THE ROLE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: A STUDY OF FARMER-HERDER CONFLICT IN WASE LGA, PLATEAU STATE. 2015-2024.

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the potential of e-governance as a tool for mitigating persistent farmer-herder conflicts in Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. The research is motivated by the limitations of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, which are often characterized by delays, perceived bias, and a lack of transparency, thereby eroding trust and perpetuating cycles of violence. This study posits that e-governance, through its core principles of transparency, improved information access, and participatory engagement could offer an innovative pathway to bridge this trust deficit and facilitate more effective conflict mitigation. The study is anchored on the Network Governance theory and the Access to Information theory as its theoretical framework and employed a qualitative research design. Secondary sources of data collection from textbooks, journals papers, internet materials, and seminar and conference papers. The findings reveal a significant yearning among stakeholders for more accountable and efficient conflict resolution processes. The study perceived the potential in e-governance tools, such as mobile-based reporting systems and digital land mapping, for enabling early warning, fostering dialogue, and ensuring accountability. However, critical barriers were identified, including profound distrust in institutions, low digital literacy, inadequate telecommunication infrastructure, and concerns over the digital exclusion of vulnerable groups. The study concludes that while e-governance holds strong transformative potentials for conflict mitigation in Wase LGA, its success is critically contingent on addressing these foundational barriers. It recommends that Plateau State Ministry of Science and Technology should partner with local communities to co-design a simple SMS-based conflict reporting system and telecom providers should partner with the government to improve network infrastructure in rural Wase to provide zero-rated access to conflict management portals.

Keywords: E-Governance, Farmer-herder conflict, conflict management, Wase LGA, Nigeria.

Introduction

Farmers–herders conflicts constitute one of the most persistent and destructive threats to human security and sustainable development in Nigeria, particularly within the North Central geo-political zone. Over the past decade, these conflicts have escalated in scale, frequency, and intensity, evolving from localized disputes over land and water into complex crises embedded within ethnic, religious, and political identities (International Crisis Group, 2017). The humanitarian consequences have been profound, including widespread loss of life, destruction of livelihoods, mass internal displacement, and the destabilization of rural communities (ACLED, 2022). Despite sustained state intervention, managing these conflicts has remained a formidable challenge, as conventional security and conflict-resolution mechanisms have struggled to adapt to their changing dynamics. State responses are frequently perceived as slow, reactive, and sometimes biased; further eroding public trust in government institutions and exacerbating insecurity (Muazzam & Egwu, 2020).

Plateau State historically celebrated as the "Home of Peace and Tourism" has emerged as one of the epicenters of farmers–herders violence in Nigeria. Its strategic location at the intersection of Nigeria's predominantly Muslim North and Christian South, combined with fertile agricultural land and vital grazing corridors, has rendered the state particularly vulnerable to violent competition between agrarian and pastoralist groups (Ostien, 2012). Within Plateau State, Wase Local Government Area (LGA) exemplifies the complexity of these conflicts. The area is inhabited by diverse farming communities, including the Boghom, Jukun, and Tarok, alongside Fulani pastoralists who depend on seasonal cattle migration routes, or transhumance. Wase's rugged terrain, fertile river valleys, and expansive plains constitute critical ecological resources for both livelihoods, intensifying competition over land and water. These pressures are further compounded by environmental degradation and climate variability, which frequently act as conflict multipliers (Fiki & Lee, 2006). Beyond ecological factors, the conflict in Wase like much of the North Central Geo-political zone has increasingly been politicized and instrumentalized by local elites, reinforcing cycles of violence, reprisal, and communal mistrust (Egwu, 2016).

