulers, etc. Other stakeholders have neglected the insecurity issues due to the fear of being marked as saboteurs or losing their jobs, positions, and titles. Besides, lack of cooperation among stakeholders has rendered the government amnesty program unsuccessful because most of their advice was self-centered rather than grounded on resolving the insecurity problems. Respondents in Faskari, Sabuwa, and Safana LGAs (*Figure 1*) argued that traditional rulers, religious leaders, and non-governmental organizations cannot address pressing socio-economic issues such as illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment. Also, most rustlers/bandits are known by their names and families, but the government takes no action against them. The rustlers/bandits would not cooperate with any arrangement due to what they are gaining from the activities. Thus, the culprits must be bombarded, killed, or punished through the appropriate judgment to deter others from joining them.

Stakeholders’ teamwork and the demands of rustlers/bandits in addressing insecurity challenges

The degree of respondents’ acceptability on whether stakeholders’ collaborations can address the contentious issues and needs of the rustlers/bandits across LGAs and Katsina state were expressed in the following graphs (*Figure 3*). As shown in *Figure 4*, 64% of the respondents agreed that the stakeholders’ teamwork could address the contentious issues and needs of the rustlers/bandits in Katsina state. While 13% disagreed, and 23% were neutral.

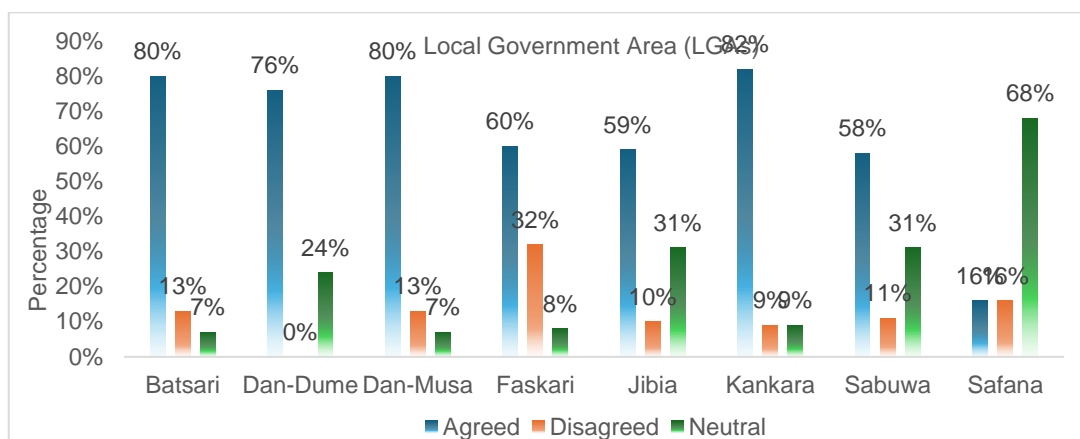


Figure 3. Respondents' percentage on stakeholders' teamwork and the rustlers/bandits' demands in resolving insecurity challenges across LGAs.

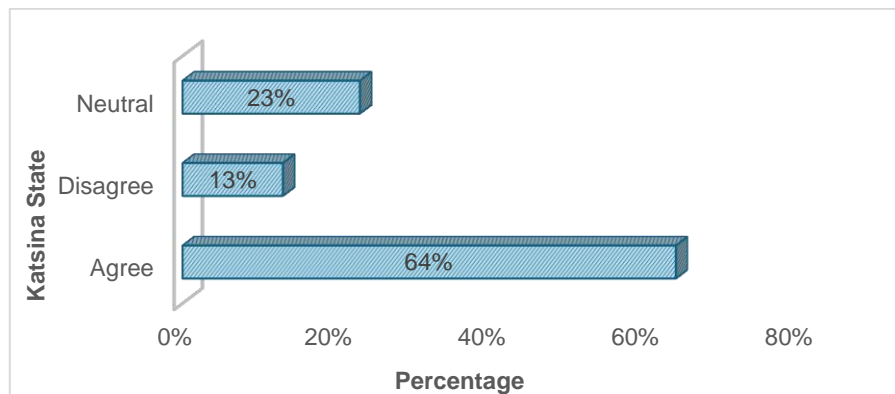


Figure 4. Respondents' percentage on stakeholders' teamwork and the rustlers/bandits' demands in resolving insecurity challenges in Katsina state.

