

Herdsman – Farmers’ Conflict: Implication on National Development (Nigeria in Perspective)

OKORO, John Peter

DAAD Scholar

Department of Governance and Development Management
University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana
+233559439327, +2348039408192
Johnpet8192@gmail.com

Abstract

The struggle for survival and protection of economic livelihood appears to precipitate conflict between herdsman and farmers across many communities in Nigeria. The conflict has in recent years taken more dangerous dimension with acquisition of modern weapons and communication devices. It has however, resulted in massive loss of lives and properties. This study therefore examines the implication of herdsman-farmers’ conflict on the national development. The study is anchored on conflict theory, frustration aggression theory, and failed state theory. The work adopts qualitative approach to data analysis relying on secondary sources like journals, textbooks, newspapers and online organizational publications. Evidences show that attacks and counter-attacks from Fulani herdsman and farmers respectively resulted to loss of human and animal lives, displacement of persons, destruction of houses, farmlands and crops, and distrust between herdsman and farmers. The study concluded that the Herdsman-farmers’ conflict created casualties, displacement, food insecurity, distrust and unemployment capable of inhibiting national development in Nigeria. The study therefore recommended inter alia, that government at all levels should promulgate legislations outlawing open grazing of cattle while encouraging herders to establish ranches for their cattle. All Fulani herdsman operating in any local government should be registered to enable monitoring of their activities and co-existence.

KEY WORDS: Herdsman, Farmers, Conflict, National Development, Failed State Theory, Nigeria

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is a truism that conflict occurs whenever disagreements exist in a social situation over issues of substance or whenever emotional antagonisms create frictions between individuals or groups. In Africa, most conflicts emanate owing to disagreements on ownership or competitive access to natural resources, among other factors. Blench (1996) asserts that resource conflicts can be classified into two, namely point resources including mines, farms and reserves and ecological conflicts including water, grazing and hunting rights. In Nigeria, struggle for survival and protection of economic livelihood (including, farmlands, crops and cattle) appears to precipitate conflict between herdsman

and farmers across many communities in Nigeria. Disagreement over the use of essential resources such as farmland, grazing areas and water between herders and local farmers are remains the major source of the conflicts in those communities. Among other factors, environmental changes, and security imbroglios are known as factors forcing herdsman into new communities in search of adequate pasture to feed their cattle, and by so doing, encroach on farmers’ resources and causing conflict.

However, conflicts between herdsman and farmers are not limited to Nigeria alone. In fact, herdsman-farmers conflicts are emerging and disrupting communities in Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, and across West Africa region. In West Africa, conflicts between farmers and nomadic cattle herders have been a common feature of economic

activities for ages (Tonah, 2006). Herdsmen attacks do not only cause significant human casualties and displacement of local populations, but also largescale destruction of properties and agro-pastoral economies. In Ghana, one of the major violent incidents that occurred in the country was on the 6th, 7th and 8th of August 2011, when a group of Konkomba farmers attacked Fulani herders in some communities including Zamasheigu, Jingboni, Sugu, Toti, Damdaboli, Offini, Makpendanya, Zamanshagu, Lamalim, Nnagmaya and Timya in which 14 Fulani herders and their families were killed, and many others injured when their houses and properties were burnt. The proximate cause of the violent conflict was seen as a reaction and frustrations of continuous cattle rustling, robbery and crop destruction by Fulani herders. Retrospectively, Fulani pastoralist conflicts with local farmers in 1988/1989 and 1999/2000 led to expulsions of the former by the Ghanaian Government through the security agencies (Tonah 2002). Another account also maintained, that the activities of Fulani Herdsmen (which included rape, destruction of crops, armed robbery and killing of individual farmers who try to chase them away from their farmlands) led to their expulsion in 1988/89, 1998/99, 2010, 2015 and 2016 by the security forces and the Ghana Immigration Service (Kaderi, 2017).

In Nigeria, however, herder-farmer conflicts have expanded from the North Central (Middle Belt) - where cases of attacks and counter attacks remain endless, to communities in the Northeast, Southeast, Northwest and South South. Herdsmen-farmer conflicts have the potential to undermine community relationships across Nigeria. That is because, the conflict has taken a twist where community members now see every Fulani person as an enemy vis a-vis the fact that the conflict has taken more dangerous dimensions with acquisition of modern weapons and communication devices recently. The conflict has resulted to massive loss of lives and properties. In 2014, groups of heavily armed Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed more than 100 villagers in Kaduna State, 69 villagers in Katsina State, and 37 villagers in Benue State in separate attacks. These large casualty counts per attack remain high, as over one 100 people were killed in clashes in Southern Kaduna in one incident alone in early 2017. Idowu (2017) submits that the violence between herdsmen and farmers has displaced more than 100,000 people in Benue and Enugu States and left them under the care of relatives or in makeshift Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps while many are still struggling to rebuild their lives. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) recently placed the Nigeria's Fulani herdsmen as the world's fourth deadliest militant group for having accounted for about 1,229 deaths in 2014. Amnesty International (as published by New Telegraph) on January 29th 2018

asserted that Fulani Herdsmen have killed 168 people in 2018 alone. The Nigerian authorities' response to communal violence is totally inadequate, too slow and ineffective, and in some cases unlawful. Clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Adamawa, Benue, Taraba, Ondo and Kaduna have resulted in 168 deaths in January 2018 alone. Hundreds of people lost their lives last year, and the government is still not doing enough to protect communities from these violent clashes. In 2017, 549 deaths were recorded across 14 states while thousands were displaced. These states include Enugu, Benue, Taraba, Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Cross Rivers, Adamawa, Katsina, Delta and Ekiti states. Meanwhile, the usual resultant effects of the conflict are loss of lives, crops, destruction of houses, displacement of persons, decline in income, distrust; as well as threat to food and national security.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