Efforts to manage farmers–herders conflicts in Wase LGA and across Nigeria have traditionally relied on the deployment of state security forces, mediation by traditional rulers and community elders, and ad hoc interventions by local government authorities. However, these approaches suffer from significant structural and operational weaknesses. Interventions are largely reactive, deployed after violence has already occurred, while

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early-warning capacities remain weak due to fragmented, delayed, and unreliable information flows (Nweze & Eze, 2019). Moreover, a deep trust deficit persists between affected communities and state institutions, with widespread perceptions of bias, corruption, and selective enforcement undermining the legitimacy and effectiveness of government-led responses (Higazi, 2016). Consequently, violence in Wase LGA has become recurrent, increasingly lethal, and more difficult to contain, indicating that existing conflict-management frameworks are insufficient for addressing both the immediate triggers and the underlying drivers of the conflict.

At the core of this failure lies a profound governance and information deficit. Early warning indicators such as crop destruction, cattle rustling, water contamination, or the movement of armed groups often go unreported or remain confined within specific communities until they escalate into large-scale violence. Existing reporting channels through traditional institutions or local government offices are slow, vulnerable to political interference, and rarely capable of real-time response. This is particularly paradoxical given the widespread penetration of mobile phones and digital technologies even in rural areas such as Wase LGA. Despite this diffusion, the systematic use of digital tools as instruments of governance and conflict management remains largely unexplored within Nigeria's local governance architecture.

Globally, e-governance tools including digital incident reporting systems, mobile-based early warning platforms, geographic information systems (GIS), digital forensic technologies, and surveillance mechanisms such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) have become integral to contemporary security management. These tools enhance real-time data collection, verification, analysis, and dissemination, thereby strengthening the capacity of security agencies and local authorities to prevent, detect, and respond to violence more effectively. They also facilitate transparent grievance tracking, counter misinformation and hate speech, and promote dialogue among divided communities (Shim & Eom, 2009; Sagarik, 2016). Evidence from conflict-prone contexts highlights their potential. For example, the Ushahidi platform enabled crowd-sourced real-time reporting during Kenya's post-election violence, while mobile-based conflict monitoring systems have contributed to violence prevention efforts in Guatemala (Meier, 2015).

Across Africa, the adoption of e-governance for security management has gained momentum. The African Union's Agenda 2063 explicitly emphasizes the modernization of governance and security frameworks through digital innovation. Countries such as South Africa have deployed extensive CCTV surveillance networks in major cities, contributing to measurable reductions in certain categories of crime, while Kenya has increasingly relied on digital forensic tools to resolve complex criminal cases (African Union, 2019). In Nigeria, although federal and state governments have initiated several e-governance projects such as digital service portals and ICT-driven administrative reforms

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the targeted application of these technologies to farmers–herders conflict management, particularly at the local government level, remains grossly under-studied and under-utilized (Eweje & Oladejo, 2021).

Against this backdrop, this study examines the farmers–herders conflict in Wase LGA through the lens of e-governance, focusing on both its underlying drivers and the extent to which digital governance tools could enhance conflict prevention and management. It analyses the causes of the conflict, evaluates the potential roles of e-governance in addressing information asymmetries and governance failures, and identifies the structural, technical, and socio-political constraints shaping its adoption in conflict-prone rural settings. By situating e-governance within the broader discourse on conflict management and local governance, the article contributes to emerging scholarship on technology-driven peacebuilding. It offers policy-relevant insights into how digital tools can be leveraged to foster sustainable peace, strengthen governance, and save lives in one of Nigeria's most volatile regions.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The literature on farmers–herders conflict in Nigeria has expanded significantly over the past two decades, reflecting the growing scale, intensity, and complexity of the violence, particularly in the North Central geo-political zone. Early studies conceptualized the conflict primarily as a resource-based struggle driven by competition over land and water between sedentary farming communities and pastoralist groups (Turner et al., 2011). From this perspective, demographic pressure, environmental degradation, desertification, and climate change were identified as structural factors that intensified competition by shrinking arable land and disrupting established grazing routes (Fiki & Lee, 2006). While these ecological explanations remain important, more recent scholarship has criticized their insufficiency in accounting for the persistence and increasing lethality of the conflict.