Respondents (64%) in Katsina believed that harmonious collaboration and sharing experiences among the stakeholders could provide avenues for reconciling the pressing needs and issues that caused the insecurity. The rustlers/bandits claim that the authorities have neglected them and failed to provide for their basic needs as citizens regarding education, health facilities, roads, employment, and other infrastructures for communal development. A respondent admitted that:

“Do not abandon some communities without giving them all the necessary care and expect things to go smoothly. These people, if you go historically, they were abandoned. Everybody sees them as people who are not educated or intelligent. You know, we make a ridicule cajole of them. And today, look at them”

(IR3)

Therefore, when collaborated properly, the stakeholders can dialogue with the elders of Fulani and rustlers/bandits' leaders to resolve their demanding issues. Another interviewee acknowledged that 'some stakeholders were involved during the previous dialogue, while others were not. If they could be brought together, these issues can be addressed' (IR6). Hence, the stakeholders must sincerely take responsibility and persuade the government to provide social amenities and welfare to improve the lives of rustlers/bandits and the rural communities. In the Safana LGA, respondents (16%) argued that efforts should be made to meet at least 80% of their demands to significantly assist in reducing the activities of cattle rustling and armed banditry in the communities. One of the respondents also maintained that 'schools, dams, and cattle hospitals should be built for the rustlers/bandits in their communities. We all have equal rights as citizens of this country' (IR12). Another interviewee stated, 'If markets can be built in their areas, they will be happy and allow people to live peacefully' (IR9). The findings above corresponded the submission of Askandar (2021) that transformative peacebuilding seeks to identify and transform all the fundamental procedures that can progressively lead to positive change in virtually all structures of society.

Respondents in Faskari and Jibia LGAs (Figure 3) pointed out that the contentious issues and needs of the rustlers/bandits could be effectively addressed through a strategic plan that brought all the stakeholders together based on mutual respect and

genuine commitments. The stakeholders can advise the government to mobilize the resources needed for such purposes. However, the stakeholders must engage the rustlers/bandits through various meetings and discussions to implement the strategic plans and actions successfully. Through such contacts, the stakeholders can create awareness among the rustlers/bandits about the importance of embracing peace and devising means for addressing the problems permanently. Respondents from Kankara, Sabuwa, Safana, and Dan-Musa LGAs (*Figure 3*) highlighted that stakeholders must resolve other antagonistic issues of grazing land, equal opportunities, injustice, and corrupt practices against the Fulani people. The victims should also be assisted to reduce their pain. The respondents emphasized that insecurity issues cannot be resolved by a single individual, unit, or government alone. All stakeholders need to join hands with clean minds and common interests to address the problem of insecurity. Some parameters, such as transparency, fairness, truthfulness, and equity, must guide the programs and activities. These would assist in ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of all the actions planned to address the contentious issues that cause the insecurity challenges. As a contingent strategy, a respondent revealed that 'we are creating jobs for youths through entrepreneurship' (IR17). Another interviewee stated that:

"I am part of the state government dialogue committee. We called these people in the forest through their leaders. They gave nineteen people. We sat down and asked them what were their needs. They said we do not have children's schools and hospitals. The state government asked them to give places, and they gave ten places close to the forest. Hospitals and schools have been built in those ten places, and many dams have been expanded"

(IR1)

Respondents (13%) who disagreed revealed that historically, the criminal act of rustlers/bandits had to do with some social injustice that needs to be resolved. Since the government has failed, it would be impossible for anybody to address the issues. The stakeholders have been divided by their selfish interests, greediness, breach of trust, political affiliations, etc. These have made it very difficult for them to collaborate and work together. Besides, some stakeholders were secretly involved and benefiting from the insecurity issues. They may not want the problems to be addressed. Respondents in Batsari, Faskari, and Kankara LGAs (*Figure 3*) asserted that many Fulanis and Hausas who engage in rustling/banditry assume that they now have a job to do. Thus, even if the government met all their demands, rustling/banditry would not stop. They were just terrorists. They raped women, killed people, rustled cattle, and kidnapped others to get money. No amount of peace talk or discussion would satisfy their greediness. Therefore, people should be allowed to own arms and retaliate against rustlers/bandits' attacks. The government should block their access to weapons and use force to get rid of them.