2.1 Historical background of Fulani Herdsmen

Fulani (also called Peul or Fulbe) are people of obscure origin that expanded eastward from Futa Toro in Lower Senegal in the 14th century (Idowu, 2017). Their indigenous language is known as Fula and it is classified within the Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family. They constitute the fourth-largest ethnic group in Nigeria with an estimated population of over seven million (Burton, 2016). The Fulani's are perhaps said to be the largest semi-nomadic group in the world and are found across West Central Africa, (BBC, 2016). Anter (2011) avers that the Fulani is an ethnic group who are spread over several West African countries and in some places in Central African and the Sudan. The people can be found in Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Togo, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Guinea, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Sudan and Cameroon. In Nigeria, some of the Fulani people have moved into the cities, while some are still living as semi-nomadic herdsmen. The Fulani are responsible for the provision of hides and of course major providers of milk and meat in Nigeria. According to Abass, (2012), their contribution to the dairy and meat industry is phenomenal and about 90% of the cattle in Nigeria are owned by the Fulani and they contribute about 3.2% to Nigeria's gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, these group who own and rear herds of animals like cattle for commercial purposes are called Herdsmen. They usually move their herds from one place to another in search of pasture and fresh water. It is predominantly the occupation of the Fulani ethnic group in Nigeria. They are often armed and visibly move about with weapons (like AK 47, daggers, machetes, arrows etc) to protect their livestock. Due to

their violent nature and associated killings, the group was recently described as the world’s fourth deadliest militant group (GTI, 2015; Mikailu, 2016).

2.2 Clarification of the term “herder-farmers conflict”

Herdsman-farmers or herders-farmers conflicts are conflicts between peasant/subsistence cultivators and nomadic/transhumant live-stock keepers. Hussein, Sumberg, & Seddon, (1999) see farmer-herder conflicts as comprising different types of conflicts, including ethnic conflicts, interest conflicts, resource disputes, political action, evictions, killings, cattle raiding and cattle rustling. According to Hagmann (2003), there

exist differences between ‘herder-herder’ conflicts and ‘farmer-herder’ conflicts. Herder-herder conflicts are usually conflicts between nomadic or transhumant livestock keepers that arise between receiving groups over their territory’s resources and incoming groups searching for water and pastures, and cattle raiding. The violent cattle raids among pastoralists in East Africa are examples of herder-herder conflicts. Furthermore, herder-herder conflicts include conflicts that manifest as a result of cattle rustling and competition for a scarce herding environment among pastoralists – herders stealing from herders and herders killing herders.

3.0 INCIDENCES OF HERDSMEN-FARMERS CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

Table 1: *Herdsman-Farmers Conflicts in Nigeria between March to May 2018.*

S/N	Date	Attack & Location	Casualties/Degree of Destruction	Media Source
1	May 24, 2018	Yorro Local Government Area of Taraba State	5 persons killed	www.thisdaylive.com , 24 th May, 2018
2	April 28, 2018	Onocha-Olona Village in Aniocha-North LGA, & Ubulu-Uku community, Aniocha South LGA, Delta State	2 persons killed in Aniocha-Olona, and 6 persons seriously injured in Ubulu-Uku	http://dailypost.ng/2018/04/30
3	April 24, 2018	St.ignatius Quasi Parish Ukpok Mbalom in Ayar-Mbalom community of Gwer East LGA of Benue state	2 catholic priests and 17 other worshipers killed. Over 100 houses burnt down, and people displaced.	http://opera.pulse.ng , 24 th April, 2018
4	April 14 & 16	Several communities across Nasarawa state	32 Tiv villagers killed, many displaced	http://sunnewsonline.com/herdsmen-kill-32-villagers-nasarawa
5	April 12, 2018	Jandeikyula village in Wukari L G A of Taraba State	25 persons killed, property worth hundreds of millions of naira destroyed millions of naira destroyed	https://allafrica.com/stories/201804130181.html
6	March 19, 2018	Agbenema in Opada/Ofejiji Ward, Omala LGA Kogi State	Scores killed, houses burnt	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SZ_hYY7HZM
7	March 14	Ogane-Enugu and Ikende communities in Dekina LGA of Kogi State	25 persons killed, several houses burnt	https://newtelegraphonline.com/2018/03/fulani-herdsmen-invade-kogi-kill-25
8	March 12	Enyanwu Igwe Village in Igbeagu Community, Izzi LGA Ebonyi State	4 persons killed, economic trees and other properties worth	http://publiceye.com.ng/2018/03/governor-umahi-temporarily-bars-herdsmen-izzi-lga-recent-attack/
9	March 8	Nzharuvo Village in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.	11 killed, 50 houses razed	https://punchng.com/herdsmen-kill-11-torch-50-houses-in-plateau/
10	March 5	Omosu Okana villages in Okpokwu LGA in Benue State	24 persons Killed, many wounded, and 20 others missing	https://www.premiumtimesng.com/.../260941-24-killed-20-others-feared-missing-fres .

11	March 3	Sardauna LGA of Taraba state	15 herdsmen lost their lives	saharareporters.com/2018/03/03/15-killed-attacks-fulani-communities-tarab
----	---------	------------------------------	------------------------------	---

Source: Authors compilation, 2018

4.0 THEORETICAL UNDERPININGS

According to Le Meur and Hochet (2010), theorizing herdsmen-farmer conflicts remains very difficult, since the actors, causes and dynamics are complex and varied. They, therefore, believe that a combination of theories is needed to explain vividly farmer-herder conflict escalation. This is why this study adopts a multi-theoretical perspective to discuss the issues in herdsmen-farmer relations and to allow for a more in-depth understanding of the issues. However, three theories were employed for this work. The theories include; Conflict Theory adopted to study the causal factors, Frustration-Aggression Theory to understand the escalation, and Failed State Theory to understand reasons for the intensity and longevity of the herdsmen-farmer conflicts in Nigeria.

4.1 Conflict theory

Karl Marx (1818-1883) who is the proponent of Conflict theory was a victim of marginalization due to his revolutionary ideas and the misery of his alienation as seen through his two radical most famous works: *The Capital* and *Communist Manifesto* (Charles, 2005). Marx's conflict ideology is "an analysis of inequality under capitalism and how to change it through confrontation" (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014). They argued that in capitalism, there is an inherent conflict of interests between two opposing classes. Material resources remain the most trigger of conflicts between two opposing groups. However, the basic tenet of the theory is that two opposing groups in the society always struggle for limited or scarce resources. Each group competes to attain or acquire more resources and owing to its scarcity, competition in form of struggle becomes inevitable between them. As the competition continues, each group assumes selfish, thus being a barrier to the progress of the other in accessing the resources. The land resources (such as farm lands, crops, grass/pasture, fresh water etc.) are scarce in Nigeria and needed by both farmers and herdsmen for sustenance of their various sources of livelihood. Conflict, however, would not only occur between herders and farmers as both strive with another in pursuit of these resources; but as either of the groups tries to intrude or exploit another's already secured and long acquired resources. Conflict would likely arise when farmers who are in need of arable farm lands encroach into grazing reserves or criminals in the host communities try to steal cattle for economic gains.