Contemporary analyses increasingly emphasize the politicization and social reconfiguration of farmers–herders relations. Egwu (2016) argues that in Nigeria's North Central Geo-political zone, the conflict has evolved beyond material resource competition into a struggle shaped by identity politics, ethno-religious polarization, and contests over political and economic power. The mobilization of ethnic and religious identities has allowed local elites to instrumentalize grievances, transforming localized disputes into wider communal confrontations. This shift has been further complicated by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the rise of cattle rustling and banditry, and the growing involvement of non-state armed actors, which blur the boundaries between pastoral conflict, criminality, and broader insecurity (International Crisis Group, 2017). As a result, the farmers–herders conflict is increasingly understood as a multi-

dimensional crisis rooted in resource competition but sustained by governance failures, identity-based exclusion, and insecurity.

Within this body of literature, scholars have also examined state responses to farmer–herder violence, with a growing consensus that existing conflict management mechanisms are inadequate. Conflict, understood as a condition of incompatible interests, values, or goals among individuals or groups (Heywood, 2002; Paluku, 2013), and does not inevitably lead to violence. Rather, violence emerges when institutional mechanisms for managing competing claims break down. In Nigeria, state responses have largely relied on the deployment of security forces, ad hoc peace committees, and mediation by traditional authorities. However, these approaches have been criticized for being reactive, poorly coordinated, and undermined by mistrust, bias, and weak information systems (Higazi, 2016; Nweze & Eze, 2019).

This critique is closely linked to broader debates on conflict management. Unlike conflict resolution, which seeks to address root causes through negotiated settlements, or conflict transformation, which aims to restructure the social and institutional foundations of violence (Lederach, 2003; Ramsbotham et al., 2016), conflict management focuses on containing violence, preventing escalation, and stabilizing volatile situations (Wallensteen, 2018). In contexts such as Wase LGA, where violence is recurrent and governance capacity is weak, scholars argue that effective conflict management is a necessary precursor to longer-term processes of resolution and transformation. The failure of conflict management in such settings is often traced to information deficits, poor early-warning systems, and limited channels for timely communication between communities and state institutions.

It is within this governance gap that recent scholarship has begun to explore the relevance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for security and peacebuilding. The concept of e-governance has emerged as a useful analytical framework for understanding how digital technologies can reshape governance processes and state–society relations. While e-government is commonly defined as the digitization of public service delivery and administrative functions such as government-to-citizen (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), and government-to-government (G2G) interactions (Sagarik, 2016) e-governance represents a broader and more transformative approach. According to the World Bank (2023), e-governance involves the use of ICTs to transform relations between governments, citizens, and other actors. Scholars such as Shim and Eom (2009) further argue that e-governance is not merely a technological innovation but a shift toward participatory, transparent, and networked governance, in which citizens become active contributors to decision-making processes.

Empirical studies from conflict-prone contexts suggest that e-governance tools can enhance conflict management by addressing precisely the informational and coordination failures that characterize many violent settings. Digital incident-reporting platforms, mobile-based early warning systems, geographic information systems (GIS), and digital forensic tools have been shown to improve real-time data collection, verification, and dissemination, thereby enabling faster and more targeted responses to emerging threats (Meier, 2015). These technologies also create opportunities for transparent grievance tracking, countering misinformation, and facilitating dialogue between divided communities, all of which are critical in environments marked by mistrust and identity-based polarization.

In Africa, the relevance of e-governance to security management has gained increasing attention, particularly within the framework of the African Union's Agenda 2063, which emphasizes the modernization of governance and security institutions through digital innovation. Experiences from countries such as South Africa and Kenya demonstrate that ICT-enabled surveillance, digital forensics, and data-driven policing can contribute to improved security outcomes (African Union, 2019). In Nigeria, however, existing studies note that while e-governance initiatives have been introduced in areas such as service delivery and administrative reform, their application to conflict management especially at the local government level remains limited and under-theorized (Eweje & Oladejo, 2021).