Stakeholders' engagement and rebuilding of victim communities relationships

The graphs below measured the degree of respondents' acceptance of whether engaging the stakeholders in resolving insecurity challenges will eliminate the previous wounds and restore relationships in the affected communities (*Figure 5*). *Figure 6* illustrates that 47% of the respondents believed that involving the stakeholders in resolving insecurity challenges will eliminate the previous wounds and restore

relationships in the affected communities across Katsina state. While 20% disagreed and 33% were neutral.

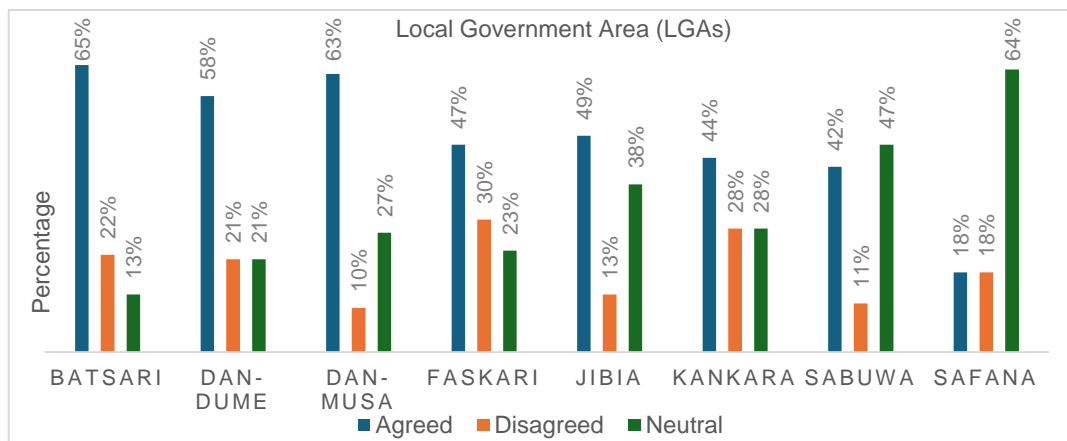


Figure 5. Respondents' percentages on stakeholders' engagement and rebuilding communities' relationships at LGAs.

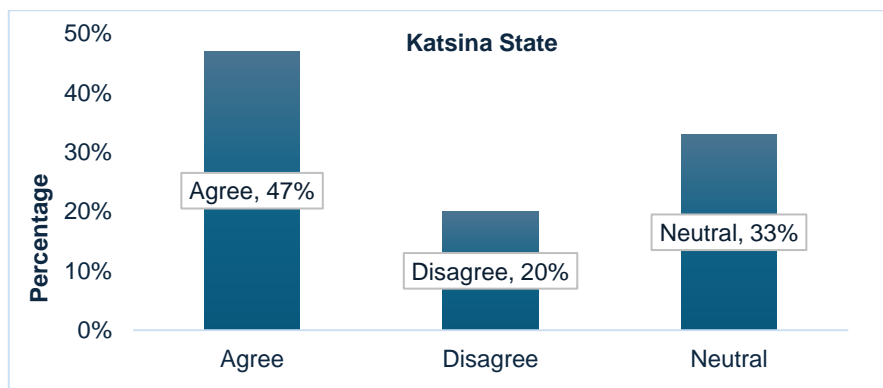


Figure 6. Respondents' percentages on stakeholders' engagement and rebuilding communities' relationship in Katsina state.

In Dan-Musa and Jibia LGAs (Figure 5), respondents pointed out that most of the stakeholders constituted prominent people of the communities. People respect them, and the communities accept whatever they agree upon. Many of them have played significant roles in assisting the victims. Therefore, engaging them in the peace process would help to rebuild the disconnected relationships between people and the affected communities. This corresponds with the advocate of transformative peacebuilding on collective transformation of relationships among individuals, parties involve, and affected communities for sustainable peace (Askandar 2021). A key informant stated that:

“Improving the relationship between herders and farmers is one of our activities. We follow local government by local government to educate farmers and herders on the importance of living in peace. Whenever there is a problem, we notify the affected local government to call the people involved at the headquarters to discuss it. If the issue concerns land, we must see the site before delivering justice to everyone. In some places, we put cement bicorns to demarcate the areas”

(IR1)