4.2 Frustration-Aggression theory

Frustration-aggression is a theory of aggression proposed by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears in 1939 and further developed by Neal Miller in 1941 and Leonard Berkowitz in 1961. The theory states that aggression is an outcome or result of blocking or frustrating a person's efforts towards a certain goal (Myers, 2007). The theory depicts a scenario where groups of people or individuals become frustrated as a result of conflict resolution outcome, or sometimes as a result of government or institutional intervention which did not favour the groups or the individuals, making the conflict to escalate. The theory further posits that frustration caused by interference in goal-directed activity produces a 'readiness' for aggression which if 'triggered' can result in aggressive response (Oli, Ibekwe, & Nwankwo, 2018). According to Rationis (2014), the trigger could be an insignificant element of behavior, such as a casual joke, gesture or mild criticism which would normally be overlooked, but to the frustrated individual who is already waiting for an opportunity to show his frustration it may provoke aggressive response or reprisal. In application to this study, the goal or aim of every farmer during planting season is to have bountiful harvest, then sell the farm produce and make profits. On the other hand, the herdsmen would always want to have well fed and healthy cattle and be able to make profits as well. When any of these expectations was not realizable, either by the cattle eating up and destroying the farmers' crops or that the farmer encroached on grazing reserves or use water reserved for cattle to irrigate their farms, aggression would be triggered. Either of the parties that felt frustrated to achieving their economic goals may decide to reprise as to show their displeasure and as a result conflict will occur (Oli, et al 2018).

4.3 Failed State Theory

Failed state theory is germane to the study of the current Herdsmen-farmer's conflict in the sovereign state of Nigeria, as it helps to explain reasons for its intensity and longevity in the state. According to Max Weber, a state is defined as maintaining a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within its borders. When this is broken (e.g., through the dominant presence of warlords, paramilitary groups, armed gangs, or terrorism), the very existence of the state becomes dubious, and the state becomes a *failed state*. Weber explains that only the state has the means of production

necessary for physical violence. A state is adjudged to have failed when it is unable to effectively maintain all or some of the essential characteristics of the state. Failed state means that the state has been rendered ineffective and is not able to enforce its laws uniformly or provide basic goods and services to its citizens because of (variously) high crime rates, insurgency, extreme political corruption, an impenetrable and ineffective bureaucracy, judicial ineffectiveness, military interference in politics, and cultural situations in which traditional leaders wield more power than the state over a certain area.

However, there is no real consensus on the definition of a "failed state"; the subjective nature of indicators that are used to measure state failure have led to an ambiguous understanding of the term (Olivier, 2013). Some scholars focus on the capacity and effectiveness of the government to determine if a state is failed or not (Patrick, 2007). Other indices such as the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index underline the democratic character of state institutions in order to determine its level of failure. Furthermore, other scholars focus their argument on the legitimacy of the state (Kaplan, 2008) on the nature of the state (Gros, 1996) on the growth of criminal violence in a state (Rotberg, 2004) on the economic extractive institutions, or on the states' capacity to control its territory. Robert H. Bates (2008) refers to state failure as the "implosion of the state", where the state transforms "into an instrument of predation" and the state effectively loses its monopoly on the means of force. According to Charles T. Call (2010) the concept of "state failure" focuses on three gaps that the state is not able to provide when it is in the process of failure: **capacity**, when state institutions lack the ability to effectively deliver basic goods and services to its population; **security**, when the state is unable to provide security to its population under the threat of armed groups; and **legitimacy**, when a "significant portion of its political elites and society reject the rules regulating power and the accumulation and distribution of wealth.

Abdulrazaq Oyeabnji Hamzat in his book "*The Truth About Nigeria*" published as article with a caption "*Government simply doesn't exist in Nigeria*" on thenigerianvoice.com in 2015, maintained that, although, Nigeria has a sovereign government, it seems to have lost control of its land and borders, thereby giving people the freedom to go in and go out of the country unrestrictedly. Countless reports had revealed how porous its borders are, yet they remain unchecked. Also, the Nigerian government has proven time and time again that it is unable to guarantee the safety of its citizens. A daily glance at most newspapers across the country would confirm how Nigerian citizens are being

murdered on a daily basis by what has now been described as unknown gunmen, BH, Fulani herdsmen, kidnappers, militants and many others. He also asserted that, Nigeria seems to be a permanent habitat for procreation of corruption and criminal acts, where government officials embezzle public funds with confidence, knowing they are well covered and protected under the law of impunity. The law of impunity is an unwritten law that requires absolute loyalty from the political elite to the current leadership of the country.

In addition, Prof. Ben Nwabueze in his article "*Why 'NIGERIA' is now qualified as a failed state*" published on vanguardngr.com on February 3, 2018, maintained that, the verdict of history recognizing inability to maintain peace, security and welfare for the people as the index of state failure is affirmed by the Constitution of Nigeria 1999, section 14(2) (b) of which provides: "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government." The word "security" is a wide term embracing not only the safety of life and property in a physical sense, but also peace. Peace is an essential condition for security, in the sense that there can be no security in a situation of widespread and rampant social discord. Security also covers protection of the people against mass death caused by mass hunger and starvation (food security) or caused by mass unemployment (job security). And the word "welfare", although it is not, in the context of the provision in section 14(2) (b) of the Constitution, intended to refer to the modern notion of the welfare state, embraces prosperity, advancement contentment and happiness of the people. Speaking generally, based on the verdict of history and on the authority of section 14(2)(b) of the Constitution of Nigeria 1999, as amplified above by purposive interpretation, it may be said that a state which is not able to secure and maintain peace, security and welfare for the people to a reasonably adequate extent is a failed state, Nwabueze asserted. By all internationally relevant and accepted indices and indicators, and judged by the reality on the ground, as analyzed above, Nigeria is justifiably categorized as a failed state, now ranked 15th among the "worst failed" states in the world (Nwabueze, 2018).

