

BORROMEAN CONFLICT MODEL:  
ANALYSING AND RESOLVING HERDERS-FARMERS CONFLICT IN  
NIGERIA'S MIDDLE-BELT REGION

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Herders-farmers conflict is one of the longest running and most active conflicts in Nigeria's restive Middle-Belt region. Given its protraction and the failure of previous interventions to bring about resolution, this paper explores how an assets-based approach such as dovetailing can bring about resolution and transformation. After a brief explanation of the Borromeam conflict model as a construct of three interacting rings, the Nigerian conflict is described as driven by three interfacing forces—economic, structural, and sociocultural. First, environmental changes led to land scarcity, creating economic uncertainty for both groups and competition between them. Second, previously existing indigeneship policy which limits access of herders—typically settlers—to land, created a sense of relative deprivation. Third, identity differences interfaced with scarcity and structurally imposed inequality, leading to confrontation and counteraction. However, guided by the philosophy that underpins the Borromeam Conflict Model, the paper asserts that a key to resolution and relationship transformation lies in an approach that dovetails the resources of both groups to satisfy their respective needs jointly.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this research paper, I explore the potential of dovetailing the resources of settler herders and indigenous farmers to resolve the conflict between both groups in Nigeria's Middle-Belt region and elsewhere. The paper is founded