This study builds on and extends this emerging literature by situating e-governance within the specific dynamics of farmer–herder conflict in Wase LGA of Plateau State. Rather than treating e-governance as a purely technical intervention, the study conceptualizes it as a governance mechanism capable of addressing information asymmetries, enhancing early warning and rapid response, and strengthening state–community engagement in conflict-prone settings. By integrating insights from the literature on farmers–herders conflict, conflict management, and digital governance, the study provides a theoretically grounded framework for understanding how e-governance tools might contribute to managing violence in contexts characterized by weak institutions, identity-based divisions, and recurring insecurity.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Network Governance Theory, complemented by Access to Information Theory, to explain how e-governance can influence conflict management in farmer–herder relations in Wase Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State. While Network Governance Theory provides the structural lens for understanding how multiple actors interact in decentralized governance arrangements, Access to Information Theory explains the informational mechanisms through which these interactions become

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effective in preventing and managing conflict. Together, the theories offer an integrated framework linking governance structure, information flow, and conflict outcomes.

Network Governance theory, associated with the works of Castells and Braman (2000), departs from traditional state-centric models of governance by arguing that contemporary governance increasingly occurs through horizontal, interdependent networks rather than hierarchical command structures. In this framework, public authority is dispersed across a range of actors including state institutions, security agencies, traditional authorities, civil society organizations, and local communities who coordinate through negotiation, information sharing, and mutual dependence to address complex policy problems.

This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant to farmers–herders conflict, which constitutes a "wicked problem" characterized by multiple actors, competing interests, and overlapping jurisdictions. In Wase LGA, conflict management does not rest solely with formal state institutions such as the local government council or security agencies. Rather, it involves a network of actors that includes farmers, herders, traditional rulers (Ardos and village heads), community vigilante groups, local NGOs, and state security forces. These actors possess fragmented authority and partial information, making unilateral or top-down interventions ineffective.

Within this networked context, e-governance functions as a critical coordination infrastructure. Digital platforms such as conflict reporting portals, shared GIS-based land and grazing maps, and mobile early-warning systems facilitate interaction among network actors by enabling timely communication, data sharing, and joint decision-making. Network Governance Theory explains how these platforms help transform loosely connected actors into functional governance networks capable of collective action. Rather than replacing existing institutions, e-governance tools link them, reducing transaction costs, improving coordination, and enabling more rapid and inclusive responses to emerging threats.

Operationally, the theory explains conflict management in Wase LGA through three network mechanisms. First, "network formation", where e-governance platforms connect farmers, herders, traditional leaders, and government agencies into a shared communication space. Second, "network coordination", where real-time information allows actors to synchronize responses for example, enabling security agencies and local authorities to intervene early when tensions are reported. Third, "network accountability", where digital records of incidents and responses make governance processes more transparent and reduces perceptions of bias or selective enforcement. In this way, Network Governance Theory provides an analytical framework for understanding how e-

governance reshapes power relations, flattens hierarchical barriers, and amplifies the voices of previously marginalized actors in conflict governance.

While Network Governance Theory explains "who" participates in governance and "how" they interact, Access to Information Theory explains "why" information flow is central to effective conflict management. Popularized by Florin (2007), the theory posits that information is a critical governance resource and that asymmetrical access to information generates power imbalances, mistrust, and conflict. In contrast, equitable access to timely, accurate, and reliable information promotes transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making.

In the context of farmers–herders conflict in Wase LGA, information asymmetry is a major driver of violence. Farmers and herders often lack shared knowledge of grazing routes, farmland boundaries, water points, and seasonal movement patterns, leading to accidental encroachment and disputes. Rumors and misinformation especially following isolated incidents can rapidly escalate tensions into violent retaliation. Moreover, opaque decision-making processes and delayed official communication fuel distrust in state-led mediation efforts.