Also referring to the comment accredited to President Muhammadu Buhari on 11th April, 2018 when speaking with the Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace - Justin Welby in London, as published on premiumtimesng.com 12th April 2018 that the killer herdsmen were trained and armed by Gaddafi. In his words, "the problem is even older than us. It has always been there, but now made worse by the influx of armed gunmen from the Sahel region into different parts of the West African sub-region. These gunmen were trained

and armed by Muammar Gaddafi of Libya. When he was killed, the gunmen escaped with their arms". This comment further depicts Nigeria as a failed state looking at the government's inability to have control over its borders and of course losing its monopoly to the use of force.

Because of this condition (failed state), the killer herdsmen have continued to kill unabated. For instance, on January 11, 2018, 73 victims of Fulani herdsmen killings in Benue were given mass burial which triggered emotional outcries and condemnations across the country. Lamenting the killing of 73 people in Benue State between the 1st and 9th of January, 2018, the Speaker of House of Representatives, Hon Yakubu Dogara, said the incident has "painted Nigeria red with blood" (Nwabueze, 2018). Also lamenting the killings, Simon Lalong, the current Governor of Plateau State, has put the number of persons killed in Fulani herdsmen attacks throughout the country in the past couple of years at 14,500. As Wole Soyinka has said, the Fulani herdsmen killings and destructions which have now engulfed most of the States of the Federation, both in the North and South, amount to a declaration of war on the country. The Fulani herdsmen may also be rightly characterised, like the Boko Haram insurgency, as a state of anarchy, defined again as meaning "lack of government", a state of society where people can kill and maim and destroy properties with impunity and without any sanctions being applied against them in accordance with law or as stipulated by law.

5.0 CAUSES OF HERDSMEN-FARMERS CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

5.1 Actors' Influence

The way actors of various camps in herdsmen-farmer conflicts is very important in their escalation. Le Meur and Hochet (2010) pointed out that herdsmen-farmer conflicts involve a composite set of both state and non-state actors as well as institutional actors, thus extending beyond just herdsmen and farmers. The actors and institutions involved in herdsmen-farmer conflicts include: pastoralists/herders (nomadic, transhumant or sedentary pastoralists); farmers; cattle traders; traditional authorities; farmer groups; businessmen (including arms sellers); security officials (the police in particular and the army); agricultural officials (veterinary and agricultural extension officers); local and national politicians; local administrators; age organisations (elder groups, youth groups); NGOs; and the courts (Krätli & Swift, 1999; Le Meur & Hochet, 2010). Though these actors play important roles in the resolution of violent conflicts, they are in fact part of the process of the escalation and de-escalation of herdsmen-farmer conflicts. Krätli and Swift (1999), in a study of pastoral conflicts in Kenya, found that many of the

actors in pastoral conflicts are hidden, and suggest, therefore, the need for a conflict stakeholder analysis to identify them. They found that some actors could play multiple roles, which can fuel conflicts.

Individual raiders may engage in illegal trade with looted guns. Cattle traders may also be elders, politicians or administrators, and so may weapon dealers. Security forces may trade in weapons. Politicians may have interests in national/international business. Any of these may have a herd of their own, which may be built up by raiding, or be reduced by being raided by others (Krätli & Swift, 1999, p.7).

5.2 Climate Change

The environment, in form of climate/environmental change and resource scarcity, is often seen as a major driver of herdsmen-farmer conflicts. Turner, Ayantunde, Patterson, and Patterson III (2011), noted that the nature of herdsmen-farmer conflicts has been shaped by the changing climate which exacerbates competition for natural resources between famers and herders; an increase in migration of herders towards semi-arid and forested regions in search of pasture. The arguments here are that resource scarcity induces migration among herdsmen triggering competition between herdsmen and farmers and, subsequently, conflict. Nigeria's far north is arid and semi-arid, with a long dry season from October to May and low rainfall (600 to 900 mm) from June to September. In 2008, the National Meteorological Agency reported that over the preceding 30 years the annual rainy season dropped from an average of 150 to 120 days. In the last six decades, over 350,000 sq km of the already arid region turned to desert or desert-like conditions, a phenomenon progressing southward at the rate of 0.6km per year (Federal Ministry of Environment, 2008). In Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara states, estimates suggest that 50-75 per cent of the land area is becoming desert (FAO Country Programming Framework, 2013-2017). These environmental changes have wrecked agriculture and human livelihoods, forcing millions of herdsmen and others to migrate south, in search of productive land. This has triggered increasing disputes between the herdsmen and the farmers of the new host communities in the central and southern Nigeria over land, water use, and crops.

5.3 Rural Banditry and Cattle Rustling

Rural banditry also drives herdsmen-farmers conflict. The rise in value of livestock has recently attracted criminals who look to rustle cattle for profit, triggered by high youth unemployment and limited outlook for improved livelihoods. Thus, the high price of cattle has also brought in new more sophisticated groups of

rustlers, coordinating attacks to profit off cattle theft and trade. In Sokoto, Katsina, Zamfara, Kebbi, Niger, and Kaduna States, in the Northwest, 'conflict entrepreneurs' are taking advantage of the Boko Haram violence in the Northeast and general insecurity in Nigeria to engage in widespread 'rural banditry' (Bagu & Smith, 2017). These gangs of criminals instigate fear and violence to raid communities for livestock and plunder. They often attack during the middle of the night and create chaos, burning homes and shooting guns in the air, to cause people to flee and more effectively maneuver cattle out of the community. The 'conflict entrepreneurs' stand to economically benefit from the continuance of violence, and therefore seek to reinforce divisions, often by inciting violence themselves. The main theatres of rural banditry and cattle rustling have been the Kamuku forest in Kaduna, Falgore forest in Kano, Dansadau forest in Zamfara and Davin Rugu forest stretching through Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara states (Crisis Group interviews, 2016). Cattle theft reportedly also has been a major source of funding for Boko Haram in the north east (Borno state government, 2016). One report estimated that in 2013 more than 64,750 cattle were stolen and at least 2,991 herders killed in states across the north-central zone (Samuel Egwu, 2013).