According to the respondents (47%), some rustlers/bandits still respect some stakeholders. Thus, the stakeholders should engage them in meetings to achieve peace and reconnect the villages. The more rustlers/bandits agree to drop their weapons and promise not to be involved in such misconduct forever the more people accept them back into their communities. In the Safana LGA, respondents (18%) believed that a peaceful environment where people can sleep, farm, rear their animals, and travel without fear could make them forget their previous wounds and rebuild relationships for economic prosperity. Respondents (47%) argued that stakeholders should prioritize community dialogue to establish peace and stability. Adhering to justice for all parties should be a paramount task. Administration of justice and good leadership from stakeholders can help rebuild people's confidence and relationships between the communities. This kind of leadership can sit with the rustlers/bandits to produce resolutions binding to all parties. A respondent noted that 'nothing will reinstate relationships among communities and end the insecurity problems in Katsina state except honesty, sincerity, and justice for everyone' (IR31). Another respondent said that 'doing justice to the people and applying it in all dealings can reestablish the relationships between communities' (IR30). A key informant explained that:

“Rustling and banditry have not spired anybody, the traditional rulers, police, local community, religious leaders, and even government officials. So, let them come to release that we need to be fair and just to the Fulani. Fulanis has complained about injustice, unfair treatment, and extortion from the court judges and security forces. The traditional rulers let them stay within their limits to rebuild the relationships with them”

(IR6)

It is also necessary for the stakeholders to embark on rigorous sensitization, awareness creation, and reorientations of people through seminars and preachings about the dangers associated with insecurity problems and the importance of living peacefully. During the workshops, people can seek apologies from the affected victims and advise them to take it as destiny. Stakeholders should emphasize and spread the idea of forgiveness and forgetting among people and between communities to rebuild their relationships. One of the interviewees expressed his concern that:

“Before the insecurity problems reached the level where it is today, we were all sleeping together here with those rustlers/bandits. They do all their activities here with us. Some of their parents were students in this town. So, the major strategy now is bringing them closer and showing them that they are not different from us because there are a lot of intermarriages, businesses, and schooling together”

(IR18)

A respondent added that:

“Fulanis should also be sensitized that we have an issue of changing climate, making all work difficult, which is a natural factor. Thus, one should not be angry with nature and turn on human beings. Let them understand that nomadic herding and moving with animals from one place to another is not only in Nigeria but in other

parts of the world have done it. They are doing it now, but it is no longer sustainable”

(IR6)

Respondents in the Batsari, Dan-Musa, Jibia, Faskari, and Kankara LGAs (*Figure 5*) argued that compensations should be made to the affected villages to reduce pain. The victims should be empowered and adequately taken care of, including trauma therapy for their experiences, rebuilding the houses destroyed, and ensuring their rights and sustainability of peace. In his studies, Victor (2020) also discovered the need to provide relief materials, compensation, and rehabilitation of the victims. One of the respondents said that ‘part of the existing arrangements (contingencies) going on to transform our relationships is trying to become closer with the rustlers/bandits by participating in their farming activities for better understanding’ (IR9). Another interviewee noted that ‘the major strategy we adopt recently to transform our relationships is trying to bring the rustlers/bandits closer and showing them that they are not different from us’ (IR18). A respondent expressed that ‘in southern Nigeria, people consider the Hausa and Fulani as one tribe. But now, the rustling/banditry has made them enemies, and only the stakeholders’ engagement can make them friends again’ (IR6). The respondents (20%) who disagreed stressed that cattle rustling and armed banditry challenges have documented serious violations of human rights. The wounds in people’s hearts would be hard to forget, as no life can be restored. The communities will never forget the raping of their daughters, the brutal murders of their parents, brothers, sisters, and children, as well as the stolen and destruction of their properties. The local economy has also been sabotaged, forcing people to migrate for peace. Many rich people have lost their wealth to the extent that they cannot cater to their families daily. ‘This pain remains in their minds’ (IR9). A key informant said that:

“Whosoever came to our community and killed seventy-four people within a single day will be ashamed of calling us to dialogue. I will not even agree. That was how we buried them. So, one has no moral right to come and ask us to dialogue with whosoever. What have we done to them? That is where we stop”

(IR29)

The respondents (20%) noted that the distrust created between Hausa and Fulani people may be difficult to heal. Some will forget, but some will take revenge whenever they are opportune, even after a thousand years. Moreover, the government cannot make any compensation that would reduce the victims’ pain. Respondents in Dan-Musa, Kankara, Sabuwa, and Safana LGAs (*Figure 5*) argued that everyone is subject to the state’s authority. The government must be honest and just by punishing anyone found guilty of these criminal activities. If the rustlers/bandits were not apprehended and brought to book, the victims’ relatives would never agree. The wounds would be healed, and the relationships could be restored only by delivering justice to the victims. In Batsari, Dan-Musa, and Dan-Dume LGAs (*Figure 5*), respondents maintained that the government must disarm the rustlers/bandits and take strict measures regarding where they source weapons. In addition, fighting the rustlers/bandits through military engagement would be more appropriate because they lost moral values. Those who surrendered peacefully should be reconciled, and those who refused should be eliminated to combat the insecurity challenges in Katsina state.