Access to Information Theory helps explain how e-governance addresses these challenges by equalizing information access across the governance network. For example, GIS-based land and grazing maps provide farmers, herders, and local authorities with a common reference point, reducing ambiguity and contestation over resource use. Digital incident-reporting systems enable early warning by allowing community members to report threats or encroachments in real time. Official SMS alert systems and online portals can counter rumors with verified information, while digital grievance-tracking platforms make conflict-management processes visible and subject to public scrutiny.

Taken together, Network Governance theory and Access to Information theory provide a coherent analytical framework for this study. Network Governance Theory explains the structural dimension of conflict management how multiple actors interact within decentralized governance networks while Access to Information Theory explains the functional mechanism through which these networks become effective. E-governance operates at the intersection of these theories: it constitutes the technological infrastructure that enables networked interaction while simultaneously reducing information asymmetries that fuel conflict.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design based on the analysis of secondary data to examine the role of e-governance in managing farmers–herders conflict in Wase Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State, Nigeria. The qualitative

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approach is appropriate because the study seeks to understand governance processes, institutional interactions, and information flows through which e-governance influences conflict management, rather than to measure outcomes quantitatively. E-governance and conflict management are complex, context-dependent phenomena shaped by policy frameworks, power relations, and institutional practices, which are best explored through qualitative inquiry.

The descriptive qualitative design enables the study to systematically document the forms, mechanisms, and institutional arrangements of e-governance relevant to conflict management, while the explanatory dimension allows for interpretation of how these mechanisms contribute to conflict prevention, response, and de-escalation. Given the limited availability of disaggregated quantitative data on e-governance interventions at the local government level in Nigeria, secondary qualitative sources provide the most reliable basis for analysis.

The study relies exclusively on secondary sources of data, drawn from both published and unpublished materials relevant to e-governance, conflict management, and farmer–herder relations. These include peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, government policy documents, white papers, security reports, publications of international organizations and civil society groups, conference papers, newspapers, and credible online resources. Data sources were selected based on their relevance to the study, analytical credibility, and empirical or policy focus on Nigeria, with particular attention to Plateau State. The use of multiple sources enhances triangulation and strengthens the validity of the analysis.

Wase LGA was purposively selected as the case study due to its history of recurrent farmers–herders conflict and its relevance to broader patterns of rural insecurity in Plateau State and Nigeria's North-Central Geo-political zone. The area has experienced persistent disputes over land use, grazing routes, and water resources, making it a suitable context for examining conflict management strategies at the local government level. Additionally, Wase LGA reflects the increasing reliance on digital communication tools by government agencies and security institutions for conflict reporting, coordination, and early warning, thereby providing an appropriate setting for analyzing the practical role of e-governance in conflict management.

The temporal scope of the study covers the period 2015–2024, a decade marked by heightened farmers–herders violence in Nigeria and growing policy attention to digital governance and technology-driven security responses. This time frame captures significant developments in e-governance initiatives, particularly the expansion of digital platforms for information sharing, coordination, and administrative response at sub-national levels.

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Data were analyzed using thematic qualitative analysis, guided by the study's theoretical framework of Network Governance Theory and Access to Information Theory. Relevant themes such as networked institutional collaboration, information asymmetry, transparency, coordination mechanisms, and conflict mitigation were identified and examined across the selected materials. This analytical approach enables the study to link empirical observations to theoretical propositions, thereby enhancing the explanatory depth and analytical rigour of the research.

Result and Discussion

Findings indicate that farmers–herders conflict in Wase LGA is not the product of a single causal factor but rather the interaction of environmental stressors, governance failures, identity politics, and criminality. Climate change and desertification have reduced grazing resources in northern Nigeria, forcing herders southward into agriculturally productive areas of Plateau State, where competition over land and water intensifies (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014). This supports broader literature linking environmental stress to resource-based conflict, particularly in fragile rural economies.