5.4 Government Negligence and Inactions

The Nigerian government has been severally accused of negligence and inability to take actions in curbing the menace of herdsmen-farmer conflict harrying the nation and the citizens. Burton (2016) noted that government's silence or negligence on the need for increased grazing space has influenced the conflict. He also argued that the request is not new as the Fulani herdsmen have previously called on the government to rectify the situation. He maintained that there has been little action on the part of the government to resolve these problems and some quarters believe that it is just being politicized for selfish gains. The herdsmen therefore have grown restless and their impatience has culminated into violent actions. Also, the federally-controlled Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) are thinly deployed in rural areas and often lack early warning signal mechanisms. Even when community and civil society groups get involved, both herders and farmers say the response to distress calls is often late. Herders say they sometimes have to seek revenge because security forces take no action against attackers who kill them and steal their cattle. Farmers say the agencies' failure to respond promptly to distress calls and punish aggressors emboldens the herders (Crisis Group interviews, 2017). More often, the country's dysfunctional law enforcement and criminal justice system fails to arrest or prosecute any perpetrators. Moreover, authorities

have generally treated these crimes as political rather than criminal acts, arguing that sanctioning suspects could spark further violence. Even if commissions of inquiry are established, they typically are used as instruments to temper tensions rather than pursue justice. Under the present administration, the security response has been particularly questionable. In February 2016, following public outcry over attacks by herders that killed scores of people in ten farming villages in the Agatu area of north-central Benue state, Buhari ordered an investigation. Nothing has been heard about it since (International Crisis Group, 2017). In April 2016, after widespread condemnation of an attack on Ukpabi Nimbo in Enugu state, the president ordered the police and military to "take all necessary action to stop the carnage", pledging that stopping herder attacks had become a priority (International Crisis Group, 2017). Since then hundreds have died in more clashes.

6.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF HERDSMEN-FARMER CONFLICT

The violent conflicts between cattle herders and crop farmers have become one of the major insecurity problems in Nigeria - only second to Boko Haram imperil. The violent conflict between the two groups have been manifesting in form of bloody clashes (attacks and counter attacks). These bloody attacks and counter attacks have created economic adverse effects and social or relational implications such as:

6.1 Loss of Human and Animal Lives: Most of these clashes between the herdsmen and farmers have resulted to humanitarian catastrophe precipitating human and animal loss. For instance, a rivalry between the Tiv farmers and Fulani ethnic groups resulted to the death of 853 people since June 2014. While the Fulani herdsmen claimed to have lost 214 people in addition to 3,200 cows, the Tiv people reportedly killed are estimated to be 633 excluding children and women who died in ramshackle camps in 2014 (Abdulbarkindo & Alupse, 2015). So far, the Tiv people in Guma, Gwer-West, Makurdi and other towns at the border with Taraba state have recorded about 458 deaths and over 350 communities have been sacked and are now living in IDP camps (Oli, Ibekwe, & Nwankwo, 2018). According to a report compiled by SBM Intelligence, a Lagos-based intelligence consulting firm, pastoral conflicts accounted for more deaths than Boko Haram last year. SBM Intelligence data covers incidents and casualty counts for Nigeria's biggest security challenges last year: the Boko Haram insurgency, pastoral conflicts involving Fulani herdsmen and cattle rustling as well as a resumption of militancy in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. The figures are represented with the chat below:

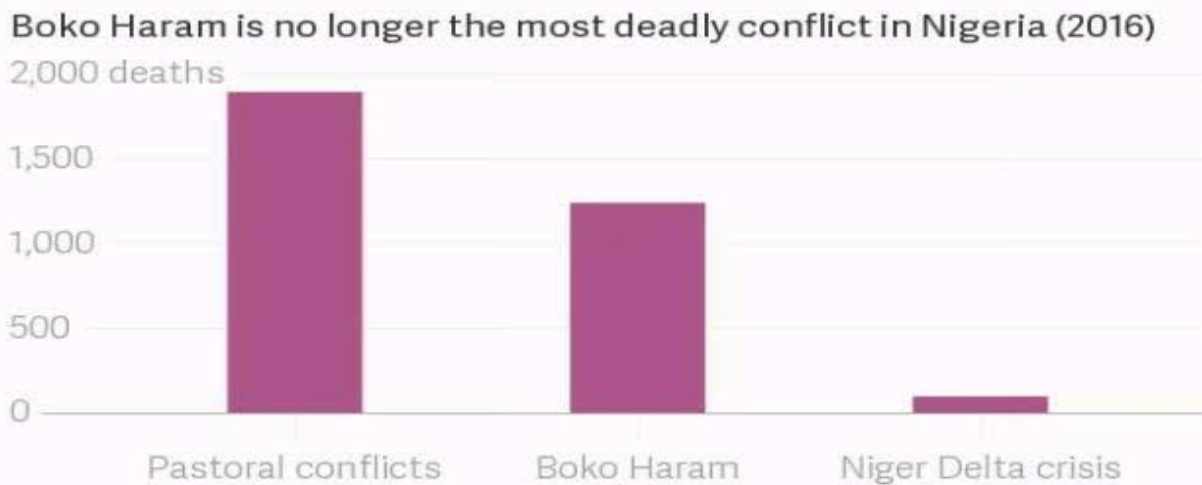


Fig 1: showing death toll as a result of Herdsmen-Farmer Conflict. Source: Data SBM Intelligence

6.2 Displacement of Persons: Reports of internally displacement of persons abounds. Displacement occurs when herdsmen and farmers clash, for instance, (Ofuoku & Isife, 2009) averred that nomadic herdsmen relocate as a result of conflict in the host communities. Host farmers especially women who stayed behind stop going to distant farms for fear of attack by nomads in the bush. Such displaced farmers have become a source of liability to other farmers whom they have to beg for food for themselves and their families. The Benue State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA says it has registered about 80,000 Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs, across four camps located in Guma and Logo local government areas of the state (Premium Times, 2018). As at March 1, no fewer than 80,450 children are currently trapped in eight Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs, camps established by the Benue state government to cater for victims of herdsmen incursions in the state. According to official figures obtained from the State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, of the said figure 47,353 are male while 39,909 are female children.