Stakeholders' genuine engagement and peaceful resolution of insecurity challenges

The graphs below indicated the respondents' perceptions on whether genuine stakeholders' engagement could resolve the insecurity challenges in Katsina state or otherwise (Figure 7). Figure 8 shown that 56% of the respondents confirmed that the genuine stakeholders' engagement would resolve the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state. While 14% disagreed and 30% were neutral.

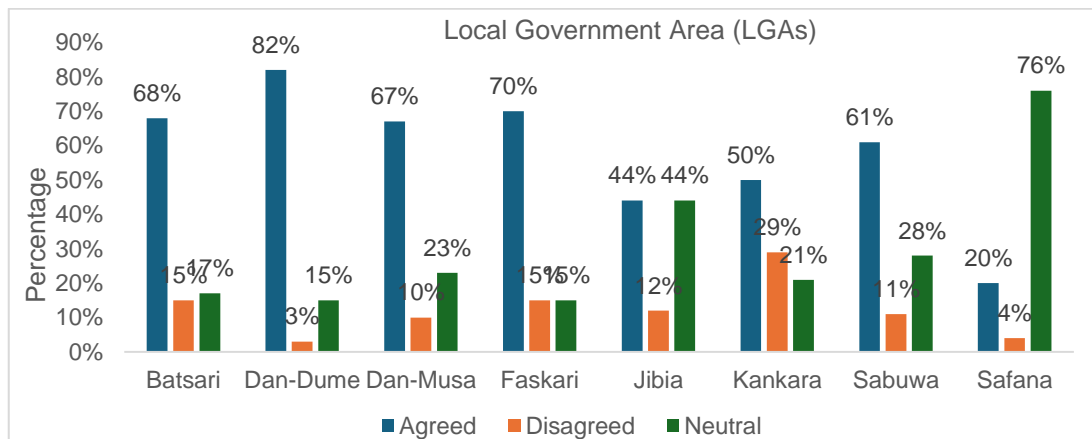


Figure 7. Respondents' percentages on stakeholders' genuine engagement and peaceful resolution of insecurity challenges in LGAs.

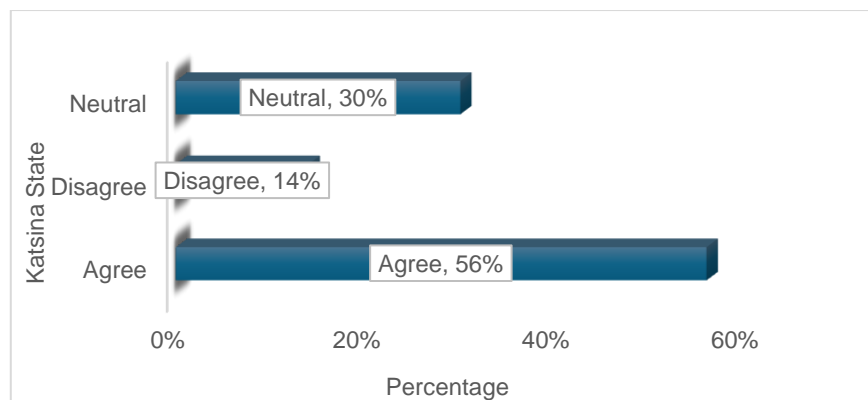


Figure 8. Respondents' percentages on stakeholders' genuine engagement and peaceful resolution of insecurity challenges in Katsina state.