Encroachment on grazing reserves and traditional cattle routes further exacerbates tensions. The deterioration and politicization of land-use institutions have created overlapping claims between farmers and herders, increasing the likelihood of violent confrontation (Higazi, 2016). Population growth compounds this problem, as expanding farmlands increasingly block transhumance corridors (Maiangwa et al., 2012). These findings align with Network Governance Theory, which emphasizes that weak coordination among land, agricultural, and security institutions undermines collective problem-solving.

The erosion of traditional authority structures has also reduced the effectiveness of informal conflict mediation mechanisms. As state security responses have become more militarized, traditional rulers and community elders once central nodes in local governance networks have been sidelined (Ostien, 2018). This institutional fragmentation creates governance gaps that criminal actors exploit. Identity framing along ethnic and religious lines further deepens mistrust, transforming resource disputes into protracted identity conflicts (Krause, 2018; Baca, 2019). The proliferation of cattle rustling and banditry blurs the boundary between communal conflict and organized crime, reinforcing cycles of retaliation (USIP, 2020).

The findings suggest that e-governance has significant potential to address these conflict drivers by improving coordination, transparency, and information flow among key actors. Digital land registries and GIS-based mapping systems can reduce disputes arising from ambiguous land tenure and contested boundaries. By providing a shared, authoritative

reference point, such tools address information asymmetry identified by Access to Information Theory as a key source of conflict escalation (Mbugua, 2019).

Early warning systems supported by satellite data, mobile reporting platforms, and predictive analytics can enable proactive intervention. These tools allow government agencies and security actors to identify emerging hotspots and deploy mediators or preventive measures before violence erupts (Selby & Hoffmann, 2014). Within a network governance framework, e-governance platforms function as connective infrastructure, linking farmers, herders, local governments, security agencies, and civil society into a coordinated response network.

Mobile communication technologies further enhance community engagement by disseminating timely information on weather conditions, grazing schedules, and conflict-prone zones. Such direct communication reduces accidental encroachment and counters misinformation that often fuels violence (FAO, 2021). Digital consultation platforms also promote inclusive policy-making by enabling affected communities to contribute to land-use and conflict management policies, strengthening legitimacy and compliance (World Bank, 2020).

Access to justice is another critical area where e-governance demonstrates impact. Online reporting systems and case-tracking portals improve transparency and accountability in dispute resolution, reducing reliance on vigilante justice (Bello, 2022). Blockchain-based monitoring of aid and compensation programs further enhances trust by ensuring fairness and preventing diversion of resources intended for conflict mitigation (Kshetri, 2017).

Despite these potentials, the findings reveal significant barriers to effective adoption of e-governance in Wase LGA. The digital divide manifested in poor infrastructure, unreliable electricity, and limited internet access restricts participation by rural farmers and pastoralists (World Bank, 2021). Low digital literacy and socio-cultural resistance further limit uptake, particularly where platforms fail to reflect local languages and traditional conflict resolution norms (UN DESA, 2022).

Data privacy and misinformation risks pose additional challenges. Weak regulatory frameworks expose sensitive information to misuse, while digital platforms can also be exploited to spread hate speech and rumors, undermining peacebuilding efforts (Bello, 2022). Political and financial constraints, including limited institutional capacity and donor-dependent projects, threaten the sustainability of e-governance initiatives (OECD, 2020).

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that e-governance can contribute meaningfully to farmers–herders conflict management in Wase LGA when embedded within a network governance structure and supported by equitable access to information. E-governance

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tools do not replace traditional or state institutions but enhance their capacity to coordinate, share information, and respond effectively. However, without addressing infrastructural, socio-cultural, and institutional constraints, e-governance risks reinforcing existing inequalities rather than mitigating conflict. This underscores the need for context-sensitive, inclusive, and sustainable digital governance strategies tailored to local realities.