6.3 Destruction of Houses: Clashes between herdsmen and farmers are also not leaving houses untouched in most affected communities across Nigeria. For instance, the killing of Nimbo indigenes in Uzo-Uwani LGA of Enugu State where 40 deaths were recorded, also saw to the destruction of ten residential houses, a church, in addition to vehicles, motorcycles and domestic animals. Also, several houses were burnt down on March 14th 2018 when Ogane-Enugu and Ikende communities in Dekina LGA of Kogi State was invaded by herdsmen.

6.4 Destruction of Farmlands and Crops: It is factual to say that most clashes between herdsmen and farmers were triggered as a result of frustrations from farmers whose farmlands and crops were destroyed by herders. Farmers who are keen to protect their means of livelihood and their crops from being damaged by

thousands of cattle have often clashed with herdsmen. According to Ofuoku and Isife (2009), more than 40 million worth of crops are usually lost annually due to invasion of cattle in the South-South region of Nigeria, especially Delta and Edo States. This has created an impediment to the survival of the host communities as many crop-farmers has abandoned their farm lands to avoid suffering in vain or being killed. Aliyu (2015) argued that the conflict has continued to lead to destruction or loss of properties and crops in Katsina State leaving an already endangered populace even poorer. A study conducted by Umeh and Chukwu (2016) in Ebonyi State indicated that the economic loss on both conflicting parties was huge and that the herders seemed to have incurred more in monetary terms than the farmers.

6.5 Distrust between Herdsmen and Farmers: according to Burton (2016) majority of the members of the expanse Fulani ethnic group are solely pastoralists without connection to militant violence. Even these peaceful ones, however, are largely viewed with suspicion and anger by the sedentary communities on whose land they take their cattle, largely as a result of the actions of the violent group. This has created distrust and altered the mutual relationship that has existed between them and most of their host communities.

7.0 IMPLICATION OF HERDSMEN-FARMER CONFLICT ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Herdsmen-farmer conflicts have caused heavy humanitarian and economic toll with thousands killed, tens of thousands displaced and economy decimated. In Benue, one of the hardest-hit states, Governor Samuel Ortom reports more than 1,878 people were killed between 2014 and 2016 (Premium Times, 2017). Tens of thousands also have been displaced. From January 2015

to February 2017, at least 62,000 people were displaced in Kaduna, Benue and Plateau states; in the absence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, most seek shelter in other poor, rural communities, straining their already scarce resources (SBM Intelligence reported, 2017). The economic toll has also been huge. According to a study conducted by Mercy Corps in 2015, the federal government was losing \$13.7 billion in revenue annually because of herder-farmer conflicts in Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Plateau states. The study found that on average these four states lost 47 per cent of their internally-generated revenues. In March 2017, Benue state Governor Samuel Ortom asserted that attacks by herdsmen coming from more northerly states, and possibly also from Cameroon and Niger, had cost his state N95 billion (about \$634 million at that time) between 2012 and 2014 (The Nation, 22 March, 2017). Communities and households also pay a heavy price. The ethnic Nzor-Tiv Global Association estimated its Agatu communities in Benue state lost N65 billion in property (\$204 million) during the early 2016 herder attacks.

In Nigeria agriculture still remain essentially one of the major economic backbones in terms of national output and employment generation. The agro-industrial enterprises depend on the sector for raw materials whilst 88% of the non-oil exports earning come from the sector. The sector contributes a great deal to the development of the economy in various ways: Agriculture contributes significantly to national food self-sufficiency by accounting for over 90% of total food consumption requirements, it helps to maintain a healthy and peaceful population and also a source of food and nutrition for households. The sector leads in economic activities, accounting for one-third of the

Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It remains the leading employment sector of the vast majority of the Nigerian population as it employs two- third of the labor force (Bola, 2007). About 90% of the rural population is involved in activities related to the crop sub-sector which provides the bulk of agricultural income. Four sub-activities make up the Agricultural sector: Crop Production, Livestock, Forestry and Fishing. The sector grew by 12.50% year-on-year in nominal terms, showing an increase over the same quarter of 2016 by 5.13% points but a slight decline by -0.03% points when compared to the preceding quarter's growth rate of 12.53%. Crop Production remains the major driver of the sector as it accounts for 91.97% of overall nominal growth of the sector. In the third quarter of 2017, Agriculture contributed 24.44% to nominal GDP. This figure is higher than the rates recorded for the third quarter of 2016 and second quarter of 2017 at 24.11% and 19.28% respectively (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017)

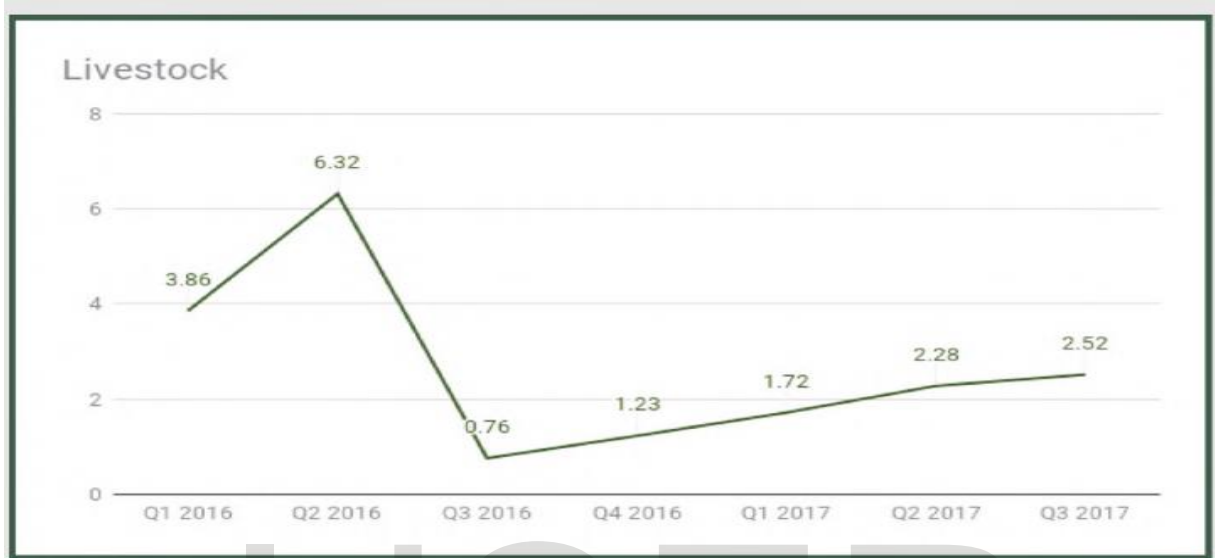
Nevertheless, looking at the contribution of agriculture to national development, it is dangerous for Nigeria to continue with such conflicts that is capable of reducing her agricultural outputs. If farmers are not farming, crops are not planted, and livestock are destroyed, then what would the teeming population who are not in anywhere close to any government Job nor any government social intervention do? Also Benue State which has been known as the food basket of the Nation has gradually become the hotbed of the crises. How do we now continue to provide food for the nation? Now, looking at the fig 2 below, we can see how unstable and the recent fall in GDP from agriculture, which of course is capable of being influenced by the unabated herdsmen-farmers conflict.