The respondents (56%) argued that stakeholders are the backbone of all community progress. The insecurity challenges can be resolved whenever the stakeholders are sincerely committed and collectively responsible for dealing with the issues. The attempts to dialogue with rustlers/bandits by the former Governor Aminu Bello Masari was a good example. However, there was no sustainability because of the failure to engaged and recognized the importance of the collective efforts of stakeholders in the process. Every actor, including the victim communities, has a distinct role in resolving the insecurity challenges and supporting the peace process. The communities have all the information about the rustlers/bandits, their hideouts, names, villages of origin, and movements, among others. One of the respondents stated that:

“There must be teamwork between the government, community, traditional and religious leaders, and everyone concerned. This is based on the understanding that religious leaders alone cannot do it. Government alone cannot do it. The community alone cannot do it. Where the religious leaders will be useful may differ from where the government efforts will be relevant, likewise the community people and all others”

(IR10)

Respondents (56%) believed that stakeholders are crucial players from all points of view and at every stage of the peace process. They are aware of every related issue and more closely associated with all the parties involved. They knew where the government could support to meet the demands of the rustlers/bandits for effective peaceful resolution. In Sabuwa LGA, the respondents argued that the insecurity challenges would be eradicated whenever the stakeholders cooperate or the government genuinely engages all the stakeholders through any possible conflict resolution strategies. Once all the parties come together, discuss and make agreements, set enforcement groups from both parties and take disciplinary actions against violators, the activities of rustling/banditry will stop. The idea is that local stakeholders know how better to approach their people, issues, and the environment, the ‘soil of the conflict’ (Askandar, 2021). A respondent believed that:

“Lack of cooperation among stakeholders produced the insecurity challenges witnessing today. Assume there is an honest and harmonious working relationship between the religious leaders, traditional rulers, communities, security personnel, government and politicians, the insecurity problems would have been resolved successfully”

(IR11)

Another interviewee stated that:

“If the stakeholders can come together with honesty and sincerity, not for peculiarities, malaise or malicious intention against any other person, not for positions because some of us just want to get positions. If everyone you mention here comes together with a clean heart, this problem will be resolved amicably. Believe me”

(IR3)

Other respondents reiterated that ‘if all the stakeholders mentioned cooperate sincerely, Katsina state will achieve unprecedented peace, stability and prosperity’ (IR32). ‘Nothing can be achieved without the cooperation among stakeholders’ (IR15). ‘If the stakeholders stand on their feet and are honest about it, God will help them’ (IR36). ‘The stakeholders should approach the issues honestly and sincerely’ (IR23). ‘If the stakeholders cooperate, the insecurity problems will become history because each category of people mentioned has one thing or the other that will assist in addressing the problems’ (IR28). One of the respondents noted that:

“We cannot hand over the security issue to the security agencies alone. We are the best security officers for ourselves. We must cooperate with the community, the security agencies, traditional and religious leaders, and the government. To coexist peacefully and remain in a peaceful community, we must work together, be patriotic and honest”

(IR22)

A respondent revealed that:

“The major challenge is that some stakeholders will do their responsibilities while others will not. If all the stakeholders sincerely cooperate, the insecurity challenges can be addressed. One of the contributions we make here is providing information. If we give the information, the security personnel should use it secretly and honestly”

(IR37)

Another respondent emphasized that:

“The lack of unity among the stakeholders will never lead to success. This is well-known to everybody. Through sincere cooperation, progress can be made. But it is good to know that it cannot be hurriedly pushed. It is a gradual process. It will require time to resolve the insecurity issues fully”

(IR38)

A key informant highlighted that:

“There is something we call community partnership engagement, where we have to engage the traditional and religious leaders, herders, farmers, community associations, youths, and women. That is what is giving us another success. Because we cannot do it alone, we must identify and engage our critical stakeholders. They provide us with information that money cannot buy”

(IR3)

The above findings aligned with the submission of Askandar (2021) that the transformative peacebuilding approach required the participation of all stakeholders towards transforming all the structures and process supporting insecurity challenges for sustainable peace. The 14% of respondents believed that the rustlers/bandits, with their collaborators, have taken insecurity as their business. Thus, it would be hard to stop them. In Batsari, Dan-Musa, Faskari, Jibia, Safana, Kankara, and Sabuwa LGAs (Figure 7), respondents argued as long as the rustlers/bandits exist, the security of lives and properties will never be in peace. Thus, the government and security forces must fix the insecurity problems. The authorities should provide more soldiers and weapons to clear all the rustlers/bandits in the affected communities. The security forces must enter their hideouts in the forest, fire, and arrest any rustler/bandit with their herd of cattle. Those caught should face the appropriate judgment. A respondent said that:

“If the government wants, we all know where they are. These people are well known, including their houses. Their parents are watching them but can't talk. If one goes to

neighboring villages, they are all there with their guns and soldiers' uniforms. They can be seen physically"

(IR19)

This study confirmed that the genuine and cooperative efforts of stakeholders can transform the context, need, relationships, parties and processes sustaining the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry. It demonstrated that the issue of insecurity is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders (local traditional rulers, religious leaders, civil societies, affected communities, rustlers/bandits, and the state authorities). Thus, the stakeholders must collaborate to resolve it. They possess all the necessary information about the environmental conditions, individuals or groups involved, and the prevailing patterns causing the insecurity challenges. Therefore, an active collaboration and complementarity among them would initiate constructive ideas and create a comprehensive framework that could lead to peaceful resolutions of the problems, community development, and sustainable peace in Katsina state. Some of the affected communities have recorded relative peace as a result of the stakeholders' complementarity and joint efforts. This proves that stakeholders' contributions from all sides of the communities are required to solve the insecurity challenges. They have the influence to persuade the decision-makers to support the teamwork and take prompt action on issues that requires the government attention. The rustlers/bandits have been neglected by the government in terms of socio-economic and infrastructures for communal development. The stakeholders can then collaborate properly to negotiate with them in resolving their demanding issues. The stakeholders must sincerely take responsibility and persuade the government to provide social amenities and welfare services to improve the lives of rustlers/bandits and rural communities as a whole.

The study reveals that the stakeholders are crucial in rebuilding the relationships of the affected communities, especially in local government areas of Batsari, Dan-Dume, Dan-Musa and Jibia. Thus, engaging them in the peace process will assist in mending the disconnected relationships among individuals, parties and communities. The stakeholders must prioritize reconciliations and community dialogue through the town hall meetings to bring back permanent peace and stability. They must face the problems without bias, personal interests, fear, or favor in dealing with every insecurity-related issue. Besides, every actor has a distinct role to play in resolving insecurity challenges and supporting the peace process. Then, the issues should not be entrusted to a single party, group or individuals. There must be a teamwork among the government, community people, traditional rulers, religious leaders, civil society groups, and everyone concerned. This is why the transformative peacebuilding approach emphasizes the collective effort and vital role of every stakeholder in the peace process (Askandar, 2021). Uesugi (2020), in his hybrid peacebuilding approach, also highlights the centrality of the involvement of all stakeholders in the peacebuilding process. Moreover, the contingency strategies efforts made by some stakeholders such as; administering justice over the land disputes, creation and expansion of grazing routes, building hospitals, schools and creating jobs for the youth, participating in the rustlers/bandits' farming activities to re-establish harmonious relationship were good attempts. However, these should be done in collaboration with all the stakeholders. Transformative peacebuilding places more emphasis on contingency strategies at every stage in transforming all aspects of the insecurity problems for sustainable positive peace (Askandar, 2021).

In addition, the strategies must be expanded to cover other challenging issues of large forest reserves, porous borders, arms proliferation, weak security systems, corruption, inequality, injustice, mistrust, and bad governance. The rustlers/bandits must also be sensitized about the issue of climate change, which is a natural factor. The stakeholders need to adequately support the victims to reduce pain, safeguard their rights, and ensure sustainable peace. They must also address the socio-economic issues related to high level of illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, and basic infrastructures like inadequate schools, hospitals, roads, water supply, electricity, etc. These will assist to transform the environmental context, address the contentious demands of the rustlers/bandits and rebuild distorted relationships among people and communities. It will also build trust among everyone and ensure effective peace process in resolving the insecurity challenges and set path to sustainable positive peace in Katsina state.

Conclusion

This study established the centrality of stakeholders' teamwork in resolving the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry. Stakeholders must cooperate, support, and complement each other's efforts to reconcile with communities and the rustlers/bandits. This will pave the way for transforming all components that have sustained the insecurity problems in Katsina state over the years. Meanwhile, some stakeholders are taking steps to address some challenging issues, however, these need to be improved and expanded to involve all the stakeholders in the process. The environmental context, relationships, contentious issues, needs, and the whole processes must be collectively transformed to build a solid foundation for sustainable positive peace. The study concluded that it is possible to resolve the insecurity challenges of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Katsina state through a sincere collective engagement of stakeholders within, while maintaining the contingency and complementarity strategies, as advocated by the transformative peacebuilding approach.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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