Conclusions

This study set out to examine the potential of e-governance as a tool for managing the protracted farmer-herder conflict in Wase Local Government Area. The findings reveal a nuanced landscape: while e-governance holds significant transformative potential for conflict mitigation, its efficacy is not inherent in the technology itself but is entirely contingent upon its design and implementation. The research affirms that the conflict is rooted in multidimensional factors competition over scarce resources, historical grievances, identity politics, and a critical breakdown in communication and trust. Traditional top-down governance approaches have exacerbated perceptions of opacity and inaccessibility, leaving a vacuum that e-governance could fill, but not without confronting profound contextual constraints.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study lies in its reconceptualization of e-governance in fragile contexts. Moving beyond techno-optimist frameworks, it posits e-governance not as a standalone solution but as a "digital bridge." This concept emphasizes technology's role as a supplementary tool that enhances, rather than replaces, the irreplaceably human processes of dialogue, mediation, and trust-building. Its value is derived from its ability to make institutional processes more transparent, accelerate the flow of accurate information, and open new channels for inclusive communication, thereby cultivating a more fertile ground for sustainable conflict transformation. Ultimately, the goal is not to automate peacebuilding but to strategically empower the communities and institutions engaged in it.

However, this potential is sharply bounded by the stark reality of the digital divide, encompassing infrastructure deficits, low literacy, cost barriers, and linguistic diversity. Furthermore, the study underscores a critical implementation axiom: any technological intervention introduced without actively building trust and integrating with existing socio-political architectures such as community leadership and the jangali system is destined to fail. Therefore, success depends on a content-sensitive, hybrid, and inclusive design philosophy that prioritize accessibility and socio-technical integration over technical sophistication.

First, interventions must adopt a phased, low-tech entry point to ensure immediate accessibility and build foundational trust. This entails collaboration between the Plateau

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State Ministry of Science and Technology, telecom providers, and local communities to deploy a simple, SMS-based conflict reporting system operating in local languages (Hausa, Fulfulde). Coupled with efforts to secure zero-rated access to official portals and improve rural network infrastructure, this approach directly tackles the exclusion of the most vulnerable and begins to address the perceived inaccessibility of the state.

Second, technology must be leveraged to transparently manage the core conflict resource: land. The development of publicly accessible GIS maps demarcating farmlands, grazing routes, and water sources available at local government offices and via a simple website can serve as an authoritative tool to reduce disputes arising from ambiguous boundaries and seasonal movements. This application moves e-governance beyond reporting to actively pre-empting conflict by making resource rights and patterns visible and contestable through formal channels.

Third, capacity building and infrastructure must be co-located to foster ownership and literacy. Establishing solar-powered community digital hubs in nodal towns like Bashar and Kadarko, paired with targeted training for farmers and herders on using USSD/SMS alerts and verifying information, does more than bridge the digital divide. It embeds the technology within the social fabric, creating physical spaces for engagement and actively combatting the misinformation that fuels violence.

Finally, and most critically, e-governance must be embedded within a broader ecosystem of communication for peace. The pervasive reach of community radio presents an indispensable hybrid tool. A proactive, multi-lingual peacebuilding campaign on these airwaves facilitating moderated dialogues, debunking rumors, and amplifying stories of cooperation can foster a shared narrative of peace. This strategy directly counters inflammatory misinformation and provides a consistent platform for reconciliation, ensuring the digital tools are supported by a foundational layer of social trust and public consensus.

In summary, the path forward for e-governance in Wase LGA is one of humble integration. It requires policymakers to forsake grandiose technological fixes in favor of context-embedded tools that enhance transparency, accelerate communication, and empower local actors. By doing so, e-governance can truly function as a digital bridge, not a bypass, connecting communities to the state and to each other in the arduous yet essential work of building lasting peace. Negative effects of infrastructural and informational challenges, electoral management bodies should implement integrated strategies that combine AI adoption with robust infrastructure development, cybersecurity measures, and comprehensive voter education programs.

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