Source: Tradingeconomics.Com/National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria
Fig 2: Shows the growth of GDP from agriculture

The figure shows that GDP from agriculture declined steadily from 5,189,365.99 Million in last quarter of 2017 to 4859436.87 Million in the first quarter of 2018, and to 348731.92 Million in the second quarter of 2018. However, it is clear that other factors like climate change, government policies, etc were capable of causing the decline, but undermining the fact that many farmers can no longer access their farmlands as a result

of fear and trauma created by herdsmen-farmers conflict is inappropriate. Though the graph below shows that livestock under agriculture started growing gradually and steadily (after falling from 6.32% in Q2 of 2016 to 0.76% in Q3 of the same year) till Q3 of 2017, the crop production output has continued to fall as the subsequent graph will show.



Source: Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report Q3 2017

Fig 3: Graph of Nigeria GDP from livestock

Livestock under agriculture sector grew by 2.52% in Q3 2017 from 2.28% in Q2 2017 and 0.76% in Q3 2016.



Source: Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report Q3 2017

Fig 4: Shows graph of Nigerian GDP from Crop production

Crop production under agriculture sector grew by 3.19% in Q3 2017 from 3.21% in Q2 2017 and 4.88% in Q3 2016. The implication of this is food insecurity and dependence on food outside Nigeria.

8.0 CONCLUSION

It has become like a norm for us to be glutted every now and then with stories of bloody conflicts between Fulani

herdsmen and some inhabitants of crop farming communities in Nigeria. However, the bad story is rooted in the struggle for survival and protection of economic livelihood between herdsmen and farmers across many communities in Nigeria which appears to precipitate conflict. The conflict has in recent years taken more dangerous dimension with acquisition of modern weapons and communication devices which

consequently resulted in massive loss of lives and properties. The socio-economic effects of herdsman-farmer conflict in Nigeria include loss of human and animal lives, displacement of persons, destruction of houses, farmlands and crops, and distrust between herdsman and farmers. Agriculture as the backbone of the economy in Nigeria which provides employment and source of livelihood for the increasing population is threatened owing to this conflict. Herdsman-farmers' conflict created food insecurity, distrust and displacement which further created unemployment capable of inhibiting national development in Nigeria.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are made:

1. Government at all levels should promulgate legislations outlawing open grazing of cattle while encouraging herders to establish ranches for their cattle.
2. State governments should designate some areas as grazing fields for the nomadic herdsman and make them pay tax to the state, whilst warning that any crime involving a Fulani herdsman would attract severe penalties
3. All Fulani herdsman operating in any local government should be registered to enable monitoring of their activities and co-existence.
4. Government should ensure that those involved in the allocation of land for farming should imbibe responsibility and not allocate along cattle route or over grazing lands to avoid encroachment by nomadic herdsman.
5. Government should adopt community policing model to forestall peace in the rural areas as it will enable the police and the community members detect when the herdsman gain access into the communities to attack residents. Community policing seeks the effective community engagement in the provision of solution to policing issues and also developing partnership in the maintenance of safety and security in the society.
6. Support for agricultural development through incentives will facilitate availability of food for the teeming Nigeria population. People in different aspects of agriculture and other trades alike should simultaneously and mutually articulate their trades for enhanced productivity and achievement of Sustainable Development.
7. Federal government should engage peace and conflict resolution experts in dealing with issues concerning herdsman-farmer crises. This will enable effective dialogues, negotiations and of course a win-win resolution. With conflict experts, early warning mechanism can be ensured.

REFERENCES

- Abass, I. (2012) No Retreat No Surrender Conflict for Survival between the Fulani Pastoralist and Farmers in Northern Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*. Vol 8, No1. pp 331-346.
- Abdulbarkindo, A & Alupse, B. (2015). Migration and violent conflict in divided societies: Non-Boko Haram violence against Christians in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. *Nigeria Conflict Security Analysis Network (NCSAN), Working Paper No. 1, Abuja, Nigeria, Pp. 1-49.*
- Aliyu, A.S. (2015). Causes and resolution of conflict between cattle herders and crop farmers in Katsina State. *A Published M.Sc. Dissertation by the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, pp.1-74.*
- Bates, Robert H. (2008). "State Failure". *Annual Review of Political Science*. **11**: 1–12. [doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.060606.132017](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.060606.132017).
- BBC, (2016) Making sense of Nigeria's Fulani-farmer conflict 5 May, 2016
- Blench, R. (1996). Natural Resource Conflicts in North-Central Nigeria. *London: Mandarav.*
- Bola, O. (2007). Nigeria Agricultural Sector. Oxford University Press.
- Burton, G. (2016). Background report: The Fulani herdsman. *Project Cyma Publication. November, pp.1-18.*
- Call, C. T. (2008). "The Fallacy of the 'Failed State'". *Third World Quarterly*. **29** (8): 1491–1507. [doi:10.1080/01436590802544207](https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802544207).
- Charles, J. O. (2005). *Sociological Theory: A historic-analytical approach on man and society*. Lagos: Serenity.
- Chom Bagu & Kate Smith (2017). *PAST IS PROLOGUE: Criminality And Reprisal Attacks In Nigeria's Middle Belt*. Search for Common Ground 2017
- FAO Nigeria, *FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) Federal Republic of Nigeria 2013-2017*, p. 5.
- Global Terrorism Index (2015). *Measuring and understanding the impact of terrorism*. New York: Institute for Economics & Peace, pp. 1-107.
- Gros, J. G. (1996). "Towards a taxonomy of failed states in the New World Order: Decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti". *Third World Quarterly*. **17** (3): 455–472. [doi:10.1080/01436599615452](https://doi.org/10.1080/01436599615452).
- Hagmann, T. (2003). *Mitigating violent resource conflicts in the Somali region of Ethiopia*. Paper presented at

- the ZEF Research Meeting, Center for Development Research, (ZEF), University of Bonn, Bonn, November 19, 2003.
- Hussein, K., Sumberg, J., & Seddon, D. (1999). Increasing violent conflict between herders and farmers in Africa: Claims and evidence. *Development Policy Review*, 17(4), 397-418. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7679.00094>
- Idowu, A.O. (2017). Urban violence dimension in Nigeria: Farmers and herders onslaught. *AGATHOS International Review*, 8(14), 187-206.
- Kaderi Noagah Bukari (2017) *Farmer-Herder Relations In Ghana: Interplay Of Environmental Change, Conflict, Coopera-Tion And Social Networks* PhD Thesis submitted to Georg-August University of Göttingen
- Kaplan, S. (2008). *Fixing Fragile States. A new paradigm for development.* US: Praeger Security International. ISBN 978-0-275-99828-8.
- Krätili, S., & Swift, J. (1999). *Understanding and managing pastoral conflict in Kenya: A literature review.* Sussex: University of Sussex
- Le Meur, P.-Y., & Hochet, P. (2010). Property relations by other means: Conflict over dry-land resources in Benin and Mali. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 22(5), 643-659. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2010.44>
- Mercy Corps (2015). *The Economic Costs of Conflict: Evidence on Violence, Livelihoods and Resilience in Nigeria's Middle Belt*.
- Mikailu, N. (2016, May 5th). Making sense of Nigeria's Fulani-farmer conflict. BBC News. Retrieved 14th June, 2017 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36139388>
- Moritz, M. (2004) *Changing Contexts and Dynamics of Herder-Farmer Conflicts Across West Africa.* <http://www.wou.edu-moritzm/introduction%20CJAS.pdf>. Website accessed on 15/01/06.
- Myers, D. G. (2007). *Social psychology.* New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill.
- Nay Olivier (2013). "Fragile and Failed States: Critical Perspectives on Conceptual Hybrids". *International Political Science Review*. 34 (3): 326-341. doi:10.1177/0192512113480 054.
- Ofooku, A. U. & Isife, B. I. (2009). Causes, effects and resolutions of farmers-nomadic cattle herders conflict in Delta state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Sociology & Anthropology*, 1(2), 047-054.
- Oli, N. P, Ibekwe, C. C. Nwankwo, & Ignatius U (2017). *Prevalence of Herdsmen and Farmers Conflict in Nigeria.* International Journal of Innovative Studies in Sociology and Humanities (IJISSH) ISSN 2456-4931 (Online) Volume: 3 Issue: 1 | January
- Patrick, S. (2007). "'Failed' States and Global Security: Empirical Questions and Policy Dilemmas". *International Studies Review*. 9 (4): 644-662. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2486.2007.00728.x.
- Ritzer, G. & Stepnisky, J. (2014). *Sociological theory.* (9th ed.). Singapore: McGraw-Hill.
- Rotberg, R. (2004). *When States Fail. Causes and Consequences.* US: Princeton University Press. ISBN 0-691-11671-7.
- Tonah, S. (2002). 'The Politics of Exclusion: The Expulsion of Fulbe Pastoralists from Ghana in 1999/2000'. *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology Working Papers*, 1-27.
- Turner, M. D., Ayantunde, A. A., Patterson, K. P., & Patterson III, E. D. (2011). Livelihood transitions and the changing nature of farmer-herder conflict in Sahelian West Africa. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 47(2), 183-206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220381003599352>
- Umeh, G.N. & Chukwu, V.A. (2016). Socioeconomic perspectives to arable crop farmer-herder conflicts in Ebonyi North Zone, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Science & Research (IJSR)*, 5(5), 135-142.
- Bloodbath in Enugu as Fulani herdsmen kill 40. (2016, April 26). *Vanguard*, p. 10.
- Crisis Group interviews, vigilante leaders, Lafia, Nasarawa state, 22 September 2016.
- Death toll in Benue herdsmen attack hits 59. (2016, June 20), *Punch*, p. 4.
- FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) Federal Republic of Nigeria 2013-2017, op. cit., p. 6.
- Federal Ministry of Environment, *National Policy on Desertification and Drought*, 2008
- <https://educacinfo.com/agricultural-sector-nigeria-economic-growth/?v=1f05ffef197c> Page 3 of 10
- <https://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/gdp-from-agriculturehttp://citifmonline.com/2017/10/29/9-dead-after-fulani-herdsmen-and-farmers-clash/>
- <https://www.proshareng.com/admin/upload/reports/10988-UNITEDCAPITALPLCFINANCIALSTATEMENTSFEBRUARY2018-proshare.pdf>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264887608_Analysis_of_the_Contribution_of_Agricultural_Sector_on_the_Nigerian_Economic_Development
[accessed May 15 2018].

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/03/farmers-herdsmen-crisis-80450-children-trapped-eight-idp-camps-across-benue/>

<http://www.pulse.ng/news/local/fulani-herdsmen-kill-5-in-plateau-during-buhari-s-visit-id8094161.html>

<http://opera.pulse.ng/news/local/herdsmen-kill-two-catholic-priests-17-worshipers-in-benue-id8296799.html>

People killed in Zamfara banditry in four years - NSCDC", *Daily Trust*, 17 February 2017

IJSER